

BOULDER COUNTY Driver and Cycling Laws and Guidelines



For Drivers

Colorado traffic law is designed to produce safe outcomes for all users of our roads, paths, and trails.

Drivers and cyclists have a role and responsibility for the safety of themselves and all other drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians.

UNDER COLORADO STATE LAW

Drivers and Cyclists
have many of the
Same Rights and Obligations

Cars and Bicyclists
are both considered
Vehicles



Drivers must keep a minimum of 3 feet distance between the outermost projection of one's vehicle and the cyclist.

By Law, Drivers Must

- **Yield by waiting for cyclists** who temporarily may not be able to ride fully to the right. Reasons for not cycling fully to the right could be hazards, debris on the road, or the need for the cyclist to turn left.
- **Keep a minimum of three feet** between the outermost projection of one's vehicle and the cyclist when a driver passes a cyclist. Pass only on the left.
- **Do not pass a cyclist without sufficient sight of the road ahead** and/or remain behind a cyclist when approaching an intersection or railroad crossing.
- **Yield to other, slower drivers** in front of them who may be lawfully slowing and/or yielding to cyclists, pedestrians, or equestrians. It is illegal to fail to yield the right-of-way and other aggressive or intimidating actions could constitute a crime.
- **Drivers may** cross a double yellow centerline to pass a cyclist (while keeping a minimum of three feet between the outermost projection of one's vehicle and the cyclist) only if it is safe to do so. That is, the driver must confirm that there is no oncoming traffic. Do not pass cyclists on blind curves, for example, the blind curves typical to Boulder County's mountain roads.

Cyclist Laws to Know

- **Use of the legal Colorado Safety Stop.** This law allows a cyclist to treat a stop sign as a yield sign or a red light as a stop sign and proceed through the intersection as long as there is no reason for the cyclist to yield to cross traffic.
- **Cyclists can ride two abreast as long as they do not impede the normal flow of traffic.** Drivers must yield to cyclists in order to give them an opportunity to go single file or move farther to the right, where they do not impede normal traffic flow.

Cyclists two abreast are sometimes safer since they can be passed quicker than a line of single-file cyclists. Traffic law and safety require slowing for or yielding to other vehicles, including cyclists, when necessary.

Yielding to cyclists is not only a matter of courtesy or the law — it saves lives.



NOTE: The resource in this brochure is provided for informational purposes and is not intended as legal advice or to comprehensively describe applicable rules or laws, including but not necessarily limited to C.R.S. § 42-4-1401 et seq. and local codes. Please contact an attorney if you have legal questions.

BOULDER COUNTY Laws and Guidelines for Safe Cycling



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Coalition 4 Cyclists encourages cyclists to ride to the right to keep cyclists safe and permit normal traffic flow.

Cyclist Laws and Duties

- **Ride as far to the right as practicable** based on hazards, passing slower vehicles, or the need to take the lane to turn left or similar. By riding to the right, except when temporarily not practicable, cyclists allow for normal traffic flow that is safe and courteous.
- **Announce in advance** of passing slower cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.
- **Between the hours of dusk and dawn** or during periods of low visibility, cyclists are required to ride with a white headlight and a rear red reflector. It's best to consider using front and rear lights, even during daylight.
- **Never impede normal traffic flow**, defined as holding up five or more vehicles behind a cyclist. Except for unusual circumstances, which can occur, the Coalition 4 Cyclists (C4C) encourages cyclists to courteously ride to the right or do so on a timely basis to permit normal traffic flow at all times.
- **Be patient and respectful.** In the rare but existing case of encountering equestrians, always greet the equestrian as soon as possible, be prepared to yield in order to share the trail safely, and take the equestrian's instructions if need be.

Laws, Rights, and Safety

- **The Colorado Safety Stop law** permits a cyclist who is 16 years of age or older to treat a stop sign as a yield sign and a red light as a stop sign if and only if there is no cross traffic nor reason for the cyclist to yield to other vehicles at the intersection.
- **Cyclists may ride two abreast** as long as they do not impede the normal flow of traffic.
- **Ride single-file** or be prepared to do so efficiently on narrow roads such as canyon roads.
- **Always wear a helmet AND wear bright, visible clothing.**
- **Always be on alert for** traffic, pedestrians, and sudden obstacles.

Cycling lawfully, along with care and courtesy, can save lives in Boulder County.



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