

STATE OF NEW YORK

7995

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

May 30, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. NIOU -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to bicycles with electric assist

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 102 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by
2 chapter 931 of the laws of 1977, is amended to read as follows:

3 § 102. Bicycle. Every two or three wheeled device upon which a person
4 or persons may ride, propelled by human power through a belt, a chain or
5 gears, with such wheels in a tandem or tricycle, except that it shall
6 not include such a device having solid tires and intended for use only
7 on a sidewalk by pre-teenage children. A bicycle includes a bicycle with
8 electric assist as defined in section one hundred two-c of this article,
9 provided that nothing in this article is intended to affect the ability
10 of a local authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing the
11 operation of bicycles with electric assist.

12 § 2. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section
13 102-c to read as follows:

14 § 102-c. Bicycle with electric assist. Every two or three wheeled
15 device upon which a person or persons may ride, propelled by an electric
16 motor system rated at not more than seven hundred fifty watts, equipped
17 with operable pedals, and meeting the requirements of one of the follow-
18 ing three classes:

19 (a) "Class one bicycle with electric assist" shall mean a bicycle with
20 electric assist equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when
21 the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the
22 bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.

23 (b) "Class two bicycle with electric assist" shall mean a bicycle with
24 electric assist equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when
2 the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.

3 (c) "Class three bicycle with electric assist" shall mean a bicycle
4 with electric assist equipped with a motor that provides assistance only
5 when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when
6 the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty-eight miles per hour.

7 Bicycle with electric assist does not include a device specifically
8 designed for use by persons with disabilities. For the purposes of this
9 article, a bicycle with electric assist shall be subject to all the
10 provisions applicable to a bicycle and no other provisions.

11 § 3. Section 125 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by chapter
12 365 of the laws of 2008, is amended to read as follows:

13 § 125. Motor vehicles. Every vehicle operated or driven upon a public
14 highway which is propelled by any power other than muscular power,
15 except (a) electrically-driven mobility assistance devices operated or
16 driven by a person with a disability, (a-1) electric personal assistive
17 mobility devices operated outside a city with a population of one
18 million or more, (b) vehicles which run only upon rails or tracks, (c)
19 snowmobiles as defined in article forty-seven of this chapter, [and] (d)
20 all terrain vehicles as defined in article forty-eight-B of this
21 chapter, and (e) bicycles with electric assist as defined in section one
22 hundred two-c of this article. For the purposes of title four of this
23 chapter, the term motor vehicle shall exclude fire and police vehicles
24 other than ambulances. For the purposes of titles four and five of this
25 chapter the term motor vehicles shall exclude farm type tractors and all
26 terrain type vehicles used exclusively for agricultural purposes, or for
27 snow plowing, other than for hire, farm equipment, including self-pro-
28 pelled machines used exclusively in growing, harvesting or handling farm
29 produce, and self-propelled caterpillar or crawler-type equipment while
30 being operated on the contract site.

31 § 4. Section 159 of the vehicle and traffic law is amended to read as
32 follows:

33 § 159. Vehicle. Every device in, upon, or by which any person or prop-
34 erty is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, except devices
35 moved by human power or used exclusively upon stationary rails or
36 tracks, and bicycles with electric assist as defined in section one
37 hundred two-c of this article.

38 § 5. Subparagraph b of paragraph 1 of subdivision (a) of section 1202
39 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by chapter 679 of the laws of
40 1970, is amended to read as follows:

41 b. On a sidewalk, except that a bicycle may park on a sidewalk in a
42 manner complying with the Americans with disabilities act, provided that
43 such bicycle does not interfere with the normal and reasonable movement
44 of pedestrian traffic;

45 § 6. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section
46 1242 to read as follows:

47 § 1242. Special provisions relating to bicycles with electric assist.
48 (a) Any violation under this chapter involving a bicycle with electric
49 assist as defined in section one hundred two-c of this chapter shall not
50 be grounds for impoundment of such bicycle, nor shall any fees, fines or
51 civil penalties be required to release any such bicycle to its owner or
52 the person operating it when seized by a government enforcement entity,
53 except as otherwise provided by state law.

54 (b) Any fine levied for the use of a bicycle with electric assist
55 under this chapter by a user whose use of such bicycle is in the ordi-

1 nary course of business shall be levied upon the employer, and not
2 levied upon such user.

3 (c) The use of a bicycle with electric assist shall comply with any
4 local rules, regulations or ordinances relating to the use of such bicy-
5 cles established by the relevant county, municipality, town, or village.

6 § 7. Section 1225-a of the vehicle and traffic law, as added by chap-
7 ter 222 of the laws of 1974, is amended to read as follows:

8 § 1225-a. Driving on sidewalks. No person shall drive a motor vehicle
9 or bicycle with electric assist on or across a sidewalk, except that a
10 vehicle or bicycle with electric assist may be driven at a reasonable
11 speed, but not more than five miles per hour, on or across a sidewalk in
12 such manner as not to interfere with the safety and passage of pedestri-
13 ans thereon, who shall have the right of way, when it is reasonable and
14 necessary:

15 (a) to gain access to a public highway, private way or lands or build-
16 ings adjacent to such highway or way;

17 (b) in the conduct of work upon a highway, or upon a private way or
18 lands or buildings adjacent to such highway or way[~~r~~]; or

19 (c) to plow snow or perform any other public service, for hire, or
20 otherwise, which could not otherwise be reasonably and properly
21 performed.

22 § 8. This act shall take effect immediately.