

2024 -- H 8119

LC005754

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- LOW-SPEED VEHICLES

Introduced By: Representatives Cortvriend, and McGaw

Date Introduced: March 29, 2024

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-19.6-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-19.6 entitled "Low-  
2 Speed Vehicles [Effective July 1, 2024.]" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-19.6-1. Low-speed vehicles. [Effective July 1, 2024.]**

4 (a) Except as otherwise provided in chapters 19.4 and 19.5 of this title, a low-speed motor  
5 vehicle or low-speed vehicle shall not be operated upon any public way unless such vehicle is  
6 registered in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, displays the registration number as  
7 provided in § 31-3-10, and displays a slow-moving vehicle emblem on the rear of the vehicle as  
8 required by § 31-10.1-7. Low-speed vehicles shall be subject to inspection as required by chapter  
9 38 of this title. The registrar may issue registration plates displaying the "Slow Moving Vehicle"  
10 emblem for a low-speed vehicle upon the same terms and conditions applicable to registrants of  
11 other motor vehicles and may issue a special parking identification placard bearing the same  
12 designation upon the same terms and conditions applicable to persons seeking a placard for a motor  
13 vehicle. Every person lawfully operating a low-speed motor vehicle shall have the right to use the  
14 public highways in the state, ~~except low-speed vehicles shall be prohibited from operation on~~  
15 ~~limited access highways, as defined in § 31-1-23, state highways, as defined in § 31-1-23, or~~  
16 ~~through highways as defined in § 31-1-23 or on any public highway or roadway with a speed limit~~  
17 ~~of more than thirty-five miles per hour (35 m.p.h.)~~ including any state highway, through highway,  
18 limited access highway or public highway or roadway with a posted speed limit of thirty-five miles  
19 per hour (35 m.p.h.) or less. No low-speed vehicle shall operate on any state highway, through

1 [highway, limited access highway or public highway or roadway with a speed limit greater than](#)  
2 [thirty-five miles per hour \(35 m.p.h.\)](#).

3 (b) Low-speed vehicles shall be subject to the traffic laws and regulations of the state and  
4 the provisions of this section.

5 (c) Nothing in subsection (a) of this section shall be construed to prohibit a low-speed  
6 motor vehicle from crossing a public highway at an intersection where the public highway to be  
7 crossed has a posted speed limit between thirty-five miles per hour (35 m.p.h.) and forty-five miles  
8 per hour (45 m.p.h.), provided the public highway the low-speed vehicle is traveling on and the  
9 public highway the low-speed vehicle is crossing the intersection toward both have a speed limit  
10 no higher than thirty-five miles per hour (35 m.p.h.) and the intersection is controlled by traffic  
11 signals or stop signs.

12 (d) A municipality may, by ordinance, prohibit the operation of low-speed vehicles on a  
13 laned roadway or local highway or a portion of a highway within its jurisdiction and under its  
14 control, regardless of posted speeds, where it finds that use of the highway or a particular portion  
15 of the highway by low-speed motor vehicles would represent an unreasonable risk of death or  
16 serious injury to occupants of low-speed vehicles as a result of general traffic conditions which  
17 shall include, but not be limited to, excessive speeds of other vehicles, traffic volumes, use of the  
18 highway by heavy trucks or other large vehicles or if the established speed limit on the highway  
19 increases above thirty-five miles per hour (35 m.p.h.) beyond the point where a low-speed vehicle  
20 could safely exit the highway. The municipality shall post signs where necessary to provide notice  
21 to the public of such prohibited access.

22 (e) Low-speed vehicles operated on Prudence Island, in the town of Portsmouth, pursuant  
23 to the provisions of chapter 19.4 of this title, are exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

24 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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1           This act would provide that low-speed vehicles may be operated on limited access  
2 highways, state highways, through highways and public highways or roadways provided the speed  
3 limit on the highways and roadways is no more than thirty-five miles per hour (35 m.p.h.).

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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