

North Dakota State University

Bicycle Safety & Rules of the Road

I. Introduction

Bicycling is a fun and healthy exercise. Before riding your bicycle on roadways, take time to learn the rules. Many bicyclists are seriously injured in accidents because they are less protected than drivers of automobiles, and/or they do not practice safe riding skills.

II. Purpose

These guidelines and City of Fargo laws are available to provide minimum health and safety information for use of bicycles.

III. Goals

To recognize and understand common traffic rules, the importance of obeying traffic laws and to reduce the risk of injury and death by learning and practicing bicycle safety. Take personal responsibility for one's actions.

IV. Procedures

- A. Bike licenses are no longer issued by the City of Fargo. Bike owners are now encouraged to register their bikes and other valuables (with serial#) with the Fargo Police Department's "[My Property](#)" on-line registration program; for more information on bicycle safety, visit the [Fargo Police Department](#) website.
- B. Engraving on a bicycle is not recommended, especially with some modern frame materials that could be damaged. Owners should keep their bicycle serial number, make, model, frame size and color recorded in the event of loss, impoundment or theft. It is also recommended keeping several detailed photographs, to include the serial number.
- C. A "U" bolt lock, in combination with a braided cable lock, is the most secure way to lock a bike to a designated bike rack or other solid object. The cable should pass through the bikes frame and both wheels.
- D. If your bicycle is stolen on campus property and you want to make a report, contact University Police, 231-8998. Theft from non-campus property can be reported to Fargo Police, (701)235-4493.
- E. All bicycles will be parked in outdoor racks provided for that purpose. Bicycles brought inside, fastened to other objects, or left in such manner as to impede or endanger pedestrian or vehicular traffic, will be subject to impoundment by University Police.

V. Bicycle Safety Tips

- A. Bicycle helmets, when properly worn, are an essential element to bicycle safety as they can reduce the severity of head and brain trauma in a fall or collision. Always strap on an approved safety helmet before you ride, and learn how to properly adjust it.
- B. Cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers of motor vehicles. Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals.

- C. Always operate a bicycle on the right side of the roadway, as close as practicable to the curb or road edge.
- D. Keep your brakes, lights, horn or bell and reflectors in good working condition.
- E. Learn and use hand signals for turns and stops.
- F. Being visible to other road users is important! Avoid riding after dark. If you must, the bicycle must have a headlight projecting a white light and red rear reflector. Use of a red taillight, *in addition* to a red rear reflector, is encouraged. Wear bright or fluorescent colored clothing.
- G. Do not speed, race or weave in and out of traffic.
- H. Cyclists may ride two abreast, provided they do not impede the normal flow of traffic. Single file riding may be more appropriate and safe on roadways with heavier traffic or narrow lanes.
- I. Keep both hands on the handle bars, except to signal a stop or a turn.
- J. Use extra caution at intersections, where most car-bike collisions occur. Stay alert, visible and be predictable. Pay close attention to turning motor vehicles, as the drivers may not be watching out for cyclists.
- K. Consider dismounting and walking across intersections or streets with multiple travel lanes and heavy traffic, especially at peak travel times and/or times of reduced visibility. Use crosswalks when possible and stay alert.
- L. Stay vigilant on busy streets or highways. Safe, confident cyclists stay alert, visible, predictable, and follow the rules of the road.
- M. Know Your Bicycle – practice routine maintenance, and perform an “*A-B-C-Quick Check*” prior to every ride: A-proper air pressure in tires; B-check brakes for proper adjustment and function; C-check chain, cassette, chain-rings and cranks for debris, rust, proper tension; *quick* releases should be closed firmly on wheel axles and seat post.
 - 1. Chain - Keep clean and lubricated; check for wear and replace as needed
 - 2. Pedals - Lubricate bearings and spindle, replace worn treads
 - 3. Spokes - Keep tight, replace broken ones promptly
 - 4. Wheels - Should rotate smoothly, lubricate bearings, keep axle nuts tight and quick releases firmly closed
 - 5. Tires - Inflate to correct pressure, which is stamped on the sidewall of the tire; over or under inflation can negatively affect the bikes handling characteristics and result in a fall, rim damage, flat tires or loss of traction.
 - 6. Side Reflectors - Colorless or amber on front and red on rear, visible from 500 feet
 - 7. Headlight - White light visible from 500 feet
 - 8. Handlebars and Grips - Properly adjusted and tight
 - 9. Bell or Horn - Be sure it works
 - 10. Saddle - Properly adjusted and tight
 - 11. Red Reflector - Visible from a distance of 500 feet; a tail light, in addition to a red reflector, is encouraged for increased visibility
 - 12. Coaster Brakes or Hand Brakes - Must brake evenly with enough force to cause a tire skid on dry, level pavement
 - 13. Fenders - Keep securely fastened

- N. Don't Ride Double on bikes not equipped for more than one rider, Don't Hitch rides on moving vehicles, Don't Stunt Ride on roadways – save it for the appropriate place, and only with proper safety equipment and training.

VI. City of Fargo Laws

Please observe the following bicycle laws (Fargo, ND) to keep you safe:

8-1410. Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles. Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all the duties which may be applied to the driver of a vehicle by the laws of this state declaring rules of the road applicable to vehicles or by the traffic ordinances of this city, except as to special regulations in this article and except as to those provisions of laws and ordinances which by their nature can have no application.

8-1411. Obedience to traffic-control devices.

- A. Any person operating a bicycle shall obey the instructions of official traffic-control signals, signs, and other control devices applicable to vehicles, unless otherwise directed by a police officer.
- B. Whenever authorized signs are erected indicating that no right or left or U-turn is permitted, no person operating a bicycle shall disobey the direction of any such signs, but where the rider dismounts from the bicycle to make any such turn, he shall then obey the regulations applicable to pedestrians.

8-1412. Riding on bicycles.

- A. A person propelling a bicycle shall not ride other than astride a permanent and regular seat attached thereto.
- B. No bicycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped.
- C. Passengers, other than those propelling a bicycle, may ride on a seat which is mounted to the rear of the operator. Said passenger seat shall be equipped with handgrips and footrests and seat belts, or otherwise designed to prevent the occupant from falling or being thrown from said seat, and shall be occupied by the persons who are too young to operate a bicycle.
- D. No person shall be permitted to ride on any part of a bicycle other than a seat as described in (C) above. Said passenger shall be guilty of an offense as well as the party permitting same.

8-1413. Riding on roadways and bicycle paths.

- A. Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall ride as close as practicable to the right side of the roadway except under any of the following situations:
 - 1. When overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle proceeding in the same direction.
 - 2. When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway.

3. When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions including, but not limited to fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge. For purposes of this section, a “substandard width lane” is a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.
 4. When driving a bicycle on a one-way street.
 5. When approaching a place where a right turn is authorized.
- B. Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than two abreast, except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Persons riding two abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic and, on a single lane roadway, shall ride within a single lane.

8-1414. Speed. No person shall operate a bicycle at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions when existing.

8-1415. Emerging from alley or driveway. The operator of a bicycle emerging from an alley, driveway, or building, upon approaching a sidewalk or sidewalk area shall yield the right-of-way to the pedestrians approaching on said sidewalk or sidewalk area, and upon entering the roadway, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on said roadway.

8-1416. Carrying articles. No person operating a bicycle shall carry a package, bundle, or article which prevents the rider from keeping at least one hand upon the handle bars or carry a package, bundle, or article which prevents the forward vision of the operator.

8-1417. Parking Bicycles - Abandoned Bicycles.

- A. No person shall park a bicycle upon a street or public right of way other than the curb or in a rack to support the bicycle. A bicycle shall be parked in such manner as to afford the least obstruction to pedestrian traffic.
- B. Any bicycle appearing to be abandoned on any public path, sidewalk or street may be removed and impounded by a police officer, or any other employee of the city that is authorized to issue parking citations.
- C. In such cases, notice shall be posted on the bicycle stating that the bicycle will be impounded and disposed of as allowed by law if it is not removed within three days of such posting on such bicycle. Any bicycle which remains in violation of this ordinance may be impounded and disposed of as allowed by law without further notice to the owner.
- D. The term “abandoned” shall refer to the condition of a bicycle in a state of disuse or neglect as evidenced by missing components, flat tires or other signs of disuse or neglect.

8-1418. Riding on sidewalks.

- A. No person shall ride a bicycle upon any skyway.
- B. Whenever any person is riding a bicycle upon a sidewalk, he shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give audible signal before overtaking and passing any pedestrian.
- C. No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk which is posted with signs

prohibiting bicycles; provided that this ordinance shall not apply to law enforcement officers riding bicycles in connection with their duties. The posting of signs shall be in accordance with the latest revision of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices as published by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration provided; however, that signs not in accordance therewith shall be in full force and effect if approved by resolution of the Board of City Commissioners.

8-1419. Lamps and other equipment on bicycles.

- A. Every bicycle when in use between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise shall be equipped with a lamp on the front which shall emit a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front; and with a red reflector of at least two square inches on the rear, of a type which shall be visible from all distances from 50 to 500 feet to the rear when directly in front of a lawful upper beam of headlamps of a motor vehicle. A lamp emitting a red light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear may be used in addition to the red reflector. Reflectors or reflectorized material shall also be attached to the handlebars and front fork to reflect light emitted by lawful headlamps of a motor vehicle. Said material shall be white or silver in color.
- B. No person shall operate a bicycle equipped with, nor shall any person use upon a bicycle, any siren or whistle.
- C. Every bicycle shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.
- D. Every bicycle shall be equipped with handlebars no higher than the shoulders of the operator.

8-1420. Restricted operation by child under twelve years of age.

- A. No child under the age of 12 years shall operate a bicycle on the streets or avenues in the city within a zone the boundaries of which shall be as follows: From the intersection of Roberts Street and Sixth Avenue North. South on Roberts Street to NP Avenue; West on NP Avenue to Eighth Street and First Avenue South; East on First Avenue South to the intersection of First Avenue South and Fourth Street; North on Fourth Street to the intersection with Sixth Avenue North; and West on Sixth Avenue North to the intersection with Roberts Street.
- B. No child under the age of 12 years shall operate a bicycle on Broadway or on the one-way streets of University Drive and Tenth Street from 13th Avenue South to 19th Avenue North, unless accompanied by a person 18 years of age or older.

8-1421. Bicycles may be impounded if operated in violation of ordinances. The police department of the city or any of the members thereof may impound any bicycle operated in violation of any of the ordinances of the city and retain possession of same until all fines have been paid or until compliance with any other sentence of the court.

8-1422. Bicycle accidents. The driver of a bicycle involved in an accident with another bicycle, motor vehicle, or with a pedestrian, shall immediately stop such bicycle at the scene of the

accident and shall give his name, age and address to the other person or persons involved. He shall also give immediate notice of the accident to the police department and shall file a report with the police department regarding the accident. In the event said accident is investigated at the scene by the police, it is not necessary for the driver to file an individual report.

8-1423. Bicycle routes to be established. Bicycle routes shall be established by the city and shall be so posted by the police department. Said routes are created to encourage bicycle operators to utilize these routes for their safety and convenience.

8-1424. Arresting persons for violating bicycle or traffic regulations--Duty of officer arresting.

A. Whenever a bicyclist is arrested for the violation of any of the provisions of this chapter, the officer arresting such person, except as otherwise provided shall:

1. Take name and address of such person;
2. Issue a summons or otherwise notify him in writing to appear at a time and place to be specified in such summons or notice.

B. If the violator is under 10 years of age, the bicycle shall be impounded and the parent or the guardian shall be notified in writing of the infraction. An 8-75 copy of the written warning issued the operator shall be forwarded to the parent or guardian.

8-1425. Penalties imposed. All persons convicted of (violating) any provisions of this chapter (article) shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$50; or by the impounding of the vehicle for a minimum of 15 days or until impound and storage fees are paid; or both.