

**COMMISSIONERS' ORDINANCE NO. 0-03-2025**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 73 OF THE COVINGTON CODE OF ORDINANCES, TITLED "LOW-SPEED VEHICLES, GOLF CARTS AND UTILITY VEHICLES ON PUBLIC ROADWAYS", TO PERMIT THE USE OF GOLF CARTS AND OTHER LOW-SPEED VEHICLES WITHIN SPECIFIC BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON.

\* \* \* \*

WHEREAS, the City of Covington currently permits the use of golf carts and other low speed vehicles between the borders of the Ohio River and Licking River, up to an and including 12<sup>th</sup> Street/MLK Boulevard and Philadelphia Street; and

WHEREAS, residents across the City of Covington have requested that the City permit the use of golf carts and other low speed vehicles across additional areas of the City, subject to the various state and local regulations already in place.

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, KENTON COUNTY, KENTUCKY AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1

Chapter 73 of the Covington Code of Ordinances is hereby amended to read as follows:

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**§ 73.01 DEFINITIONS.**

For the purpose of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

**BICYCLE.** A vehicle with two wheels tandem, handlebars, a saddle seat and pedals by which it is propelled by the operator.

**FOOT SCOOTER.** A vehicle with two wheels that are no more than ten inches in diameter, has handlebars and is propelled solely by the operator of the vehicle.

**GOLF CART.** Any self-propelled vehicle that:

(1) Is designed for the transportation of players or maintaining equipment on a golf course, while engaged in the playing of golf, supervising the play of golf or maintaining the condition of the grounds on a golf-course;

(2) Has a minimum of four wheels;

- (3) Is designed to operate at a speed of not more than 35 mph;
  - (4) Is designed to carry not more than six persons, including the driver;
  - (5) Has a maximum gross vehicle weight of 2,500 pounds;
  - (6) Has a maximum rated payload capacity of 1,200 pounds; ~~and~~
  - (7) **Has a seatbelt assembly that conforms to the federal motor vehicle safety standard provided in 49 C.F.R. sec. 571.209 for each designated seating position; and**
- (8) Meets the federal motor vehicle safety standards for low-speed vehicles set forth in 49 C.F.R. § 571.500.

LOW-SPEED VEHICLE. A motor vehicle that:

- (1) Is self-propelled using an electric motor, combustion-driven motor or a combination thereof;
- (2) Is four-wheeled;
- (3) Is designed to operate at a speed not to exceed 25 mph as certified by the manufacturer;
- (4) The vehicle meets the federal motor vehicle safety standards for low-speed vehicles set forth in 49 C.F.R. ~~[part]~~ **571.500**~~[65]~~;
- (5) The vehicle displays a 17-character vehicle identification number that meets the requirements set forth in 49 C.F.R. 565; and
- (6) The low-speed vehicle has not been modified to increase its speed above its original standard manufactured limit.

MOPED. Either a motorized bicycle, whose frame design may include one or more horizontal crossbars supporting a fuel tank so long as it also has pedals, or a motorized bicycle with a step-through type frame which may or may not have pedals rate no more than two brake horsepower, a cylinder capacity not exceeding 50 cubic centimeters, an automatic transmission not requiring clutching or shifting by the operator after the drive system is engaged and capable of a maximum speed of not more than 30 mph.

MOTORCYCLE.

- (1) Any motor driven vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the operator and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, but excluding tractors and vehicles on which the operator and passengers ride in an enclosed cab; and

(2) Motorized scooters with a cylinder capacity exceeding 50 cubic centimeters or that are capable of operating a maximum speed of more than 30 mph are classified as MOTORCYCLES for purposes of this chapter.

MOTORIZED SCOOTER. A vehicle with two wheels that are no more than ten inches in diameter, has handlebars, is propelled by a gas or electric motor and is designed to be stood or sat upon by the operator.

OPERATOR. Any person in actual control of a bicycle, foot scooter, moped, motorized scooter or motorcycle upon a highway.

**STREET-LEGAL SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE. An all-terrain vehicle, utility terrain vehicle, minitruck, pneumatic-tired military vehicle, or full-size special purpose-built vehicle, including a vehicle that is self-constructed or built by the original equipment manufacturer and a vehicle that has been modified, as defined in KRS 186.**

UTILITY VEHICLE. A vehicle designed and manufactured for general maintenance, security and landscaping purposes, but does not include any vehicle designed or used primarily for the transportation of persons or property on a street or highway, a golf cart or an all-terrain vehicle, as defined in KRS 189.010.

(1984 Code, § 74.01) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004; Ord. O-25-17, passed 10-24-2017; Ord. O-32-18, passed 8-28-2018)

§ 73.02 PASSENGERS ON MOTORCYCLES, MOPEDES, MOTORIZED SCOOTERS OR BICYCLES PROHIBITED; EXCEPTION.

A person operating a motorcycle, moped, motorized scooter or bicycle shall ride only upon the permanent and regular seat attached thereto, and the operator shall not carry any other person nor shall any other person ride on such motorcycle, moped, motorized scooter or bicycle unless the vehicle is designed to carry more than one person, in which event a passenger may ride upon the permanent and regular seat if designed for two persons, or upon another seat firmly attached to the rear or side of the operator.

(1984 Code, § 74.02) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### MOTORCYCLES, MOTORIZED SCOOTERS AND MOPEDES

§ 73.15 OPERATORS MUST BE AT LEAST 16 YEARS OF AGE.

All persons operating motorcycles, ***motorized scooters*** or mopeds must be at least 16 years of age to operate such vehicles on the highway.

(1984 Code, § 74.03) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

§ 73.16 DRIVING ON SIDEWALK PROHIBITED.

No person shall drive a motorcycle, motorized scooter or moped upon any sidewalks of the city.

(1984 Code, § 74.04) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

§ 73.17 OPERATOR'S LICENSE REQUIRED.

(A) Every person must secure a moped operator's license issued by the state's Transportation Cabinet before operating a moped upon a highway.

(B) Every person must secure a motorcycle operator's license issued by the state's Transportation Cabinet before operating a motorcycle upon a highway.

(C) The operator of a moped or motorcycle shall have his or her license in his or her immediate possession at all times when driving a moped or motorcycle and shall display it upon demand to any officer of the city's Police Department.

(D) Persons whose motor vehicle operator's license (driver's license) has been suspended or revoked are prohibited from operating a moped or motorcycle upon a highway.

(1984 Code, § 74.04) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

Statutory reference:

Operator's license required by Kentucky law, see KRS 186.410 and 186.510

§ 73.18 INSURANCE REQUIRED FOR MOTORCYCLES.

(A) All owners of motorcycles that are operated in the city must purchase the required insurance coverage pursuant to KRS 304.39-010 through 304.39-110.

(B) The operator of a motorcycle shall have proof of insurance in his or her immediate possession at all times when driving a motorcycle and shall display it upon demand to any officer of the city's Police Department.

(1984 Code, § 74.06) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

Statutory reference:

Insurance required by Kentucky law, see KRS 304.39-010 through 304.39-340

§ 73.19 REGISTRATION OF MOTORCYCLE REQUIRED.

Before the owner of a motorcycle may operate it or permit its operation upon a highway, the owner must register the motorcycle in accordance with regulations issued by the state's Transportation Cabinet.

(1984 Code, § 74.07) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

Statutory reference:

Registration of motor vehicles required, see KRS 186.020

§ 73.20 MOTORCYCLE, MOTORIZED SCOOTER AND MOPED OPERATORS TO OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS.

Every person operating a motorcycle, motorized scooter or moped upon a highway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties imposed by the traffic laws of the state or by the traffic ordinances of the city.

(1984 Code, § 74.08) (Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004)

**§ 73.21 PERMITTED AREAS OF USE FOR MOTORIZED SCOOTERS**

**Motorized Scooters, as defined in § 73.01 of this chapter, may be operated on any city roadway, provided the following conditions are met:**

**(1) The posted speed limit of the city roadway is 20 mph or less;**

**(2) The operator of the Motorized Scooter does not cross a roadway at an at-grade intersection where the roadway being crossed has a posted speed limit of more than 35 mph unless the intersection is equipped with an electronic traffic signal; and**

**(3) The operator and vehicle being operated comply with all other applicable provisions of the city, state and United States' laws.**

BICYCLES, MOTORIZED SCOOTERS  
AND FOOT SCOOTERS

§ 73.35 EFFECT OF REGULATIONS.

(A) It is a misdemeanor for any person to do any act forbidden or fail to perform any act required in this subchapter.

(B) The parent of any child and the guardian of any ward shall not authorize or knowingly permit any such child or ward to violate any of the provisions of this subchapter.

(C) These regulations applicable to bicycles, motorized scooters and foot scooters and shall apply whenever a bicycle, motorized scooter or foot scooter is operated upon any highway or upon any path set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles and/or scooters, subject to those exceptions stated herein.

(1984 Code, § 74.10) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### § 73.36 BICYCLE DEALERS.

Every person engaged in the business of buying or selling new or secondhand bicycles shall make a report to the Chief of Police of every bicycle purchased or sold by such dealer, giving the name and address of the person from whom purchased or to whom sold, a description of such bicycle by name or make, the frame number thereof and the number of license plate, if any, found thereon.

(1984 Code, § 74.11) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967)

#### § 73.37 BICYCLE RIDERS TO OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS.

Every person riding a bicycle or motorized scooter upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a motor vehicle by the laws of the state declaring rules of the road applicable to vehicles or by the traffic ordinances of the city applicable to the driver of a motor vehicle, except, as to special regulations in this section, and, except as to those provisions of laws and ordinances which, by their nature, can have no application.

(1984 Code, § 74.12) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004)

#### § 73.38 OBEDIENCE TO TRAFFIC-CONTROL DEVICES.

(A) Any person operating a bicycle or motorized scooter 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 or motorized scooter shall disobey the direction of any such signs, except where such person dismounts from the bicycle or motorized scooter to make any such turn, in which event such person shall then obey the regulations applicable to pedestrians.

(1984 Code, § 74.13) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

### § 73.39 RIDING ON ROADWAYS AND BICYCLE PATHS.

Every person operating a bicycle or a motorized scooter (other than those defined as motorcycles) upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction. Persons riding bicycles or motorized scooters 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. Wherever a usable path for bicycles or scooters has been provided adjacent to a roadway, bicycle riders or scooter operators shall use such path and shall not use the roadway.

(1984 Code, § 74.14) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

### § 73.40 SPEED OF BICYCLES[ ~~OR MOTORIZED SCOOTERS~~].

No person shall operate a bicycle [~~or motorized scooter~~] at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions then existing.

(1984 Code, § 74.15) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

### § 73.41 EMERGING FROM ALLEY OR DRIVEWAY.

The operator of a bicycle or motorized scooter emerging from an alley, driveway or building shall, upon approaching a sidewalk or the sidewalk area extending across any alleyway, yield the right-of-way to all 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.

(1984 Code, § 74.16) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

### § 73.42 CARRYING ARTICLES.

No person operating a bicycle or motorized scooter shall carry any package, bundle or article which prevents the rider from keeping at least one hand upon the handle bars.

(1984 Code, § 74.17) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### § 73.43 PARKING OF BICYCLES AND MOTORIZED SCOOTERS.

No person shall park a bicycle or motorized scooter upon a street other than upon the roadway against the curb or upon the sidewalk in a rack to support the bicycle or against a building or at the curb, in such a manner as to afford the least obstruction to pedestrian traffic.

(1984 Code, § 74.18) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### § 73.44 RIDING OR DRIVING ON SIDEWALKS.

(A) Persons may operate a foot scooter on city sidewalks.

(B) No person shall ride a bicycle upon a public sidewalk within any area zoned for commercial use.

(C) No person shall operate a motorized scooter on city sidewalks. However, this prohibition shall not apply to motorized wheelchairs, electric personal assistance mobility devices or any city police, fire or public works vehicle driven by an employee in the course of his or her duties.

(D) The Chief of Police is authorized to erect signs on any sidewalk or roadway prohibiting the riding of bicycles, foot scooters or motorized scooters thereon and, when such signs are in place, no person shall disobey them.

(E) Whenever any person is riding a bicycle or foot scooter upon a sidewalk, such person shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give audible signal before overtaking and passing such pedestrian.

(1984 Code, § 74.19) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### § 73.45 LAMPS, EQUIPMENT ON BICYCLES.

(A) Every bicycle, foot scooter or motorized scooter, when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with a lamp in 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 on the rear of a type which shall be visible from all distances from 50 feet to 300 feet to the rear when directly in front of lawful upper beams of headlamps on 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.

(B) No person shall operate a bicycle or motorized scooter, unless it is equipped with a bell or other device capable of giving a signal audible for a distance of at least 100 feet; except that, a bicycle or motorized scooter shall not be equipped with, nor shall any person use upon a bicycle or motorized scooter, any siren or whistle.

(C) Every bicycle and motorized scooter shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

(1984 Code, § 74.20) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### § 73.46 HELMETS REQUIRED WHEN RIDING BICYCLES.

(A) Every person operating or riding a bicycle in a park or on the Licking River Greenway Trail located in the city shall wear a protective helmet of good fit, fastened securely and meeting American National Standards Institute standards, or Snell Memorial Foundation standards, or standards adopted by the Federal Government.

(B) No person operating a bicycle in a park or on the Licking River Greenway Trail located in the city shall allow anyone to ride as a passenger unless the passenger is wearing a helmet.

(C) A parent or guardian of a minor shall be responsible for requiring that the parent or guardian's minor children wear protective helmets when they operate or ride a bicycle in a park or on the Licking River Greenway Trail in the city.

(1984 Code, § 74.21) (Ord. O-4-11, passed 3-22-2011) Penalty, see § 73.99

#### LOW-SPEED VEHICLES, GOLF CARTS, **STREET-LEGAL SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES** AND UTILITY VEHICLES

#### **§ 73.60 EFFECT OF REGULATIONS.**

**(A) It is a misdemeanor for any person to do any act forbidden or fail to perform any act required in this subchapter.**

**(B) The parent of any child and the guardian of any ward shall not authorize or knowingly permit any such child or ward to violate any of the provisions of this subchapter.**

**(C) These regulations applicable to Low-speed Vehicles, Golf Carts and Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicles shall apply whenever a Low-speed Vehicle, Golf Cart or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle is operated upon any city street or highway.**

§ 73.61[~~0~~] OPERATION OF LOW-SPEED VEHICLES, GOLF CARTS, **STREET-LEGAL SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES** AND UTILITY VEHICLES ON PUBLIC ROADWAYS.

(A) No [~~f~~]Low-speed [~~v~~]Vehicle, **Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle** [~~unless operated pursuant to division (B) below~~], [~~g~~]Golf [~~e~~]Cart, **unless operated pursuant to division (B) below**, or [~~u~~]Utility [~~v~~]Vehicle may be operated or driven on any public roadway, street or highway within the city.

(B) Low-speed [~~v~~]Vehicles, **Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicles and Golf Carts**, as defined in § 73.01 of this chapter, may be operated on city roadways between the borders of the Ohio River, Licking River, up to and including 12th Street/MLK Boulevard/**West 12th Street/Montague Road** and **Sleepy Hollow Road** [~~Philadelphia Street~~], **including all City streets in Devou Park**; provided[~~5~~] the following conditions are met:

(1) The posted speed limit of the city roadway is [~~35~~] **20** mph or less, **unless the vehicle qualifies as a Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle, in which case it shall be permitted to operate on city roadways where the posted speed limit is 35 mph or less**;

(2) The operator of the [~~f~~]Low-speed [~~v~~]Vehicle, **Golf Cart or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle** does not cross a roadway at an at-grade intersection where the roadway being crossed has a posted speed limit of more than 35 mph unless the intersection is equipped with an electronic traffic signal;

(3) The operator has a valid operator's license in his or her **immediate possession at all times when driving a Low-Speed Vehicle, Street-Legal Special Purpose Vehicle, or Golf Cart and shall display it upon demand to any officer of the city's Police Department**; [~~and~~]

(4) **Persons whose motor vehicle operator's license (driver's license) has been suspended or revoked are prohibited from operating a Low-Speed Vehicle, Street-Legal Special Purpose Vehicle, or Golf Cart on city streets and highways; and**

(~~4~~)5) The operator and vehicle being operated comply with all other applicable provisions of the city, **state** and United States' laws.

(1984 Code, § 74.30) (Ord. O-25-17, passed 10-24-2017; Ord. O-32-18, passed 8-28-2018) Penalty, see § 73.99

**§ 73.62 INSURANCE REQUIRED FOR LOW-SPEED VEHICLES, GOLF CARTS, STREET-LEGAL SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES.**

**(A) All owners of Low-speed Vehicles, Golf Carts or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicles that are operated in the city must purchase the required insurance coverage pursuant to KRS 304.39-010 through 304.39-110.**

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**(B) The operator of a Low-speed Vehicle, Golf Cart or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle shall have proof of insurance in his or her immediate possession at all times when driving the vehicle and shall display it upon demand to any officer of the city's Police Department.**

**Penalty, see § 73.99**

**Statutory reference:**

**Insurance required by Kentucky law, see KRS 304.39-010 through 304.39-340**

**§ 73.63 REGISTRATION OF FOR LOW-SPEED VEHICLES, GOLF CARTS AND STREET-LEGAL SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES REQUIRED.**

**(A) Before the owner of a Low-speed Vehicle, Golf Cart or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle may operate it or permit its operation upon city streets and highways, the owner must register the Low-speed Vehicle, Golf Cart or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle in accordance with regulations issued by the state's Transportation Cabinet.**

**Penalty, see § 73.99**

**Statutory reference:**

**Registration of motor vehicles required, see KRS 186.020**

**§ 73.64 LOW-SPEED VEHICLE, GOLF CART AND STREET-LEGAL SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE OPERATORS TO OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS.**

**Every person operating a Low-speed Vehicle, Golf Cart or Street-legal Special Purpose Vehicle upon a city street or highway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties imposed by the traffic laws of the state or by the traffic ordinances of the city.**

**§ 73.99 PENALTY.**

(A) Whoever violates §§ 73.60~~[01]~~ ~~[0F]~~**through** 73.64~~[0]~~ of this chapter shall be deemed guilty of a violation and shall be fined not less than \$20, nor more than \$250.

(B) Whoever violates §§ 73.02, 73.15 through 73.20 and 73.35 through 73.45 of this chapter shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined not less than \$5, nor more than \$250, or imprisoned not more than 60 days in the county jail, or both so fined and imprisoned.

(C) Whoever violates § 73.46 of this chapter shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor and shall be fined not less than \$5, nor more than \$100.

(1984 Code, § 74.99) (Ord. O-34-67, passed 5-25-1967; Ord. O-10-81, passed 3-10-1981; Ord. O-69-85, passed 9-24-1985; Ord. O-13-94, passed 4-12-1994; Ord. O-60-04, passed 10-12-2004; Ord. O-4-11, passed 3-22-2011; Ord. O-25-17, passed 10-24-2017)

Section 2

The provisions of this chapter are severable. If any section, clause, sentence, part, or provision of this chapter shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of the court shall not affect, impair, or invalidate any of the remaining sections, clauses, sentences, parts or provisions of this chapter. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board of Commissioners that this chapter would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional section, clause, sentence, part, or provision had not been included herein.

Section 3

That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force upon its passage, approval, and publication as required by law.

  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
CITY CLERK

Passed: April 22, 2025 (Second Reading)

April 8, 2025 (First Reading)