

Spotlight on Motorcycle Safety

Riding a motorcycle is a way of life for many people. Ask any of them why, and the answer will likely be — Freedom.

This is why PennDOT started the Live Free, Ride Alive initiative to draw focus on motorcycle safety.

Registered motorcycles in Pennsylvania numbered 401,439 in 2015. There were also 860,600 licensed motorcyclists in the state

that same year.

In Pennsylvania, teens as young as 16 may apply for a motorcycle permit, and, after meeting certain requirements, earn a motorcycle driver's license.

This edition of The Road Ahead newsletter addresses the safety concerns for motorcyclists and vehicle drivers as they share the road.



It also explains the options available through PennDOT's free motorcycle riders' courses.

Tune-up Skills, Safety Knowledge Before Hitting the Open Road

In 2015, there were 3,413 crashes involving motorcycles in Pennsylvania. Those resulted in 179 fatalities.

Of the fatal crashes, 28 percent involved a motorcycle rider who was impaired by alcohol, and 49 percent were speed related. In 31 percent of fatal motorcycle crashes, police determined the motorcycle rider did not contribute to the crash.

PennDOT's comprehensive motorcycle safety campaign, **Live Free Ride Alive**, is an effort to reduce the number of motorcycle crashes and fatalities on Pennsylvania's roadways. The campaign's website, **LiveFreeRideAlive.com**, contains important safety messages for motorcycles.

Among the tips offered are the following:

- **Be seen** by wearing reflective clothing and putting reflective tape on your protective clothing and motorcycle. Also wear face or eye protection and a DOT-approved helmet.
- **Use common sense** by riding sober, obeying all speed limits and allowing enough time to react to potentially dangerous situations.
- **Know your motorcycle** and conduct a pre-ride check.
- **Practice safe riding techniques** and know how to handle your motorcycle in adverse road and weather conditions.
- **Avoid unsafe riding behaviors** like speeding, alcohol or drug impairment and aggressive driving.



From Beginners to Lifetime Riders — Classes Offer Something for Everyone

The Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program (PAMSP) was established to teach riders of all skill levels the basic fundamentals needed to reduce risk while operating a motorcycle. The PAMSP was created from legislation in 1984 and began operation one year later.

To date, over 460,000 people have taken the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program.

The PAMSP has approximately 70 training sites statewide. To locate the site nearest, go online to www.pamsp.com or call 1-800-845-9533.

So, what classes are offered through the free program?

The **Basic Rider Course (BRC)** covers topics such as protective gear, basic riding skills, shifting, stopping, swerving, turning, and mental skills for hazard avoidance. This course lasts 15 hours, usually on multiple days.



The **Basic Rider Course 2 (BRC2)** covers skills in cornering, braking and swerving are enhanced. This six-hour course designed for riders who already have experience riding a motorcycle.

The **3-Wheel Basic Rider Course (3WBRC)** covers riding skills and safety strategies similar to what is provided in the BRC except on a three-wheel motorcycle. This is a 12-hour course.

The **Advanced Rider Course** is a one-day course for experienced riders who desire to learn and practice more in-depth riding techniques, like time and space management to reduce crash risks.

Some insurance companies offer a deduction on premiums to individuals who successfully complete the course. For details, contact your insurance agent.

Motorists Should Look Twice, Save a Life

Motorists share a responsibility in helping motorcyclists stay safe on the roadways.

Drivers should practice the following behaviors to help ensure everyone is sharing the road safely:

- **Watch for Motorcycles** and be aware that motorcycles are small and may be difficult to see. Check mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes and at intersections.
- **Allow more following distance** and leave at least four seconds when following a motorcycle.
- **Always signal your intentions** before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- **Respect a motorcycle** as a full-size vehicle with the same rights and privileges as any vehicle on the roadway.
- **Never drive impaired.**