

Chapter 583

(House Bill 1283)

AN ACT concerning

Charles County – Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles – Regulation and Enforcement

FOR the purpose of authorizing Charles County to regulate the operation of off-highway recreational vehicles in the county and to impound an off-highway recreational vehicle that is the subject of certain alleged motor vehicle violations; and generally relating to off-highway recreational vehicles in Charles County.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Transportation
Section 25–102(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2020 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Transportation

25–102.

(a) The provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law do not prevent a local authority, in the reasonable exercise of its police power, from exercising the following powers as to highways under its jurisdiction:

- (1) Subject to the provisions of § 21–1003.1 of this article, regulating or prohibiting the stopping, standing, or parking of vehicles;
- (2) Regulating traffic by means of police officers or traffic control devices;
- (3) Regulating or prohibiting processions or assemblies on highways;
- (4) Designating particular highways or separate roadways as one-way highways and requiring that all vehicles on them move in one specified direction;
- (5) Regulating the speed and weight of vehicles in public parks;
- (6) Designating any highway as a through highway or designating any intersection as a stop intersection or a yield intersection;
- (7) Restricting the use of highways as provided in Title 24 of this article;

(8) Regulating the operation of bicycles, requiring them to be registered, and imposing a registration fee;

(9) Regulating or prohibiting the turning of vehicles or specified types of vehicles at intersections;

(10) Altering speed limits as provided in Title 21, Subtitle 8 of this article;

(11) Regulating through truck traffic and prohibiting trucks from using any highway or alley that is not designated or maintained as a part or extension of the State or federal highway system, provided the local authority has designated an adequate alternate route for diverted truck traffic;

(12) Adopting any other traffic regulations as specifically authorized in the Maryland Vehicle Law;

(13) Regulating taxi stands, including taxi stands in the middle of a block;

(14) (i) In this paragraph, “all-terrain vehicle” includes an off-highway motorcycle.

(ii) 1. Subject to item 2 of this item, except in Allegany County and Garrett County, designating a certain portion of highways upon which snowmobiles may travel for the sole purpose of gaining access to snowmobile trails; but

2. Designating only those highways which divide snowmobile trails and which would otherwise obstruct direct access between snowmobile trails; and

(iii) In Allegany County and Garrett County:

1. Authorizing a person to:

A. Cross a highway on an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile at a right angle at a speed of not more than 25 miles per hour; or

B. Operate an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile on not more than 5 miles of highway at a speed of not more than 25 miles per hour; and

2. Designating a certain portion of highways upon which all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles may travel at a speed of not more than 25 miles per hour for the sole purpose of gaining access to:

A. Trails on which the operation of an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile is authorized;

B. Fields; or

C. Another area where the operation of an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile is authorized;

(15) Requiring a motorized minibike to be permitted by the local authority, and imposing a permit fee;

(16) In Allegany County, designating crossings on county highways where a person operating a golf cart may cross the highway for continued access to any portion of a golf course;

(17) Restricting use of a low speed vehicle on a highway;

(18) Authorizing an emergency vehicle not subject to registration to operate on a highway while performing an emergency service as defined in § 19-103 of this article; [and]

(19) Authorizing a person to cross a highway on an all-terrain vehicle at a right angle to access a farm or to move from one part of a farm to another part of the same farm; AND

(20) IN CHARLES COUNTY:

(I) REGULATING THE OPERATION OF OFF-HIGHWAY RECREATIONAL VEHICLES;

(II) REQUIRING OFF-HIGHWAY RECREATIONAL VEHICLES TO BE REGISTERED BY THE COUNTY AND IMPOSING A REGISTRATION FEE;

(III) IMPOSING AGE RESTRICTIONS ON THE OPERATION OF OFF-HIGHWAY RECREATIONAL VEHICLES; AND

(IV) AUTHORIZING THE IMPOUNDMENT OF AN OFF-HIGHWAY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF:

1. TITLE 21, SUBTITLE 9 OF THIS ARTICLE;

2. § 6-404 OF THE CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE; OR

3. § 6-405 OF THE CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor, May 13, 2025.