

169.18 DRIVING RULES.

Subdivision 1. **Keep to the right.** Upon all roadways of sufficient width a vehicle shall be driven upon the right half of the roadway, except as follows:

- (1) when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction under the rules governing such movement;
- (2) when the right half of a roadway is closed to traffic while under construction or repair;
- (3) upon a roadway divided into three marked lanes for traffic under the rules applicable thereon;
- (4) upon a roadway designated and signposted for one-way traffic as a one-way roadway; or
- (5) as necessary to comply with subdivision 11 when approaching an authorized vehicle parked or stopped on the roadway.

Subd. 2. **Meeting.** Drivers of vehicles proceeding in opposite directions, shall pass each other to the right, and upon roadways having width for not more than one line of traffic in each direction each driver shall give to the other at least one-half of the main-traveled portion of the roadway, as nearly as possible.

Subd. 3. **Passing.** The following rules shall govern the overtaking and passing of vehicles proceeding in the same direction, subject to the limitations, exceptions, and special rules hereinafter stated:

- (1) the driver of a vehicle overtaking another vehicle proceeding in the same direction shall pass to the left thereof at a safe distance and shall not again drive to the right side of the roadway until safely clear of the overtaken vehicle;
- (2) except when overtaking and passing on the right is permitted, the driver of an overtaken vehicle shall give way to the right in favor of the overtaking vehicle on audible warning, and shall not increase the speed of the overtaken vehicle until completely passed by the overtaking vehicle; and
- (3) the operator of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle or individual proceeding in the same direction on the roadway shall leave a safe distance, but in no case less than three feet clearance, when passing the bicycle or individual and shall maintain clearance until safely past the overtaken bicycle or individual.

Subd. 4. **Passing on the right.** The driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass upon the right of another vehicle only upon the following conditions:

- (1) when the vehicle overtaken is making or about to make a left turn;
- (2) upon a street or highway with unobstructed pavement not occupied by parked vehicles of sufficient width for two or more lines of moving vehicles in each direction;
- (3) upon a one-way street, or upon any roadway on which traffic is restricted to one direction of movement, where the roadway is free from obstructions and of sufficient width for two or more lines of moving vehicles;
- (4) when the driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass another vehicle upon the right only under conditions permitting such movement in safety. In no event shall such movement be made by driving in a bicycle lane or onto the shoulder, whether paved or unpaved, or off the pavement or main-traveled portion of the roadway.

Subd. 5. Driving left of roadway center; exception. (a) No vehicle shall be driven to the left side of the center of the roadway in overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction unless such left side is clearly visible and is free of oncoming traffic for a sufficient distance ahead to permit such overtaking and passing to be completely made without interfering with the safe operation of any vehicle approaching from the opposite direction or any vehicle overtaken. In every event the overtaking vehicle must return to the right-hand side of the roadway before coming within 100 feet of any vehicle approaching from the opposite direction.

(b) Except on a one-way roadway, no vehicle shall, in overtaking and passing another vehicle or at any other time, be driven to the left half of the roadway under the following conditions:

(1) when approaching the crest of a grade or upon a curve in the highway where the driver's view along the highway is obstructed within a distance of 700 feet;

(2) when approaching within 100 feet of any underpass or tunnel, railroad grade crossing, intersection within a city, or intersection outside of a city if the presence of the intersection is marked by warning signs; or

(3) where official signs are in place prohibiting passing, or a distinctive centerline is marked, which distinctive line also so prohibits passing, as declared in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices adopted by the commissioner.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraph (b), clause (3), a motor vehicle may be driven to the left side of the roadway to safely overtake a bicycle under the following circumstances:

(1) the bicycle is proceeding in the same direction as the motor vehicle;

(2) the driver of the motor vehicle either (i) provides a safe clearance distance, in no case less than the greater of three feet or one-half the width of the motor vehicle, or (ii) completely enters the left lane of the highway;

(3) the operator of the bicycle is not (i) making a left turn, or (ii) signaling that the bicycle operator intends to make a left turn; and

(4) the driver of the motor vehicle complies with all other applicable requirements under this section.

Subd. 6. One-way traffic. (a) Upon a roadway designated and signposted for one-way traffic as a one-way roadway, a vehicle shall be driven only in the direction designated.

(b) A vehicle passing around a rotary traffic island shall be driven only to the right of such island.

Subd. 7. Laned highway. When any roadway has been divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for traffic, the following rules, in addition to all others consistent with this subdivision, apply:

(1) a vehicle shall be driven as nearly as practicable entirely within a single lane and shall not be moved from the lane until the driver has first ascertained that the movement can be made with safety;

(2) upon a roadway which is not a one-way roadway and which is divided into three lanes, a vehicle shall not be driven in the center lane except when overtaking and passing another vehicle where the roadway is clearly visible and the center lane is clear of traffic within a safe distance, or in preparation for a left turn or where the center lane is at the time allocated exclusively to traffic moving in the direction the vehicle is proceeding, and is signposted to give notice of the allocation. The left lane of a three-lane roadway which is not a one-way roadway shall not be used for overtaking and passing another vehicle;

(3) official signs may be erected directing slow-moving traffic to use a designated lane or allocating specified lanes to traffic moving in the same direction, and drivers of vehicles shall obey the sign;

(4) whenever a bicycle lane has been established on a roadway, any person operating a motor vehicle on the roadway shall not drive in the bicycle lane except to perform parking maneuvers in order to park where parking is permitted, to enter or leave the highway, to prepare for a turn as provided in section 169.19, subdivision 1, or to stop a school bus for the purpose of receiving or discharging any person provided the school bus is equipped and identified as provided in sections 169.441 and 169.442, subdivision 1, and the flashing red signals are activated and stop-signal arm is extended; and

(5) notwithstanding clause (1), the operator of a vehicle with a total length in excess of 40 feet, a total width in excess of ten feet, or any combination of vehicles may, with due regard for all other traffic, deviate from the lane in which the operator is driving to the extent necessary to approach and drive through a roundabout.

Subd. 8. Following vehicle too closely. (a) The driver of a motor vehicle shall not follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, having due regard for the speed of such vehicles and the traffic upon and the conditions of the highway.

(b) The driver of any motor vehicle drawing another vehicle, or the driver of any motor truck or bus, when traveling upon a roadway outside of a business or residence district, shall not follow within 500 feet of another vehicle. The provisions of this paragraph shall not be construed to prevent overtaking and passing nor shall the same apply upon any lane specially designated for use by motor trucks. This paragraph does not apply to following vehicles in a vehicle platoon if the operator has an approved plan in compliance with section 169.881.

(c) The driver of a motor vehicle shall not follow within 500 feet of an authorized emergency vehicle that is traveling in response to an emergency.

Subd. 9. Divided highway; crossovers. Whenever any highway has been divided into two or more roadways by leaving an intervening space or by a physical barrier or clearly indicated dividing section so constructed as to impede vehicular traffic, every vehicle shall be driven only upon the right-hand roadway unless directed or permitted to use another roadway by official traffic-control devices or police officers. No vehicle shall be driven over, across, or within any such dividing space, barrier section, except through an opening in such physical barrier, or dividing section or space or at a crossover or intersection established by public authority.

Subd. 10. Slower vehicles. (a) Upon a roadway with one lane in the direction of travel, a person proceeding at a speed that is sufficiently low as to create a traffic hazard, including when operating an animal-drawn vehicle upon a roadway or shoulder of a roadway, must operate the vehicle as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.

(b) Upon a roadway with more than one lane in the same direction of travel, a person must move out of the left-most lane to allow another vehicle to pass, when practicable under existing conditions. A left-most lane under this paragraph is the lane adjacent to one designated and posted for a specific type of traffic, including as provided under section 160.93. This paragraph does not apply when:

- (1) overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction;
- (2) preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway;
- (3) preparing to exit a controlled-access highway on the left side of the road;

- (4) the lane is designated and posted for a specific type of traffic; or
- (5) the vehicle is an authorized emergency vehicle.

Subd. 11. **Passing parked authorized vehicle; citation; probable cause.** (a) For purposes of this subdivision, "authorized vehicle" means an authorized emergency vehicle, as defined under section 169.011, subdivision 3; a tow truck or towing vehicle, as defined under section 168B.011, subdivision 12a; a freeway service patrol vehicle; a road maintenance vehicle; a utility company vehicle; a construction vehicle; a postal service vehicle; a solid waste vehicle; or a recycling vehicle.

(b) When approaching and before passing an authorized vehicle with its emergency, flashing, or warning lights activated that is parked or otherwise stopped on or next to a street or highway having two lanes in the same direction, the driver of a vehicle must safely move the vehicle to the lane farthest away from the authorized vehicle, if it is possible to do so.

(c) When approaching and before passing an authorized vehicle with its emergency, flashing, or warning lights activated that is parked or otherwise stopped on or next to a street or highway having more than two lanes in the same direction, the driver of a vehicle must safely move the vehicle so as to leave a full lane vacant between the driver and any lane in which the authorized vehicle is completely or partially parked or otherwise stopped, if it is possible to do so.

(d) If a lane change under paragraph (b) or (c) is impossible, or when approaching and before passing an authorized vehicle with its emergency, flashing, or warning lights activated that is parked or otherwise stopped on or next to a street or highway having only one lane in the same direction, the driver of a vehicle must reduce the speed of the motor vehicle to a speed that is reasonable and prudent under the conditions until the motor vehicle has completely passed the parked or stopped authorized vehicle, if it is possible to do so.

(e) A peace officer may issue a citation to the driver of a motor vehicle if the peace officer has probable cause to believe that the driver has operated the vehicle in violation of this subdivision within the four-hour period following the termination of the incident or a receipt of a report under paragraph (f). The citation may be issued even though the violation was not committed in the presence of the peace officer.

(f) Although probable cause may be otherwise satisfied by other evidentiary elements or factors, probable cause is sufficient for purposes of this subdivision when the person cited is operating the vehicle described by a member of the crew of an authorized emergency vehicle or a towing vehicle as defined in section 168B.011, subdivision 12a, responding to an incident in a timely report of the violation of this subdivision, which includes a description of the vehicle used to commit the offense and the vehicle's license plate number. For the purposes of issuance of a citation under paragraph (e), "timely" means that the report must be made within a four-hour period following the termination of the incident.

Subd. 11a. **Passing stalled or disabled vehicle.** (a) For purposes of this subdivision, "stalled vehicle" means any motor vehicle that is disabled, parked, inoperable, or otherwise stopped on or next to a street or highway.

(b) When approaching and before passing a stalled vehicle with either its hazard lights activated or people visibly present outside the vehicle on or next to a street or highway having two lanes in the same direction, the driver of a vehicle must, if it is possible to do so, safely move the vehicle to the lane farthest away from the stalled vehicle.

(c) When approaching and before passing a stalled vehicle with either its hazard lights activated or people visibly present outside the vehicle on or next to a street having two or more lanes in the same direction,

the driver of a vehicle must, if it is possible to do so, safely move the vehicle so as to leave a full lane vacant between the driver and any lane in which the stalled vehicle is completely or partially parked or otherwise stopped.

(d) If a lane change under paragraph (b) or (c) is impossible when approaching and before passing a stalled vehicle with either its hazard lights activated or people visibly present outside the vehicle on or next to a street or highway having only one lane in the same direction, the driver of a vehicle must reduce the speed of the motor vehicle to a speed that is reasonable and prudent under the conditions until the motor vehicle has completely passed the stalled vehicle, if it is possible to do so.

Subd. 12. MS 2018 [Repealed, 2019 c 18 s 5]

Subd. 13. **Impeding motorcycle.** An operator of a motor vehicle must not intentionally impede or attempt to prevent the operation of a motorcycle when the motorcycle is operated under the conditions specified in section 169.974, subdivision 5, paragraph (g).

History: (2720-182, 2720-183, 2720-184, 2720-185, 2720-186, 2720-187, 2720-188, 2720-189) 1937 c 464 s 32-39; 1939 c 430 s 7; 1947 c 428 s 15; 1951 c 363 s 1; 1959 c 521 s 2; 1963 c 357 s 5; 1963 c 627 s 1; 1971 c 138 s 1; 1973 c 123 art 5 s 7; 1978 c 739 s 7; 1986 c 444; 1993 c 26 s 2,3; 1993 c 187 s 4; 1995 c 72 s 1; 1996 c 456 s 20; 1Sp2001 c 8 art 2 s 42,43; 2005 c 120 s 2; 1Sp2005 c 6 art 3 s 43-45; 2006 c 212 art 1 s 9; 2008 c 350 art 1 s 30-32; 2009 c 86 art 1 s 27; 2012 c 287 art 3 s 64; 2013 c 127 s 28,29; 2015 c 75 art 2 s 21; 1Sp2017 c 3 art 3 s 49,50; 2018 c 159 s 1,2; 2019 c 18 s 3; 1Sp2019 c 3 art 3 s 36-39; 2020 c 83 art 1 s 53; 1Sp2021 c 5 art 4 s 56; 2023 c 68 art 4 s 45,46; 2024 c 127 art 3 s 53