

PENNSYLVANIA'S MOTORCYCLE HELMET LAW

FACT SHEET

Pennsylvania Law requires that any person who operates or rides a motorcycle must wear protective headgear unless he or she is over 21 years of age or older and has either two years of riding experience or has completed a motorcycle safety course approved by PennDOT or the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. In addition, the operator or an occupant of a three-wheeled motorcycle equipped with an enclosed cab is exempt from wearing a helmet. In response to this law the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation developed regulations for the minimum performance requirements for helmets designed for use by motorcyclists. Additionally, the regulations specify how the helmet shall be labeled to help identify a helmet that meets both the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS 218) and Pennsylvania regulations (Title 67, Chapter 107) for helmets.

Q: How do I comply with the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Helmet Law?

A: To comply with the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Helmet Law, motorcycle helmets must meet the standards approved by the United States Department of Transportation. This is indicated by the "DOT" sticker on the helmet. The helmet must be permanently labeled with the following information:

- Name or identification of manufacturer
- Precise model designation
- Size
- Month and year the helmet was manufactured
- The "DOT" sticker can be centered on the back of the outer shell of the helmet. Only the "DOT" sticker is required on the outside of the helmet. The remaining information must be legibly labeled so it can be read without removing padding or any other permanent part of the helmet.

Q: Is there a requirement for protective eye wear?

A: Yes. In addition to wearing a helmet it is important to protect your eyes from the wind, bugs, rocks, or any other flying objects that may impair your ability to see while operating a motorcycle. While any type of protective eye wear will keep you in compliance with the law, it is highly recommended that you wear shatter-proof eye protection.

Q: Will a helmet limit vision?

A: No. All helmets provide a field of vision of at least 210 degrees. This is well above Pennsylvania's 120 degrees required for licensure, even though Pennsylvania's field of vision requirement is stricter than most states.

Q: Will a helmet hamper hearing?

A: No. In fact your ability to hear surrounding traffic may improve while wearing a helmet. Since wind and engine noise are reduced with the use of a helmet, it can help other street noise sound clearer.

Q: Could the use of a helmet lead to neck injuries in the event of a crash?

A: No. Studies indicate that the use of a motorcycle helmet provides a significant reduction in head and neck injuries.