

**Laws and Ordinances**  
**Electric Bicycle**

**California Vehicle Code 231: Bicycle**

A bicycle is a device upon which a person may ride, propelled exclusively by human power, except as provided in Section 312.5, through a belt, chain, or gears, and having one or more wheels. A person riding a bicycle is subject to the provisions of this code specified in Sections 21200 and 21200.5. An electric bicycle is a bicycle.

**California Vehicle Code Section 312.5:**

- (a) An “electric bicycle” is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts.
  - (1) A “class 1 electric bicycle,” or “low-speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle,” is a bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
  - (2) A “class 2 electric bicycle,” or “low-speed throttle-assisted electric bicycle,” is a bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
  - (3) A “class 3 electric bicycle,” or “speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle,” is a bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour, and equipped with a speedometer.

**California Vehicle Code Section 21207.5:**

- (a) Notwithstanding Sections 21207 and 23127 of this code, or any other law, a motorized bicycle or class 3 electric bicycle shall not be operated on a bicycle path or trail, bikeway, bicycle lane established pursuant to Section 21207, equestrian trail, or hiking or recreational trail, unless it is within or adjacent to a roadway or unless the local authority or the governing body of a public agency having jurisdiction over the path or trail permits, by ordinance, that operation.
- (b) The local authority or governing body of a public agency having jurisdiction over a bicycle path or trail, equestrian trail, or hiking or recreational trail, may prohibit, by ordinance, the operation of a class 1 or class 2 electric bicycle on that path or trail.

### **California Vehicle Code Section 312.5:**

- (a) An “electric bicycle” is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts.
  - (1) A “class 1 electric bicycle,” or “low-speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle,” is a bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
  - (2) A “class 2 electric bicycle,” or “low-speed throttle-assisted electric bicycle,” is a bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
  - (3) “class 3 electric bicycle,” or “speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle,” is a bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour, and equipped with a speedometer.

### **California Vehicle Code 24016:**

- (a) An electric bicycle described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5 shall meet the following criteria:
  - (1) Comply with the equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles adopted by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (16 C.F.R. 1512.1, et seq.).
  - (2) Operate in a manner so that the electric motor is disengaged or ceases to function when the brakes are applied, or operate in a manner such that the motor is engaged through a switch or mechanism that, when released or activated, will cause the electric motor to disengage or cease to function.
- (b) A person operating an electric bicycle is not subject to the provisions of this code relating to financial responsibility, driver’s licenses, registration, and license plate requirements, and an electric bicycle is not a motor vehicle.
- (c) Every manufacturer of an electric bicycle shall certify that it complies with the equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles adopted by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (16 C.F.R. 1512.1, et seq.).
- (d) A person shall not tamper with or modify an electric bicycle described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5 so as to change the speed capability of the

bicycle, unless he or she appropriately replaces the label indicating the classification required in subdivision (c) of Section 312.5.

**HMB Ordinance Code 10.48.020.C**

“Vehicle” means and includes motor vehicles, motorcycles, minibikes, dirt bikes, dune buggies, and any motor-driven cycle or vehicle.

**HMB Ordinance Code 10.48.030**

Unlawful activities: Except as provided in this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to operate a vehicle as defined in Section 10.48.020 of this chapter off a public highway or street. (Ord. 1-83 §1(part), 1983).

**San Mateo County Ord .Code 3.68.120 - Operation of bicycles; violation.**

(a) No person shall operate a bicycle in any County Park or Recreation Area, including but not limited to Sawyer Camp Trail or San Francisco Fish and Game Refuge, other than on a path designated and signed for that purpose or on a paved vehicular road meant for motor vehicles. All bicyclists shall ride in single file, except to pass. No bicyclist shall exceed a safe speed.

(b) No bicyclist on Sawyer Camp Trail shall exceed a speed of 5 miles per hour within one-eighth mile from each end of Sawyer Camp Trail. No bicyclist on Sawyer Camp Trail shall exceed a speed of 15 miles per hour on the rest of Sawyer Camp Trail.

**San Mateo County Ord .Code 3.68.090 - Motor vehicles.**

No person shall operate any motor vehicle except upon established paved roads or other established paved areas specifically designated and maintained for normal ingress, egress, and parking. This section shall not apply to any emergency or County vehicle, persons with physical disabilities operating wheelchairs or similar devices, or to any person acting in compliance with the directions of a Park Ranger or Peace Officer.