

## **A Message to Massachusetts Motorists from Erin C. Deveney, Registrar of Motor Vehicles**

Dear Motorist,

The MassDOT Registry of Motor Vehicles recognizes that the work we perform impacts you and nearly every person in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We give our customers the joy of getting their first license. We register vehicles that take people all over the state for work, school, to access medical care and for exciting and important events in their lives. We also have the very serious responsibility of making sure all drivers, as well as the vehicles on our roadways, are safe and fit to operate. The RMV is committed to providing you with efficient, reliable and professional customer service.

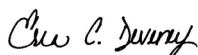
The Driver's Manual prepares you for your driving career and also for doing business with the Registry. It includes requirements for transactions we provide, as well as service options and branch location information. To serve you better, we offer 28 transactions and services via our website, [www.massrmv.com](http://www.massrmv.com). Online services bring the RMV to you. Today, you are also able to schedule a return phone call via 857-DOT-8000 for a time that works for you. We have expanded the number of AAA locations offering Registry renewal services through an innovative public-private partnership. We are introducing self-service FasTrack kiosks for license and identification card renewals and duplicates so you spend less time in line. As we improve our service delivery, [www.massrmv.com](http://www.massrmv.com) will offer you the latest and best ways to get your RMV business done.

Everyone sharing the road in Massachusetts must focus on safety. Please read the rules of the road we have included to prepare for your road test and a lifetime of safe driving, cycling and walking. These rules benefit drivers of all ages. New technology helps make our roadways safer. There are improvements in traffic signal and smart work zone technologies. Innovations are coming on how to best share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians. We want you to be prepared for what is ahead of you today, but we ask that you also please stay curious and up to date on changes aimed at increasing safety for all. One way to stay connected is to look for updates to the manual online. We are proud to offer this manual as a fully accessible PDF on our website, [www.massrmv.com](http://www.massrmv.com). In addition to English, the manual is currently available online in Spanish. We strive to accommodate people who need other assistance to earn their license or access other Registry services.

The tools in this manual are meant to give you the information you need to have the best experience possible at the RMV. Please be sure to learn the rules of the road to prepare in advance for your road test and for your continued safety. The RMV looks forward to serving you because, together, we can keep our roads safe.

For the latest RMV news, follow the RMV on Twitter @MassRMV.

Safe Driving,



Erin C. Deveney  
Registrar

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Sharing the Road

### A User's Manual for Public Ways

Most public ways, including urban streets, country lanes, main roads, secondary roads, and suburban or rural roads, are meant to be shared by all of us. "Us" includes pedestrians, persons riding on bicycles or motorcycles, persons riding in passenger vehicles or buses, and persons operating commercial motor vehicles or trailers, or combinations of those vehicles. Some ways, such as Interstate highways and expressways, are designed exclusively for use by motor vehicles and trailers traveling at high speeds. Other public ways are specifically designed for slower speeds or for travel by lighter vehicles and may restrict or prohibit certain vehicles. Public ways come in various lengths and widths with various features: one-way, two-way, multiple lanes, High Occupancy Vehicle lanes (HOV), center dividers, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and hard or soft shoulders. However the public way is laid out, it is meant to be used by people and the various types of vehicles that may propel them along if they are not on foot.

Although the bulk of this Manual provides information about the use of public ways for motor vehicles and trailers, the goal of the RMV in producing it is to make all users of public ways aware that our public streets and roads are meant to be shared except where the law provides for limited uses. Bicycling and walking may be used in conjunction with transit, so always pay attention.

#### **Sharing the Road with Bicycles:**

In 2009, to further promote safe interactions on our roads between bicycles and motor vehicles, the Governor signed several new laws. These expand the rights of bicyclists and make it easier to cite them for their own traffic violations. They also place new legal responsibilities on motorists.\* The changes should help ensure that bicyclists have a safer riding environment. The changes enforce stricter standards on motorists to be alert and careful in the presence of bicycles. For a brief description of these changes, see page 78 and 106.

#### **Attention Motorists:**

Bicyclists have a legal right to use all public roads in this state except limited access or express state highways where signs specifically prohibiting bicycles have been posted. Like motorists, they are also required to know and obey traffic laws and regulations. Both bicyclists and motorists need to understand the laws. As a motorist, you need to understand and appreciate that bicyclists are far more vulnerable to injury and death when forced off the road and when in collision with a motor vehicle. Drivers need to know and respect bicyclists' rights and safely share the road with them. You also need to know your own legal responsibilities when driving in the presence of bicycles.

\* Chapter 525 of the Acts of 2008; Sections 3 & 11 of Chapter 26 of the Acts of 2009; and Chapter 65 of the Acts of 2009 (which took effect on 1/1/2011).

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*This document is published by the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. While it contains a great deal of information about RMV policies and state laws, it is important to note that this is **not** a legal document. Every effort is made to present the most accurate, error free, and up-to-date information. However, RMV policies and fees change from time to time, as do laws governing motor vehicles.*

*The RMV will make every effort to post information about changes to the fees, policies, procedures or laws referenced in this Driver's Manual that may affect your ability to obtain a Learner's Permit, Driver's License or Identification Card. Relevant changes will be posted on the RMV's website at [www.massrmv.com](http://www.massrmv.com). If you do not have access to a computer, you may call the RMV's Phone Center at 857-368-8000 (from the 339/617/781/857 MA area codes or from outside of MA) or 800-858-3926 (from all other MA area codes). Or, you can call 877-RMV-TTDD if you are hearing impaired.*

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) has changed a great deal since its inception in 1903. There are now nearly five million licensed drivers in our state. And today, more than ever, the Agency is committed to increasing efficiency and improving customer satisfaction through technology and innovative initiatives.

Enhanced computer technology continues to strongly impact customer service. Through the RMV's website ([www.massrmv.com](http://www.massrmv.com)) you can pre-stage certain license/ID card transactions and conduct such transactions as scheduling a road test, paying your road test/license fees, renewing a registration, renewing a license or Massachusetts ID Card, ordering a special plate, paying a traffic citation, ordering a duplicate license/ID, ordering a duplicate title, changing your address, verifying the issuance of a driver's education certificate, checking the status of a registration or title, changing your organ donor status, or canceling plates. You can also download forms, view this *Driver's Manual*, and learn the latest "rules of the road." Over the Internet, the RMV also invites you to ask questions and offer suggestions for improving RMV services.

Checklists for common branch transactions are also available on the website. They list the requirements and documentation you will need to successfully complete your transaction at an RMV branch.

To encourage you to avoid unnecessary trips to one of the RMV's branches, the Agency wants you to process some transactions over the phone; you can replace a lost license, pay a citation, order a driving record, schedule a road test, and renew a registration. By mail, you can conduct some title and registration transactions. Through the Electronic Vehicle Registration program, participating automobile dealers and insurance agents can issue new plates and perform registration transfers and renewals.

The RMV will continue to explore other ways to improve its relationship with you.

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## How to Use This Manual

For *new drivers*, this booklet is a useful tool for understanding the licensing process and for studying the rules of the road. For *experienced drivers*, this booklet offers more than the procedure for obtaining a learner's permit. It provides valuable information on RMV policies, changes to driving laws, and safe driving tips. Keep this manual in your vehicle and refer to it whenever you have a question.



Introduction

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## Warning of Unofficial Websites Mimicking the Massachusetts RMV Website

Massachusetts residents looking for the RMV (Registry of Motor Vehicles) website or trying to do RMV transactions online should make sure they are using the “official” RMV website at: <http://www.massrmv.com>

Several similar-looking, third-party websites, not connected with the RMV, have fooled RMV customers by seeming to offer RMV services and/or RMV information. These “mimic” sites are often reached by customers using online search engines. **DO NOT BE FOOLED!** RMV customers should be extra careful and avoid any “mimic” websites that charge fees to perform RMV services online or to provide basic RMV information or forms. Some of these websites may even contain printed disclaimers of a connection to the RMV on their site.

It is also smart to avoid any site that uses the phrase “Department of Motor Vehicles” or the letters “DMV”. That phrase and the abbreviation “DMV” are NOT used in relation to the Registry of Motor Vehicles in Massachusetts. Remember: <http://www.massrmv.com>

If you rely on any driver license or motor vehicle-related information these websites provide, access any services they claim to offer, or pay a fee to them for an alleged “service” (whether online or by mail), **you are doing so at your own peril.** The information they provide may not be correct and your personal and financial information may not be safe in the hands of the operators of these “mimic” websites.

The RMV is proud of the fact that its customers can perform at least 28 different transactions safely and securely on the “official” RMV website and can also obtain much invaluable “free” information. For example, all of the information from the current RMV “Driver’s Manual” is available for free (a \$5 value) just by clicking on and opening the online version from “Forms and Manuals” rather than buying a copy.

And, the RMV’s “site policies” (located at the bottom of RMV web pages) explain how the RMV uses and protects your personal and financial information when you provide it to the RMV. Please note that the **RMV cannot be responsible** for the content or actions taken by third-party “mimic” websites.