

**The following discusses the operation of Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) in Denver, emphasizing safety tips for motorists around LRVs. It also covers guidelines for drivers interacting with bicyclists, highlighting laws, and best practices to avoid collisions. Bicycles are considered vehicles on the roadway, and motorists are advised to give them adequate space when passing, yield at intersections, and be cautious when opening doors or making turns. Additionally, it outlines hand signals for bicyclists and suggests ways for motorists to anticipate their movements for safer road sharing.**

**LIGHT RAIL** The Regional Transportation District (RTD) has Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) in its mass-transit fleet in the Denver Metropolitan area. In some areas, LRVs will operate on streets in the same direction as other motor vehicles. In other areas, LRVs will operate in the opposite direction from other traffic. The LRVs are governed by all traffic signals and signs and have the same rights and responsibilities as other motorists when operating on the streets. They also require additional attention from everyone on the road. Driver safety tips: Each light rail car weighs up to 40 tons and can't stop quickly. Remember these important tips while driving in a light rail area: ● Never turn in front of an approaching LRV. ● Never turn across a set of light rail tracks without checking in all directions. ● Watch for people getting on and off a stopped LRV. ● Be especially alert in light rail areas as nearby buildings and foliage can make it difficult for motorists to see LRVs. ● Some light rail crossing areas can have regular traffic lights to communicate with motorists. Some have warning lights and some have gates with railroad type traffic arms. All these signals mean the same thing: Stop and do not cross the tracks. ● Never drive around traffic gates, even if an LRV has just passed. Another vehicle might be coming from the other direction. ● Be aware of your vehicle height. Overhead wires are a standard height of 18 feet, 6 inches above the center of the tracks. Always assume a wire hanging from overhead catenary is electrified so never touch the wire or anything it is touching. Pay close attention to special traffic warning signs in connection with light rail. If you find a wire hanging from overhead or if you think any safety devices are malfunctioning, please call 911 or RTD at 303-299-6000 and report the situation.

**BICYCLISTS** Bicycles are considered vehicles on the roadway. People on bikes have many of the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as motorists, and they are generally required to follow the same rules of the road (see earlier sections for bike-specific pavement markings, signs and signals). Check your local ordinances for any laws that apply differently to bicyclists; for example, in some communities, bicyclists are allowed to ride on sidewalks and in crosswalks where they have the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as pedestrians. Drivers must be alert, actively look for bicyclists and be cautious when approaching or passing bicyclists because bicycles are smaller and bicyclists are more vulnerable than people inside of motor vehicles. Like motorists, bicyclists Colorado Driver Handbook 22 have different levels of experience and skills, and some bicyclists are children. Keep these characteristics in mind as you look for and approach people biking. Regardless of how we travel, everyone has a responsibility to help keep others safe and avoid crashes. Below are some laws and practices drivers should follow to interact safely with people on bikes. Colorado laws regarding motorists and bicyclists: ● Bicyclists should ride as far to the right as judged safe. Be aware that bicyclists may ride in the center of the travel lane to increase their visibility and safety. Bicyclists may choose to ride in the center of the travel lane on narrow roads or to avoid obstacles such as the door zone of parked cars, broken glass or drainage grates. ● When passing bicyclists, including those in a bike lane, motorists are required to give a minimum of three feet from the outermost part of their vehicle or any attachments. It is legal to cross a double yellow line with no oncoming traffic if necessary to provide a minimum of three

feet of passing distance. If you are unable to give three feet, slow down and remain behind the bicyclist until it is safe to pass. ● Bicyclists may ride side-by-side if they are not impeding the normal and reasonable movement of traffic. This can help them be more visible to drivers and decrease the time it takes to pass a group of bicyclists. ● Yield to bicyclists in intersections as you would for pedestrians and other vehicles. ● People on bikes have the right-of-way in a bike lane, and bike lanes continue through intersections, regardless of whether or not paint extends through the intersection. ● Do not stop, park or drive on a designated bicycle path or lane. Impeding bicycle traffic in a bike lane forces bicyclists to ride into the main travel lane and can put them in an unsafe situation. You may cross a bike lane when turning, entering or leaving another road, driveway or alley. ● People on bikes may ride outside of a bike lane. ● Always use your turn signal to communicate before turning and keep it off when traveling straight. ● On a multi-lane, one-way street, know that a bicyclist can ride on the right or left side of the roadway. ● Make right turns from close to the curb and from a Conflict Zone when one is present. This helps prevent crashes with bicyclists who are approaching from behind and may otherwise try to pass on your right. ● Do not force a bicyclist off the road, this constitutes aggressive driving and has legal consequences. ● A new law was passed in 2022 which states when an intersection is clear and a bicyclist already has the right-of-way, bicyclists ages 15 and older may now treat stop signs as yield signs and treat stop lights as stop signs. Additional practices to avoid crashes and help keep bicyclists safe: ● Treat people on bikes as drivers of vehicles who have a right to the road, and who are also more vulnerable. ● Take the time to actively look for people on bicycles and to accurately judge their speed and distance. ● Although bicyclists are required to ride in the same direction as motor vehicles, look for them riding anywhere on the roadway. ● Leave more than three feet of passing distance when driving larger vehicles or in rural or windy conditions to avoid dangerous wind blasts. ● Do not turn sharply, slow down or stop abruptly in front of a bicyclist. A motor vehicle's brakes are more powerful than a bicycle's and you could cause a crash. ● Be particularly careful around bicyclists when the roadway is wet or covered with debris. These conditions affect people on bicycles much more than people in vehicles. ● When parked on the street, check to the sides and rear for bicyclists before you open your vehicle door. Use your hand closest to the center of the vehicle to For specific Colorado Bicycle laws, see the Statewide Bicycle Manual. Conviction How to prevent Motorist turning left in front of an oncoming bicyclist Look for oncoming motorcyclists riding on the shoulder, edge of the lane or behind other oncoming vehicles and take time to accurately judge their distance and speed before turning Motorist or motorcyclists running a stop sign or stop signal Stop first, then proceed into intersection after looking for and yielding to others Motorist opening a vehicle door without looking behind for a passing motorcyclists or vehicle Always check behind you before opening a door into the roadway and try opening the door with your arm opposite the door Motorist turning right in front of a motorcyclists traveling straight Yield and let the cyclist clear the intersection first and make turns from close to the curb to prevent a cyclist approaching from behind from passing unsafely on your right Motorist pulling out from a driveway and failing to look for a motorcyclists on road or sidewalk Check both directions and beyond the curb or driveway when crossing a sidewalk, bike path, or road 23 open your door, a behavior commonly known as the "Dutch Reach." ● Check for bicyclists in your path and blind spots before backing up, changing lanes or turning. ● Before making a left turn, actively look for people biking on the right side or on the shoulder and take time to accurately judge their distance and speed before turning. ● When driving alongside a bicyclist and preparing to turn right, slow down, yield and let the bicyclist clear the intersection before making your turn. ● Before turning right at a red light where it is legal, come to a complete stop. Look for bicyclists behind or next to your vehicle, making a left turn from the opposite side of the street or traveling

in the lane with which you plan to merge. ● Avoid sounding your horn close to bicyclists unless there is an immediate risk of a crash. Using your horn may startle a bicyclist and cause them to crash. Hand signals for bicyclists: ● Bicyclists are required to use hand signals, as shown, when turning and stopping. However, they may be unable to signal if their skill level or road or traffic conditions require them to keep both hands on the handlebars. Look for other clues of a bicyclist's intent, such as turning their head or looking over their shoulder before changing lane position. ● For a right turn, extend the right arm straight out or left arm upward at a right angle. For a left turn, extend the left arm directly out to the left. ● If slowing or stopping, drop the left arm down at the elbow.