

Motorized mobility aids (MMA)

Use of an electric wheelchair, three-wheel mobility scooter or four-wheel mobility scooter on public roads

CAUTION

The goal of this guide is to provide information on the use of a motorized mobility aid (MMA) on public roads,^I the framework of which is set out in the *Order respecting motorized mobility aids*^{II} and in the *Highway Safety Code* (CQLR, chapter C-24.2.). Note that this information does not constitute a legal interpretation of the provisions nor does it relieve owners, drivers and passengers of motorized mobility aids of their obligation to know and respect the rules relating to the operation of MMAs on public roads.

For more comprehensive information, please refer to the *Order respecting motorized mobility aids and the Highway Safety Code*.

- I Including public roads, private roads open to public vehicular traffic and on land occupied by shopping centres or other land where public traffic is allowed.
- II Order number 2020-14 of the Minister of Transport dated 3 August 2020 concerning the suspension, on certain conditions, of several provisions of the *Highway Safety Code* to allow the use of a motorized mobility aid on public roads and its cohabitation with other road users (2020, G.O. 2, 2037B).

This publication was prepared by the Direction générale de la sécurité et du camionnage and edited by the Direction générale des communications of the ministère des Transports.

The content of this guide can be consulted on the Ministère's website at:

www.transports.gouv.qc.ca.

For information:

- » call 511 (in Québec) or 1 888 355-0511 (throughout North America)
- » consult the website of the ministère des Transports at www.transports.gouv.qc.ca
- » write to the following address:

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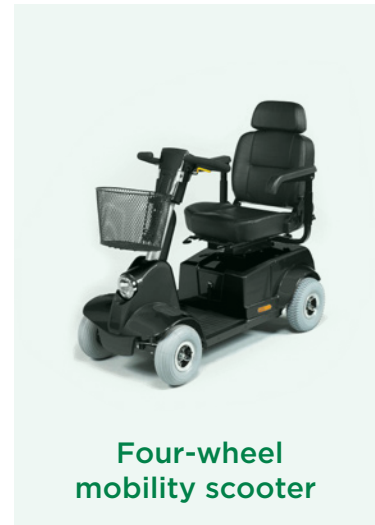
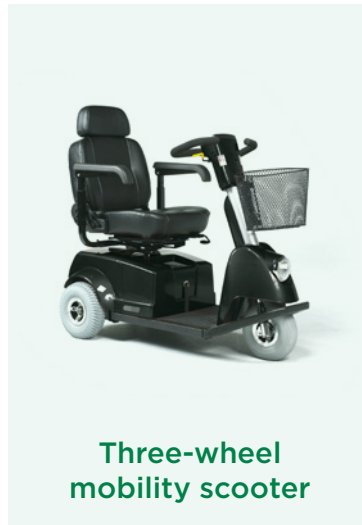
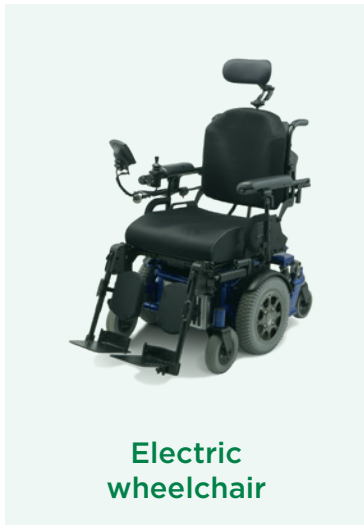
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Motorized mobility aids (MMAs) are devices designed to make up for an inability to walk. They include electric wheelchairs, three-wheel mobility scooters and four-wheel mobility scooters.



The results of a pilot project concerning MMAs, which ended on June 1, 2020, confirmed the importance of continuing to regulate the use of MMAs. This falls within the mission of the ministère des Transports, which is to ensure the mobility of individuals through safe and efficient transportation systems.

The rules have been put in place to ensure both the safety of MMA users and a harmonious cohabitation between them and other road users. Not only do these rules promote a better sharing of the road, they also allow greater flexibility when choosing a route by regulating the use of MMAs on roadways, cycle lanes and sidewalks.

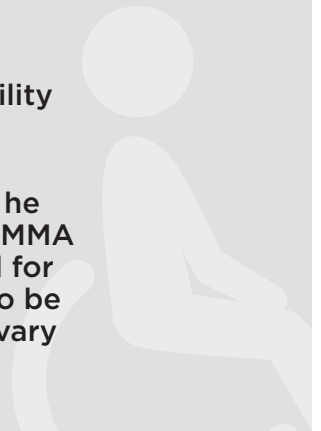
An MMA user who fails to respect the rules is liable to a fine under the *Highway Safety Code*.

Definition of a motorized mobility aid

Attention: Only devices corresponding to the definition below may travel on public roads under the rules provided for in the Order respecting motorized mobility aids.

Not all models of three-wheel mobility scooters and four-wheel mobility scooters sold on the market comply with the Minister of Transport's definition of an MMA.

It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that the model that he or she owns or wishes to acquire corresponds to the definition of an MMA in order to be able to travel on public roads under the rules provided for in the *Order respecting motorized mobility aids*. MMA users must also be aware of the rules governing the use of their MMA, since some rules vary according to the type of MMA.



A motorized mobility aid (MMA) is defined as:

- » an electric wheelchair, or
- » any other vehicle designed to make up for an inability to walk that has the following features:
 - › is designed for only 1 person,
 - › is equipped with a seat, which cannot be straddled, and a backrest, a footrest and armrests,
 - › is not equipped with pedals,
 - › is propelled by an electric motor,
 - › moves on 3 or 4 wheels, and
 - › has a maximum width of 75 cm, including equipment, except if its use is prescribed to the user by a health professional.

A vehicle is not considered an MMA if:

- » it is equipped with a closed cabin or sides closed using a rigid or soft, transparent or opaque, material,
- » it has been altered to comply with the description of an MMA (e.g. golf cart),
- » it was made by hand.



Mandatory equipment

Brakes

- » MMAs must be equipped with at least one brake system sufficiently powerful to stop the MMA quickly in case of emergency and to hold it stationary.
- » To travel on sidewalks, an MMA, other than an electric wheelchair, must be equipped with a brake that is activated automatically when the accelerator is released.
- » No person may use an MMA whose brake system has been modified or altered in such a way as to reduce its effectiveness.

Reflectors and reflective strips

An MMA must be equipped with:

- » a white or yellow reflector on the front,
- » a red reflector at the rear, and
- » a white, yellow or red reflective strip or reflector installed as high as possible on each side of the vehicle.

In the case of an electric wheelchair, each reflector may be replaced by reflective strips of the same colour.

Lights and headlights

To travel in darkness or on a roadway where the maximum authorized speed limit is over 50 km/h, an MMA must be equipped with:

- » 1 or 2 white headlights,
- » 1 or 2 red tail-lights (they can be flashing).

In both contexts, these lights and headlights must be turned on.

Electric wheelchairs are exempted from this requirement.

If equipment or an object installed on an MMA blocks its headlights, lights or reflectors, devices equivalent to its headlights, lights or reflectors must be carried in places where they are visible. Objects transported on an MMA must be well attached, in a way as not to affect handling or visibility.

Safety Flag

- » When an MMA is travelling on a roadway where the maximum authorized speed limit is more than 50 km/h, it must be equipped with a safety flag.
- » The safety flag needs to be triangular and orange and at least 300 cm² in size. Its higher end, in a vertical position, has to be at least 150 cm from the ground.

It is illegal to travel on an MMA that:

- » has undergone alterations which may reduce its stability or braking capacity, or increase its speed or power,
- » has equipment that has been modified or is inoperable,
- » is no longer equipped with the equipment necessary for its operation or to ensure safety.

Equipment that is allowed or recommended

Allowed equipment

- » Roofs and windshields are authorized if they:
 - › are designed specifically for the device and are not made by hand,
 - › are solidly attached to the vehicle,
 - › do not have the effect of reducing or preventing good visibility from inside or outside the MMA.
- » The windshield:
 - › must be transparent and manufactured or treated as to substantially reduce friability and the likelihood of shattering,
 - › must be free of any material that might reduce visibility for the person operating the MMA,
 - › must be free of sharp edges and be correctly attached,
 - › must not be tarnished, cloudy or broken in a way that reduces the visibility of the road or road signs,
 - › must in no case be modified to have reflective properties (mirror effect).

Recommended equipment

The Ministère recommends:

- » that MMAs be equipped with a safety flag whenever used on public roads in order to improve the user's visibility,
- » that electric wheelchairs be equipped with a white headlight and red tail-light for travelling in the dark,
- » that the MMA be equipped with two white reflectors in front and two red reflectors in the back, installed as far apart from each other as possible, to indicate the actual width of the MMA and to make it easier to see and identify it in the dark and in foggy conditions,
- » that lights and headlights be turned on during the day, in particular when warranted by atmospheric conditions (e.g. rain, fog), for all types of MMAs,
- » that users wear, especially in darkness, light-coloured clothing so that they are visible to other road users.

Traffic rules

The traffic rules for motorized mobility aids (MMAs) apply on public roads, private roads open to public vehicular traffic and on land occupied by shopping centres and other land where public traffic is allowed.

With some exceptions, an individual using an MMA must follow the traffic rules that apply to:

- » [pedestrians](#) (in French only) when travelling on a sidewalk or when leaving the sidewalk to enter an intersection,
- » [cyclists](#) when riding in a cycle lane, on a roadway or shoulder.

However, certain rules were adapted to take into account the characteristics specific to each type of MMA and to regulate their operation to ensure the safety of the MMA user and all other road users. The following sections present the rules to follow, according to the infrastructure used.

Traffic rules when travelling on a sidewalk





- » An MMA, other than an electric wheelchair, may travel on the sidewalk only if the MMA is equipped with a brake that is activated automatically when the accelerator is released (automatic brake, electric brake).
- » The maximum speed of travel on a sidewalk cannot exceed 10 km/h. At all times, the MMA user must take into account pedestrian traffic on the sidewalk, the environment and infrastructure and must, where applicable, adjust the speed to that of pedestrians.
- » MMA users must travel on the sidewalk:
 - › when travelling in a traffic circle where the sidewalk is accessible and safe¹ and there is no cycle lane or multi-use path making it possible to cross the traffic circle,
 - › where the signage indicates that cyclists must use the sidewalk.



1. A safe infrastructure is at least 1 metre wide and flat-surfaced.

Traffic rules on cycle lanes

A cycle lane is a lane designed and developed for the exclusive use of cyclists or so that it can be shared by other means of getting around.

TYPE OF CYCLE LANE	DEFINITION AND TRAFFIC RULES
<p>Bicycle lane</p>	<p>A bicycle lane is a lane reserved for the exclusive use of cyclists and whose boundaries are marked off on the ground or by a distinct surface.</p> <p>Bicycle lanes are generally found on roadways where the posted speed is below 50 km/h, to the right of the other traffic lanes. Cyclists have the priority and must generally travel in the same direction as the traffic.</p> 
<p>Shared roadway</p>	<p>A shared roadway is a roadway shared by motorists and cyclists. It is recognized as a cycle lane because of the level of safety it offers, in addition to meeting specific traffic volume and speed requirements. Since there are no specific developed areas or corridors reserved for cyclists, they need to respect the same traffic rules that apply to the rest of the road network.</p> 
<p>Bicycle path</p>	<p>A bicycle path is a cycle lane reserved exclusively for bicycle traffic, which is either independent of any traffic lane or physically separated from the traffic lane by a barrier.</p> <p>When a path for cyclists is developed on the roadway, as an extension of the bicycle path, cyclists do not have the priority. In such a case, they need to yield the right of way to vehicles before entering the path.</p>
<p>Multi-use path</p>	<p>Unlike a bicycle path, a multi-use path is open to cyclists and other users, including pedestrians, people who use inline skates, and users of vehicles that are non-motorized or propelled by a low-power motor. Multi-use paths normally have wider lanes to make it easier for the different users to share the path.</p>
<p>Bicycle boulevard</p>	<p>A bicycle boulevard is a public road, or a portion of it, on which bicycle traffic is facilitated.</p> <p>The page <i>Vélorue – Règles de circulation</i> (in French only) describes applicable rules in detail.</p> 
<p>Paved shoulder</p>	<p>A paved shoulder is a shoulder on which the roadway extends. It is separated from the rest of the roadway with markings on the ground and is developed specifically to improve the safety of cyclists.</p> 

Note : Municipalities govern the use of bicycle paths and multi-use paths on their territory and can determine, through bylaws, the types of vehicles that are authorized to use the paths. It is therefore important for MMA users to check their municipal bylaws to see whether an MMA can be used on such paths.

Rules to follow on a cycle lane

MMA users must:

- » ensure that they do not compromise the safety of other users of the cycle lane,
- » when travelling on a bicycle boulevard, adopt the rules that apply to [cyclists](#),
- » limit their speed to 32 km/h on cycle lanes, including bicycle boulevards,
- » travel in the same direction as bicycle traffic,
- » always respect the maximum speed allowed on the infrastructure being used.

Traffic rules on a roadway and its shoulder

MMA users must:

- » at all times, favour using a cycle lane where one is available, accessible and safe²,
- » limit their speed to 32 km/h. If the posted speed limit is less than 32 km/h, it must be respected at all times (e.g. shared street with a 20 km/h speed limit);
- » travel in the same direction as the traffic, as close as possible to the edge or right side of the roadway or on the shoulder.

Additional rules apply when the speed limit is over 50 km/h. In such a case, MMA users must:

- › travel on a sidewalk, in a cycle lane or on the shoulder when accessible and safe²,
- › if this is not possible, travel on the roadway, only over a short distance or to go to a location that would not be accessible otherwise,
- › equip the MMA with a triangular orange flag (for details, see the section “Mandatory equipment”)
- › turn on the MMA’s lights and headlights at all times³.

Travelling on the roadway is not allowed where a sign or signal prohibits cyclists and road vehicles from using the roadway (e.g. accident, incident, dangerous overpass).

2. A safe infrastructure is at least 1 metre wide and flat-surfaced.

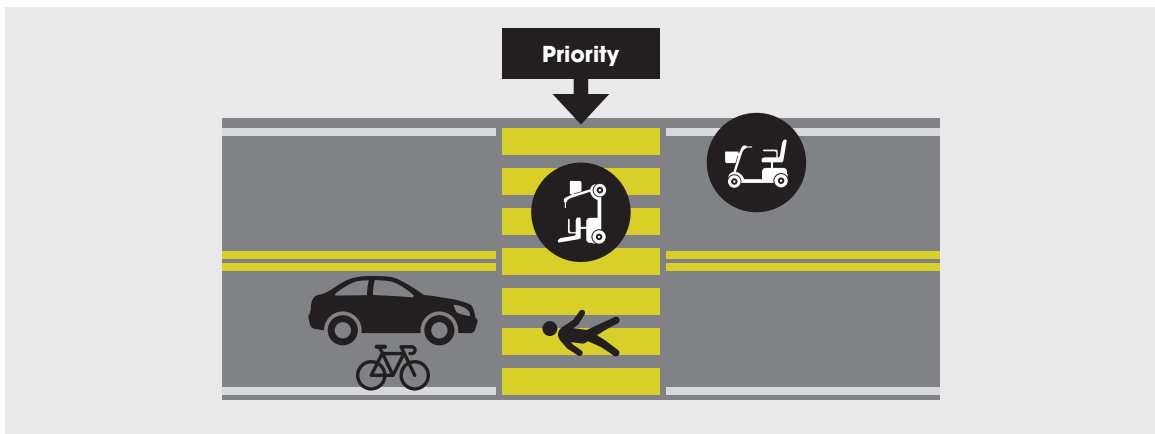
3. This obligation does not apply to electric wheelchair users. However, if the electric wheelchair is equipped with lights and headlights, the Ministère recommends turning them on.

Traffic rules for a crossing or intersection

At pedestrian crosswalks

To cross a road at a pedestrian crosswalk that is not located at an intersection controlled by traffic lights or stop signs, the MMA user must, before entering the crosswalk, ensure that it can be done safely.

Where a pedestrian or an MMA user enters a pedestrian crosswalk, the other users (road vehicles, bicycles and MMAs) must stop and allow the pedestrian or MMA user to cross.

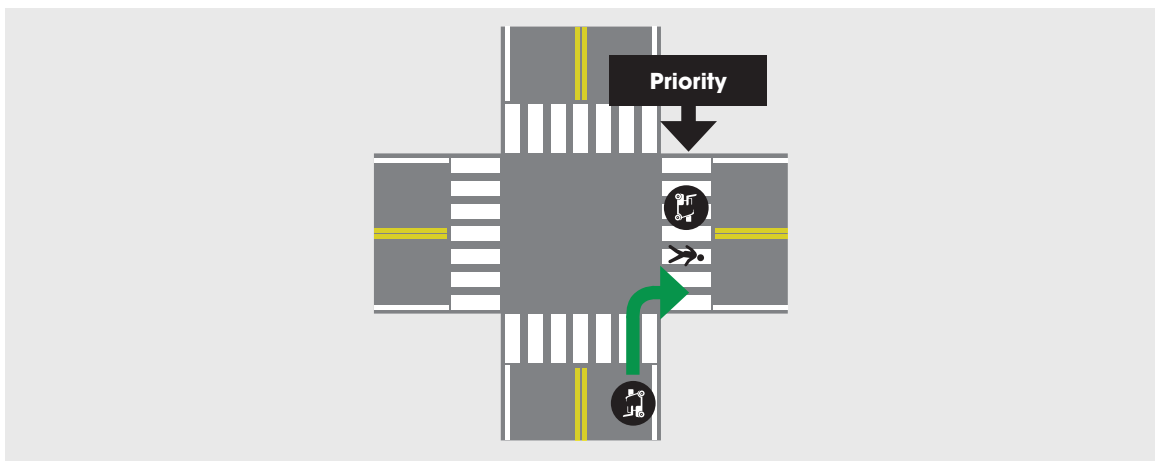


At intersections

To cross an intersection, MMA users must heed the pedestrian lights. Where there are none, they must obey the traffic lights or stop signs, as the case may be.

» Right turn at an intersection

When turning right at an intersection, the user must yield the right of way to pedestrians, cyclists and other MMA users crossing the roadway the user is about to enter.

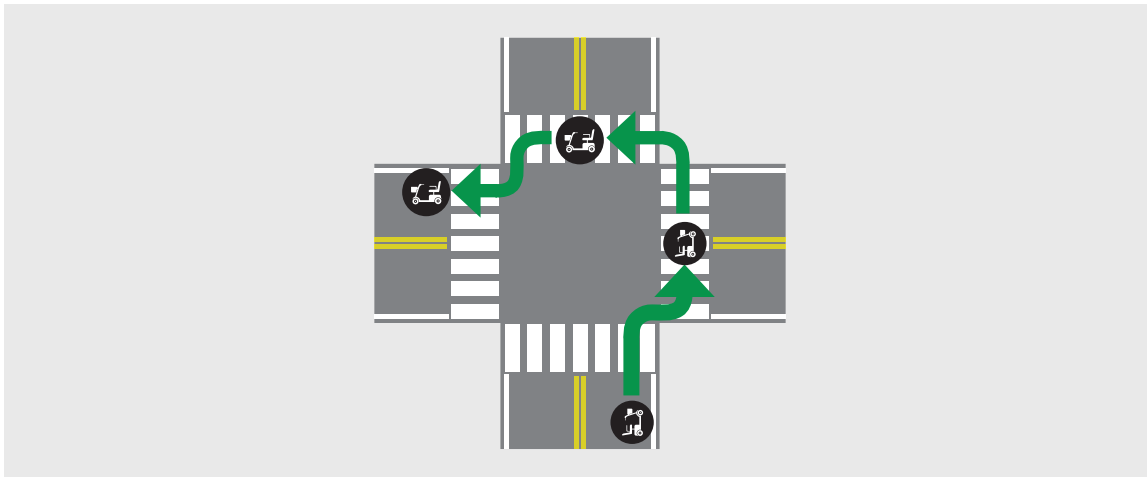


» **Left turn at an intersection**

This manoeuvre is prohibited for all MMA users. They must cross the roadway in the same manner as pedestrians and cannot cross diagonally, except when specifically authorized by a peace officer or a school crossing guard or by the signs or signals that apply to pedestrians.

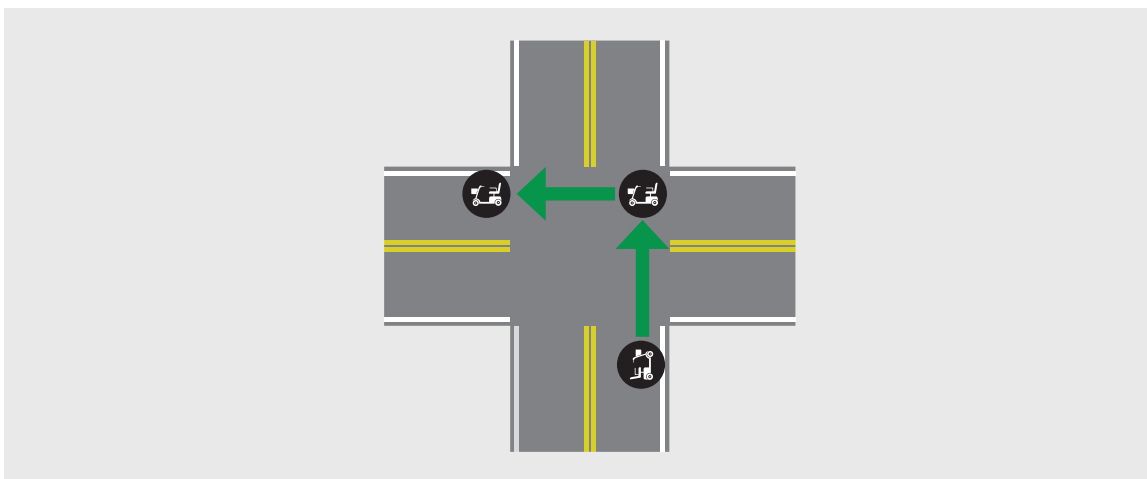
Left turn at an intersection with pedestrian lights

- › The MMA user crosses in two stages, using the crosswalks and respecting the pedestrian signals or signage.



Two-stage left turn at an intersection without pedestrian lights

- › The MMA user crosses the intersection in two stages, always staying to the right of the roadway.



In the absence of intersections or pedestrian crosswalks nearby

MMA users who wish to cross a road where there is no intersection or pedestrian crosswalk nearby must:

- » yield the right of way to road vehicles, cyclists and MMA users travelling on the road,
- » ensure, before entering the road, that it is safe to cross,
- » cross the roadway perpendicular to its axis (crossing diagonally is prohibited).

At a traffic circle

To cross a traffic circle, the MMA user must take the sidewalk or the cycle lane, provided that this type of infrastructure is accessible and safe.⁴

Where there is no sidewalk or cycle lane accessible, the MMA user can travel on the roadway, in the following manner:

- » when about to enter the traffic circle, it is important to slow down and yield the right of way to users in the traffic circle before entering it,
- » once in the traffic circle, the MMA user must travel in a counter-clockwise direction, as close as possible to the edge or right side of the roadway,
- » if possible, the MMA user must activate the appropriate turn signal before taking the desired exit.

Entering or leaving private property

The MMA user, when leaving or accessing private property, must yield the right of way to vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians travelling on the public road.

4. A safe infrastructure is at least 1 metre wide and flat-surfaced.

Places where MMA users are not allowed to travel

- » On limited-access roads, in particular, freeways or access roads.
- » On roadways where the speed limit is more than 50 km/h:
 - › where there is an accessible and safe⁴ shoulder, sidewalk or cycle lane,
 - › over long distances.
- » In the direction opposite to the traffic, when the MMA user is on the roadway or shoulder.

Exception: Where, along the roadway, there is no sidewalk or cycle lane enabling the MMA user to travel on it, the MMA user may travel on the roadway or shoulder in the opposite direction in order to:

- › avoid crossing the roadway a number of times over a short distance,
- › travel on the lighted side of the public road,
- › travel on the side with the wider shoulder.

The MMA user must make sure that it can be done safely.

- » Between two rows of vehicles moving in contiguous lanes.
- » Between a vehicle travelling in the same lane and a vehicle parked to the right or left of that lane.



Other rules to respect

An MMA user must:

- » adopt the rules applicable to a pedestrian when travelling on a shared street,
- » stop when nearing a school bus whose flashing lights are activated,
- » comply with all road and traffic signs and signals,
- » position the MMA in single file when part of a group of 2 or more MMAs travelling on the roadway (maximum of 15 MMAs in line).

A pedestrian accompanying an MMA user must:

- » walk in the same direction as traffic if there is no sidewalk bordering the roadway.

An MMA user must not:

- » tow a trailer or carry passengers,

Exception : *A child under 5 years of age may be carried provided that:*

- › *the driver uses a restraint system,*
- › *the child is placed on the MMA so as not to obstruct the driver's view or interfere with the handling of the vehicle,*
- › *the driver travels at a safe and reasonable speed,*
- › *the driver does not compromise or is not likely to compromise his or her safety or the safety of the child and other road users.*

- » tolerate that an individual hang on to or be pulled or pushed by the MMA,

Exception: *An individual using an electric wheelchair may use a stroller specifically designed for it.*

- » drink alcoholic beverages or consume drugs when using an MMA,*
- » use an MMA while intoxicated,**
- » wear earphones,*

Exception: *Wearing an earphone in only one ear is permitted when it is a technical guidance assistance or necessary to ensure the user's safety.*

- » use a cellular telephone or any other portable device designed to transmit or receive information or to be used for entertainment purposes nor use a display screen.*

Exception:

- › *When the device is securely mounted on the MMA and provides only information needed for the user's travel.*
- › *When the MMA user is stopped on the edge of the roadway, on the shoulder, cycle lane or sidewalk in such a way that does not obstruct traffic.*

* These rules do not apply to electric wheelchair users as they are considered as pedestrians.

** Application of the Criminal Code of Canada.

