

Golf Cart Guidelines



Point Hope's streets are part of the City of Charleston; therefore, all vehicle, bike and pedestrian traffic must comply with the City of Charleston ordinances. Oftentimes, the POA office gets questions regarding permitting and the operation of low-speed vehicles. Below we have listed some useful information and frequently asked questions regarding the use of low-speed vehicles and golf carts at Point Hope. The following information has been provided by Sergeant Riggs of the Charleston Police Department.

Q: How does the State of South Carolina Law define a Motor Vehicle?

Every vehicle that is self-propelled and every vehicle that is propelled by electric power obtained from overhead trolley wires but not operated upon rails. (56-5-130). South Carolina does not have a specific law defining golf carts but based on the definition of a motor vehicle, the golf cart is considered a motor vehicle and must follow the state traffic laws. South Carolina does distinguish the difference between a golf cart and a low-speed vehicle (LSV).

Q: What is a low speed vehicle (LSV)?

A low-speed vehicle is defined as a four-wheeled motor vehicle, other than an all-terrain vehicle, whose speed attainable in one mile is more than twenty miles an hour and not more than twenty-five miles an hour on a paved level surface, and whose gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) is less than three thousand pounds. (56-1-10). The LSV is also considered a motor vehicle and must follow the state traffic laws.

Conditions for Operating on the highway (56-2-110):

"Highway" means the entire width between the boundary lines of every way publicly maintained when any part of it is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. (56-5-430)

- A person operating a low-speed vehicle must be at least sixteen years of age and shall hold a valid driver's license. The operator of a low-speed vehicle being operated on a highway must have in his possession:
- The registration card issued by the department or the registration card issued by the state in which the low-speed vehicle is registered.
- Their driver's license.
- Insurance – A low-speed vehicle must be registered and licensed in the same fashion as passenger vehicles and is subject to the same insurance requirements applicable to other motor vehicles. (56-2-120/56-10-225)
- A low-speed vehicle may be operated only on a highway for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less.
- A low-speed vehicle may cross a highway at an intersection where the highway has a posted speed limit of more than thirty-five miles an hour.
- A low-speed vehicle must meet the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 500 (Part 49 Section 571.500 of the Code of Federal Regulations) at all times when operated on any highway. A low-speed vehicle that complies with the equipment requirements in 49 C.F.R. Section 571.500 complies with all equipment requirements of this title.

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Federal Standard No. 500: Low-Speed Vehicles

Each low-speed vehicle shall be equipped with:

- (1) Headlamps
- (2) Front and rear turn signal lamps
- (3) Taillamps
- (4) Stop lamps
- (5) Reflex reflectors: one red on each side as far to the rear as practicable, and one red on the rear
- (6) An exterior mirror mounted on the driver's side of the vehicle and either an exterior mirror mounted on the passenger's side of the vehicle or an interior mirror
- (7) A parking brake
- (8) A windshield that conforms to the Federal motor vehicle safety standard on glazing materials (49 CFR 571.205)
- (9) A VIN that conforms to the requirements of part 565 Vehicle Identification Number of this chapter, and
- (10) A Type 1 or Type 2 seat belt assembly conforming to Sec. 571.209 of this part, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 209, Seat belt assemblies, installed at each designated seating position. (Child Safety Seats) (www.gpo.gov)

Conditions for operating a golf cart on the highway (56-2-105):

- A person operating a permitted golf cart must be at least sixteen years of age and hold a valid driver's license.
- The operator of a permitted golf cart being operated on a highway or street must have in his possession:
- The registration certificate issued by the department
- Proof of liability insurance for the golf cart
- Valid driver's license
- During daylight hours only:
 - "Daylight hours means after 6:00 a.m. and no later than 6:00 p.m. However, beginning on the day that daylight saving time goes into effect through the day that daylight saving time ends, "daylight hours" means after 6:00 a.m. and no later than 8:00 p.m. All other hours are designated as nighttime hours. (56-1-10)
- A permitted golf cart may be operated within four miles of the address on the registration certificate and only on a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less.
- A permitted golf cart may be operated within four miles of a point of ingress and egress to a gated community and only on a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less.
- Within four miles of the registration holder's address, and while traveling along a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less, a permitted golf cart may cross a highway or street at an intersection where the highway has a posted speed limit of more than thirty-five miles an hour.

Q: What do our Point Hope CC&Rs say about LSVs?

The Point Hope CC&R's states: "Operation of motorized vehicles including golf carts on pathways or trails maintained by the Association, is prohibited except that golf carts may be operated on cart paths intended for such purposes."

Q: Who should we report any issues or underage drivers to?

Issues or underage age drivers may be reported to the City of Charleston Police. Their consolidated dispatch line is (843) 743 - 7200.