



Bicycles and Other Personal Transportation Devices

No. 5005

Policy Effective Date:
6/10/2009

Last Revision Date:
10/11 /2024

Policy Owner:
James Perkins

Policy Author: *(Contact Person)*
James Perkins

Affected Parties:
Undergraduate
Graduate
Faculty
Staff
Other

- 1.0 Purpose
- 2.0 Policy
- 3.0 Procedures
- 4.0 Definitions
- 5.0 References
- 6.0 Approval and Revisions

1.0 Purpose

Virginia Tech promotes the safe use of personal transportation devices which enhances the university's goals for a more sustainable campus.

This policy establishes responsibilities and procedures to encourage pedestrian safety, reduce risks of personal injury for pedestrians or device operators, and avoid damage to university facilities caused by the inappropriate use of personal transportation devices.

2.0 Policy

This policy governs the operation and enforcement of all personal transportation devices on campus, including (but not limited to): bicycles, electric power-assisted bicycles (e-bicycles), unicycles, electric unicycles (e-unicycles), scooters, motorized scooters, electric scooters (e-scooters), in-line skates, roller skates, skateboards, motorized skateboards, electric skateboards, electronic personal assistive mobility devices (EPAMD) (including hoverboards), and all other similar devices, but excluding motorized wheel chairs and/or other mobility devices used by individuals with disabilities, motor driven cycles, mopeds, and motorcycles.

For the purposes of this policy, university campus and university property pertain to the Blacksburg campus only. The only exception is the prohibition of the operation, storage, or charging of e-bicycles, EPAMDs, and e-scooters; this prohibition applies to all university-owned or leased facilities anywhere in the world.

All persons operating a personal transportation device on university property shall comply with all applicable Virginia state statutes and university policies, and all traffic control signs and devices. On roadways, personal transportation device operators must obey all the laws of vehicular traffic; this includes, but is not limited to, traveling in the same direction as vehicular traffic and within posted speed limits. Pedestrians have the right of way and personal transportation devices must yield to pedestrians at all times. Personal transportation devices used on pathways and sidewalks when pedestrians are present, must operate at pedestrian speeds and be careful of and courteous to pedestrians.

2.1 Use on Roadways, in Parking areas, Shared-Use Paths and Sidewalks

2.1.1 Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-Unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters, E-Scooters, Motorized Skateboards, Electric Skateboards EPAMD, and Hoverboards

Bicycles, E-bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters, E-scooters, Motorized Skateboards, Electric Skateboards, EMPADs and Hoverboards are permitted on all roadways, shared-use pathways, and sidewalks, with the exception of times when there is heavy pedestrian traffic on sidewalks and pathways. In times of heavy pedestrian traffic



(such as class change), operators shall dismount completely and walk. Operators are encouraged to dismount at crosswalks. Use of devices for tricks, including but not limited to: wheelies; jumps; use on stairs, benches, or handrails; or any use other than utilitarian transportation, is prohibited. Class 3 electric power-assisted bicycles are prohibited from being ridden on sidewalks and shared-use pathways. Bicycle, E-bicycle, Unicycle, E-unicycle, Scooter, Motorized Scooter, E-scooter, Motorized Skateboards, Electric Skateboards, EPAMD and Hoverboard use is not permitted in parking garages nor in parking lots. These devices may be walked to or from a vehicle parked in a garage or parking lot.

2.1.2 Skateboards, In-line Skates, and Roller Skates

Skateboards, In-line Skates, and Roller Skates are permitted on all shared-use pathways and sidewalks but not roadways. In times of heavy pedestrian traffic, when sidewalks and pathways are congested (such as class change), operators shall dismount completely and walk, In-line skates and Roller Skates shall proceed at the same pace as pedestrian traffic. Skateboarders shall keep all wheels on the ground at all times. Use of skateboards, in-line skates, and roller skates for tricks, including but not limited to: grabs, grinds, manuals, rail stands, or any use other than utilitarian transportation, is prohibited. Skateboard, in-line skate, and roller skate operators shall slow to speeds matching pedestrians when using crosswalks. Additionally, skateboards, in-line skates, and roller skates use is not permitted in parking lots or parking garages. These devices may be walked to or from a vehicle parked in a garage or parking lot.

2.2 Prohibition of E-Bicycles, E-Unicycles, Motorized Scooters, E-Scooters, Motorized Skateboards, Electric Skateboards, Hoverboards and EPAMDs in Buildings

E-bicycles, E-unicycles, motorized scooters, E-scooters, motorized skateboards, electric skateboards, hoverboards and EPAMDs are not permitted, for operation, storage, or charging, in university owned or leased buildings anywhere in the world, except with written approval from the Vice President for Auxiliary and Business Services. Operation, storage, or charging in university owned or leased buildings subjects the user to disciplinary action and potential restitution for any damage(s) caused. These devices may be brought into the Hokie Bike Hub for maintenance and/or repair purposes only, but they shall not be stored or charged in the building.

2.3 Designated Dismount Zones

A designated dismount zone is an area in which use of bicycles and other personal transportation devices is not allowed to be ridden. In dismount zones, operators are required to dismount and walk the device through the zone. In the event dismount zones are deemed necessary, signs shall be placed in appropriate areas.

2.4 Use of Safety Equipment

The use of proper safety equipment is encouraged when operating any personal transportation device.

2.5 Use of Lights on Bicycles, E-Bicycle, Unicycles, E-Unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters, E-Scooters, Motorized Skateboards, E-Skateboards, Hoverboards, and EPAMDs

In accordance with the Code of Virginia ([§ 46.2-1015](#)), every bicycle, e-bicycle, EPAMD, motorized skateboard and motorized scooter, “when in use between sunset and sunrise shall be equipped with a headlight on the front emitting



a white light visible in clear weather from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front and a red reflector visible from a distance of at least 600 feet to the rear when directly in front of lawful lower beams of headlights on a motor vehicle. Such lights and reflectors shall be of types approved by the Superintendent [of State Police].” “Every bicycle, or its rider, shall be equipped with a taillight on the rear emitting a red light plainly visible in clear weather from a distance of at least 500 feet to the rear when in use between sunset and sunrise and operating on any highway with a speed limit of 35 MPH or greater. Any such taillight shall be of a type approved by the Superintendent [of State Police].”

While not required by the Code of Virginia, all operators of personal transportation devices are encouraged to use front and rear emitting lights between sunset and sunrise, and during inclement weather.

2.6 Use of Earphones

In accordance with the Code of Virginia (§ 46.2-1078), it shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle, bicycle, EPMAD, electric power-assisted bicycle, or moped on the highways in the Commonwealth while using earphones on or in both ears.

For the purpose of this section, "earphones" shall mean any device worn on or in both ears that converts electrical energy to sound waves or which impairs or hinders the person's ability to hear, but shall not include (i) any prosthetic device that aids the hard of hearing, (ii) earphones installed in helmets worn by motorcycle operators and riders and used as part of a communications system, or (iii) non-prosthetic, closed-ear, open-back, electronic noise-cancellation devices designed and used to enhance the hearing ability of persons who operate vehicles in high-noise environments, provided any such device is being worn by the operator of a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,000 pounds or more. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the driver of any emergency vehicle as defined in § 46.2-920”

Any person operating a personal transportation device on the campus, to include all roadways, sidewalks and shared use pathways of Virginia Tech shall not use earphones as described above.

2.7 Carrying Articles or Passengers

In accordance with the Code of Virginia (§ 46.2-906), "No person operating a bicycle, electric personal assistive mobility device, electric power-assisted bicycle, or moped on a highway shall carry any package, bundle, or article that prevents the driver from keeping at least one hand on the handlebars. No bicycle or moped shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number of persons for which it was designed or is equipped, except that an adult bicycle rider may carry a child less than six years old if such child is securely attached to the bicycle in a seat or trailer designed for carrying children.”

Any person operating a personal transportation device on the campus, to include all roadways, sidewalks and shared use pathways of Virginia Tech shall not carry articles or passengers described above.

2.8 Registration and Parking Regulations (Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters)

Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters must be registered through Parking Services and adhere to the parking regulations described in section 3.0 Procedures



3.0 Procedures

3.1 Registration

3.1.1 Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters

All Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters on the Blacksburg campus must be registered with Parking Services and the appropriate permit must be displayed. Registration is designed to prevent theft and assist with the recovery of stolen devices. Registration can be completed on-line. Failure to register a device can result in fines or impoundment of the device.

3.2 Parking Regulations

3.2.1 Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters

Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters must be parked only at bicycle parking racks. Bicycles and unicycles may not be parked in any area of a residence hall or building including, but not limited to: stairwells, hallways, corridors or doorways. No person is permitted to park a bicycle or unicycle in any location other than those specified by this policy. Bicycles, E-Bicycles, Unicycles, E-unicycles, Scooters, Motorized Scooters and E-Scooters cannot block ADA pathways, ADA access ramps, or building entrances or exits.

3.2.2 Parking Violations

Personal transportation devices parked and/or locked in areas other than those expressly stated within this policy may be impounded or immobilized by Parking Services, Sustainable Transportation or the VT Police Department. Parking Services, Sustainable Transportation and the VT Police Department will not be held responsible for the replacement of locks damaged during this process. The owner of the device that is improperly parked will receive a parking citation and may be required to pay an impound fee to retrieve their device.

3.3 Violation of Policy

Violations of any state regulations or university policy may result in a citation being issued by the VT Police Department or Parking Services and may result in the device being removed or impounded, and/or referral to the student conduct process. Repeated violations may result in suspension or revocation of personal transportation device operation privileges on campus. Violations of this policy may also subject the user to disciplinary action and potential restitution for any damage(s) caused.

3.4 Abandoned Personal Transportation Devices

Personal transportation devices that are left on campus the Monday following spring commencement shall be considered abandoned. These devices will be impounded and disposed of in accordance with university policy.

Immediate impoundment is warranted if a personal transportation device is deemed abandoned by displaying any of the following: severely rusted chain; flat or missing tire; missing parts (wheel(s), handlebar, pedal(s), seat); severe damage (e.g., bent rim or frame); buildup of debris around tires; significant amount of dirt accumulated on the bicycle seat; and/or unlocked.



3.5 Damage to University Property by Personal Transportation Devices

Students whose use of bicycles or other personal transportation devices damage university property may be referred to Student Conduct for possible restitution. See the [Student Code of Conduct](#) for further information.

4.0 Definitions

Bicycle: A device propelled solely by human power, upon which a person may ride either on or astride a regular seat attached thereto, having two or more wheels in tandem, including children's bicycles, except a toy vehicle intended for use by young children.

Crosswalk: That part of a roadway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs or, in the absence of curbs, from the edges of the traversable roadway; or any portion of a roadway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface.

Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Device (EPAMD): A self-balancing two-non-tandem-wheeled device that is designed to transport only one person and powered by an electric propulsion system. This category excludes motorized wheel chairs and/or other mobility devices used by individuals with disabilities.

Electric Power Assisted Bicycle (e-bicycle, e-bike): A vehicle that travels on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground and is equipped with (i) pedals that allow propulsion by human power, (ii) a seat for the use of the rider, and (iii) an electric motor with an input of no more than 750 watts. Electric power-assisted bicycles shall be classified as follows:

- Class 1 means an electric power-assisted bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour;
- Class 2 means an electric power-assisted bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour; and
- Class 3 means an electric power-assisted 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.

Electric-Scooter (E-Scooter): Scooter that is ridden in a standing position generally consisting of two or more wheels, designed to transport only one person, and is powered by an electric propulsion system. Such devices must be equipped with a system that will enable the user to bring the device to a controlled stop.

Electric Skateboard: a personal transporter based on a skateboard. The speed is usually controlled by a wireless hand-held throttle remote, or rider body weight-shifting between front of the board for forward motion and rear for braking. As for the direction of travel to the right or left, it is adjusted by tilting the board to one side or the other.

Electric Unicycle (e-unicycle): is a self-balancing personal transporter with a single wheel. The rider controls speed by leaning forwards or backwards, and steers by twisting or tilting the unit side to side.



Hoverboard: A form of transportation for one person, consisting of a small board on which the person balances, with two wheels and a motor.

In-line Skate: A roller skate with a boot that has wheels mounted in a single line.

Moped: A vehicle that travels on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground that has (i) a seat that is no less than 24 inches in height, measured from the middle of the seat perpendicular to the ground, (ii) a gasoline, electric, or hybrid motor that displaces less than 50 cubic centimeters, and (iii) pedals.

Motorcycle: a two or three-wheeled motor vehicle steered by a handlebar from a saddle-style seat.

Motorized Scooter: A type of non-pedaled vehicle that meets the following standards:

1. Has two wheels, of which one is 10 inches or more in diameter.
2. Has a seat for the operator.
3. Has a step-through chassis.
4. Is equipped with an automatic transmission.
5. Has a motor with a rating of 2.7 brake horsepower or less, and if the motor is an internal combustion engine, with a capacity of 50 cubic centimeters piston displacement or less.

Motorized Skateboard: a personal transporter based on a skateboard. The speed is usually controlled by a wireless hand-held throttle remote, or rider body weight-shifting between front of the board for forward motion and rear for braking. As for the direction of travel to the right or left, it is adjusted by tilting the board to one side or the other.

Operator: For purposes of this policy is a person using or operating a personal transportation device.

Personal Transportation Device: a mobility device, which may be equipped with an electric or fuel driven motor for assistance or sole propulsion, designed for conveying the operator. For the purposes of this policy include all forms of devices listed herein.

Roller Skate: A set of wheels attached to shoes, usually one pair at the front and another at the back, used for skating.

Roadway: The land over which a road is built; a road together with the land at its edge. May include two or more roadways if divided by a physical barrier or barriers or an unpaved area. For purposes of this policy the terms roadway and highway are interchangeable.

Scooter: A vehicle typically ridden as a recreation, consisting of a footboard mounted on two wheels and a long steering handle, propelled by resting one foot on the footboard and pushing the other against the ground.

Shared-Use Path: a bikeway that is physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and is located either within the highway right-of-way or within a separate right-of-way. Shared-use paths may also be used by pedestrians, skaters, users of wheel chairs or wheel chair conveyances, joggers, and other nonmotorized users and personal delivery devices. Shared-use paths may be used by pedestrians, and other modes as outlined in this policy.

Sidewalk: The portion of a street between the curb lines, or the lateral lines of a roadway, and the adjacent property lines, intended for use by pedestrians.



Skateboard: A short narrow board with two small wheels fixed to the bottom of either end, on which (as a recreation or sport) a person can ride in a standing or crouching position, propelling themselves by occasionally pushing one foot against the ground.

Unicycle: A device that travels on only one wheel and upon which a person may ride (typically using a seat/saddle).

Wheelchair or wheelchair conveyance: A chair or seat equipped with wheels, typically used to provide mobility for persons who, by reason of physical disability, are otherwise unable to move about as pedestrians. "Wheel chair or wheel chair conveyance" includes both three-wheeled and four-wheeled devices. So long as it is operated only as provided in § 46.2-677, a self-propelled wheel chair or self-propelled wheel chair conveyance shall not be considered a motor vehicle.

5.0 References

Code of Virginia §46.2-1015

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title46.2/chapter10/section46.2-1015/>

Code of Virginia §46.2-1078

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title46.2/chapter8/section46.2-1078/>

Virginia Tech Student Code of Conduct

<https://codeofconduct.vt.edu/>

Town of Blacksburg, regulations for skating, skateboards, bicycles, and electric power assisted bicycles on downtown streets, sidewalks, and parking areas

https://library.municode.com/va/blacksburg/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CO_CH21STSI_ARTIGE_STREWHVEDERE_DIV2OPWHVEDETOSTSIPAAR_S21-115KSKBIELPOASBIDOSTSIPAAR

Virginia Department of Transportation - laws regulating bicycling on Virginia's public highways

http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bikeped/laws_and_safety_tips.asp

Virginia Tech Transportation Services (registration, permits, etc.)

<https://parking.vt.edu/>

6.0 Approval and Revisions

Approved June 10, 2009 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.

- Revision 1
 - Added restriction on use of skateboards, in-line skates, and roller skates in parking lots and parking garages to Section 2.1.2
 - Approved August 19 2011 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.
- Revision 2
 - Added definition for unicycle and added unicycle to sections pertaining to bicycles.
 - Updated definition of EPAMDs and added prohibition of these devices from campus buildings.
 - Added reference to student caused damages and potential restitution (see Hokie Handbook).
 - Approved January 14, 2016 by Vice President for Administration, Sherwood G. Wilson.



Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

- Revision 3
 - Added definitions and guidance regarding e-scooters.
 - Technical updates to hyperlinks.

Approved July 1, 2019 by Vice President for Operations, Sherwood G. Wilson.

- Revision 4
 - Added definitions and guidance regarding additional types of devices included in personal devices, transportation devices; added electronic power assisted bicycle and electronic skateboard
 - Updated references to local and state regulations
 - Technical updates to hyperlinks

Approved October 11, 2024 by Vice President for Auxiliary and Business Services, Lynsay Belshe.