SMSA Position Statements

**State Motorcycle Safety Association**  
**SMSA Position Statement #: 15-01**  
**Effective Date:** April 26, 2016  
**Revised:** September 14, 2022

### 15-01 Personal Protective Gear

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that all motorcyclists and passengers should use the following motorcyclist-specific personal protective equipment to reduce injury and/or the possibility of death:

- **Head, face, and eye protection**
  - Properly fitted motorcycle helmet meeting, at a minimum, the Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) FMVSS 218 helmet standard, full face helmet with integrated face shield is preferred.
  - Face shield or motorcyclist specific eyewear meeting the VESC-8 standard and/or ANSI/ISEA Z87.1-220.

- **Properly fitted motorcyclist-specific clothing, armored preferred, to include:**
  - Full-fingered gloves;
  - Over the ankle boots;
  - Long-pants; and
  - Long-sleeved jacket.

- The use of high-visibility/retro-reflective materials is preferred.

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**State Motorcycle Safety Association**  
**SMSA Position Statement #: 15-02**  
**Effective Date:** April 26, 2016  
**Revised:** September 14, 2022

### 15-02 Model National Standards for Rider Training

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that the NHTSA Model National Standards for Entry-Level Rider Training shall serve as the minimum standard for rider education and training programs. It is also the position of SMSA that each state should utilize a quality control process to ensure they meet the National Standards on a continued basis. Rider education and training programs should be evaluated on an ongoing and routine basis.

The State Motorcycle Safety Association (SMSA) supports the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Model National Standards for Entry Level Motorcycle Rider Training.

The standards include:

- Model National Standards for Entry-Level Motorcycle Rider Training – the Model Standards establish baseline content that all entry-level riders should be taught in motorcycle rider training classes held in the United States, and

- Model National Administrative Standards for Motorcycle Rider Training Programs – the Administrative Standards establish a minimum acceptable level of operation for motorcycle rider training programs.

Note: The NHTSA Standards are applicable to two-wheel motorcycle rider entry-level training only.
### 17-03 Instructor Rules of Professional Conduct

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that each State establish or approve comprehensive professional rules of conduct for rider education and training instructors.

### 17-04 State Funding

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that any fees assigned for state motorcycle/motorcyclist safety purposes (e.g., fines) should be used solely for and made available in full to the state motorcyclist safety program.

### 17-05 State Programs

The State Motorcycle Safety Association (SMSA) recognizes that state motorcyclist safety and rider education programs are directed by the state and state programs have sole discretion in the administration and funding of state motorcyclist safety and training initiatives.

### 17-06 Autocycles

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that autocycles, defined as any motor vehicle with three wheels in contact with the roadway at any one time, has an occupant compartment, is equipped with a steering wheel, safety belts, and rollbar or roll hoops, are not to be confused with motorcycles based on their distinctly different design, operation, and handling characteristics. Any motor vehicle with three or fewer wheels without a straddle seat or handlebars should not be defined as a motorcycle.

While autocycles often come with vehicle identification numbers (VINs) and manufacturers certificates of origin (MCOs) that are similar to that of a motorcycle, they should be defined in statute as a separate vehicle type. Operators should be required to meet requirements (e.g., knowledge and skills tests) specific for the State’s vehicle classification for the licensing of autocycles.
State Motorcycle Safety Association
SMSA Position Statement #: 17-07
Effective Date: September 27, 2017

17-07 Novelty Helmets
The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that all motorcyclists should be informed on the lack of protection novelty helmets provide versus motorcycle helmets that, at a minimum, meet the DOT FMVSS 218 standard (see SMSA Position Statement #: 15-01 Personal Protective Gear).

State Motorcycle Safety Association
SMSA Position Statement #: 18-08
Effective Date: November 20, 2018

18-08 Lane Splitting/Filtering
The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is more research on Lane Splitting and Lane Filtering is required to make a fully informed decision on the practices and the impact on safety.

Lane splitting refers to the practice in which motorcyclists ride between lanes of moving traffic. Lane filtering refers to the practice of moving to the front of stopped traffic.

State Motorcycle Safety Association
SMSA Position Statement #: 20-09
Effective Date: January 24, 2020

20-09 Rider Education and Training Requirements
The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that rider education and training provide a foundation for all riders regardless of licensure status. Therefore, all current and potential motorcycle riders should be strongly encouraged to participate in rider education and training course(s).

The completion of additional and ongoing (life-long) education and training is highly recommended.

State Motorcycle Safety Association
SMSA Position Statement #: 20-10
Effective Date: January 24, 2020

20-10 NHTSA’s Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 3 Motorcycle Safety

The SMSA advocates for all State programs to utilize Guideline No. 3 Motorcycle Safety to guide their comprehensive motorcyclist safety programing.
**20-11 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Funding**

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is an invaluable partner in the arena of motorcyclist safety, and values its leadership, guidance, and support.

It is important to remain focused on motorcyclist safety while exploring new strategies with a goal of zero fatalities. The SMSA continues to support NHTSA and its efforts to administer funding for comprehensive motorcyclist safety programming.

**20-12 The Safe System Approach / Zero Traffic Fatalities**

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that motorcyclists and stakeholders must be included in safety initiatives to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities of all roadway users.

As state programs embrace The Safe System Approach with the goal of zero serious injuries and traffic fatalities, it is important that motorcycles and motorcyclists are taken into consideration in the development and evaluation of all possible solutions.

**21-13 Motorcycle Rider Training Reciprocity**

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that U.S jurisdictions should honor the completion of an entry-level rider education and training course provided by other states, U.S. territories, or the military for a motorcycle permit/license/endorsement.

As states recognize the exchange of a driver's license from another state, rider training and testing should also be recognized.

**21-14 Rider Training and Licensure for All Street Legal Powered Cycles**

The State Motorcycle Safety Association’s (SMSA) position is that operators of any street legal powered cycle should receive formal rider training and meet state licensing requirements to operate on public roadways.

Powered cycles include any street legal two or three-wheel vehicle operated on public roadways, such as two-wheel cycles, three-wheel cycles (excluding autocycles), scooters and mopeds (excluding bicycles), no matter the powertrain type (e.g., electric).