

§2075. Other speed regulations

1. Operation impeding movement of traffic. A person may not operate a motor vehicle at such a slow speed as to impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, except when reduced speed is necessary for safe operation of the motor vehicle or in compliance with law.

[PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. Q, §47 (RPR); PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. X, §2 (AFF).]

1-A. Minimum speed limit. When the Department of Transportation determines, on the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation, that slow speeds on a public way consistently impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, the Commissioner of Transportation, with the approval of the Chief of the Maine State Police, may establish a minimum speed limit.

A person may not operate a vehicle below a posted minimum speed limit, except when necessary for safe operation.

[PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. Q, §48 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. X, §2 (AFF).]

2. Public ways under construction. The Commissioner of Transportation may restrict the speed limit on a public way under construction or during maintenance and the Executive Director of the Maine Turnpike Authority may restrict the speed limit on any portion of the turnpike under construction or during maintenance when a lower rate of speed would minimize the danger of accident. A person may not operate a motor vehicle in excess of these speeds, as long as notice of the maximum speed has been given by standard black and white speed limit signs on the way. Signs erected pursuant to this subsection must be covered or removed during hours when the speed limit is not restricted.

The penalty for a violation of this subsection is a fine equal to twice the amount of the fine designated in accordance with Title 4, section 164, subsection 12 for a similar speeding violation under section 2073.

[PL 1995, c. 151, §1 (AMD).]

2-A. Public ways under construction; municipal and utility construction activities. The Commissioner of Transportation may implement the guidance of a municipality or utility engaging in a construction project on a public way to temporarily reduce the posted speed limit of the section of the public way where the municipal or utility construction project is located when construction workers are present. The commissioner shall adopt rules to implement this subsection, including rules that at a minimum establish the criteria that must be met before the commissioner may reduce a posted speed limit. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

[PL 2023, c. 19, §2 (NEW).]

3. Municipal authority. Except as provided in this subsection, a municipality may not alter a speed limit or enact or enforce a regulation contrary to this Title. A municipality may:

A. Regulate traffic by means of signal devices or other appropriate methods on a way on which traffic is heavy or continuous; [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

B. Limit traffic to one-way traffic on a way, subject to Title 23, section 1351; [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

C. Regulate speed of vehicles in public parks by erecting at all entrances to the park adequate signs giving notice of the special speed regulations; [PL 2001, c. 313, §1 (AMD).]

D. With the approval of the Department of Transportation and the Chief of the State Police, increase or decrease the speed limit on through ways by erecting standard signs giving notice of the speed limit in accordance with the latest edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices published by the Federal Highway Administration; [PL 2003, c. 92, §2 (AMD).]

E. Subject to the provisions of this paragraph, if it is a qualifying municipality, set speed limits on qualifying roads. As used in this paragraph, "qualifying municipality" means a municipality that has a population of 2,500 or more as measured by the latest decennial United States census or that employs a professional engineer licensed in this State. As used in this paragraph, "qualifying road" means a town way that is classified as local by the Department of Transportation in accordance with the federal functional classification system.

If a qualifying municipality decides to set speed limits in accordance with this paragraph, the municipality shall provide written notice of that determination to the Commissioner of Transportation and shall set speed limits for all qualifying roads in that municipality.

Unless otherwise approved as provided in paragraph D, speed limits set by a municipality must be in 5-mile-per-hour increments within the following ranges:

- (1) From 20 to 25 miles per hour, inclusive, regarding roads in a business or residential district or a compact area, except that the lower limit may be set at 15 miles per hour on roads on islands not accessible by road or dead end roads less than 1/4 mile in length; and
- (2) From 30 to 50 miles per hour, inclusive, regarding roads in all other areas.

Prior to establishing a speed limit, the municipality must perform a traffic investigation that reviews the factors identified in the applicable sections of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The municipal officers shall validate that speed limit in accordance with the procedure for establishing municipal traffic ordinances set forth in Title 30-A, section 3009, post standard speed limit signs in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and provide written notice of that speed limit zone to the Commissioner of Transportation on forms approved by the Department of Transportation.

The Department of Transportation may require a municipality with a population of 5,000 or more as measured by the latest decennial United States census that has not provided written notice to the department that the municipality will set speed limits in accordance with this paragraph to provide the department with all data necessary to set such speed limits. The nature, extent and form of that data must be acceptable to the department and may include, without limitation, the reason for the request, length and location of the proposed speed zone, road width, number of driveways in that zone, traffic volume, posted speed, prevailing speed as measured by radar, accident history and speed enforcement efforts; and [PL 2003, c. 92, §3 (AMD).]

F. With the approval of the Department of Transportation and the Chief of the State Police, and in accordance with the latest edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices published by the Federal Highway Administration, designate a school zone to which the speed limits in section 2074, subsection 1, paragraph A apply. [PL 2003, c. 92, §4 (NEW).]
[PL 2003, c. 92, §§2-4 (AMD).]

4. Speed measurement. The results of a measurement of the following instruments must be accepted as prima facie evidence of the speed of a motor vehicle in a criminal or traffic infraction proceeding:

A. Radar; [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

B. An electronic device that measures speed by radiomicrowaves, laser or otherwise; or [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

C. A device that measures, in any sequence, a selected distance traversed by a motor vehicle operated by the law enforcement officer and the time required by another motor vehicle to traverse that same distance, and computes therefrom the average speed of the other vehicle. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

[PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

5. Signs. The presence of signs is prima facie evidence that those signs were erected, that they provide the notice required and that the speeds indicated were fixed in accordance with this chapter. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1993, c. 683, §A2 (NEW). PL 1993, c. 683, §B5 (AFF). PL 1995, c. 151, §1 (AMD). PL 2001, c. 313, §1 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 92, §§2-4 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 452, §§Q47,48 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 452, §X2 (AFF). PL 2023, c. 19, §2 (AMD).

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