

Select Year: 2011 

## The 2011 Florida Statutes

---

[Title XXIII](#)  
MOTOR VEHICLES

[Chapter 320](#)  
MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSES

[View Entire Chapter](#)

**320.01 Definitions, general.**—As used in the Florida Statutes, except as otherwise provided, the term:

(1) “Motor vehicle” means:

(a) An automobile, motorcycle, truck, trailer, semitrailer, truck tractor and semitrailer combination, or any other vehicle operated on the roads of this state, used to transport persons or property, and propelled by power other than muscular power, but the term does not include traction engines, road rollers, such vehicles as run only upon a track, bicycles, or mopeds.

(b) A recreational vehicle-type unit primarily designed as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use, which either has its own motive power or is mounted on or drawn by another vehicle. Recreational vehicle-type units, when traveling on the public roadways of this state, must comply with the length and width provisions of s. [316.515](#), as that section may hereafter be amended. As defined below, the basic entities are:

1. The “travel trailer,” which is a vehicular portable unit, mounted on wheels, of such a size or weight as not to require special highway movement permits when drawn by a motorized vehicle. It is primarily designed and constructed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use. It has a body width of no more than 8½ feet and an overall body length of no more than 40 feet when factory-equipped for the road.

2. The “camping trailer,” which is a vehicular portable unit mounted on wheels and constructed with collapsible partial sidewalls which fold for towing by another vehicle and unfold at the campsite to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use.

3. The “truck camper,” which is a truck equipped with a portable unit designed to be loaded onto, or affixed to, the bed or chassis of the truck and constructed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use.

4. The “motor home,” which is a vehicular unit which does not exceed the length, height, and width limitations provided in s. [316.515](#), is a self-propelled motor vehicle, and is primarily designed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use.

5. The “private motor coach,” which is a vehicular unit which does not exceed the length, width, and height limitations provided in s. [316.515\(9\)](#), is built on a self-propelled bus type chassis having no fewer than three load-bearing axles, and is primarily designed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use.

6. The “van conversion,” which is a vehicular unit which does not exceed the length and width limitations provided in s. [316.515](#), is built on a self-propelled motor vehicle chassis, and is designed for recreation, camping, and travel use.

7. The “park trailer,” which is a transportable unit which has a body width not exceeding 14 feet and which is built on a single chassis and is designed to provide seasonal or temporary living quarters when connected to utilities necessary for operation of installed fixtures and appliances. The total area of the unit in a setup mode, when measured from the exterior surface of the exterior stud walls at the level of maximum

dimensions, not including any bay window, does not exceed 400 square feet when constructed to ANSI A-119.5 standards, and 500 square feet when constructed to United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Standards. The length of a park trailer means the distance from the exterior of the front of the body (nearest to the drawbar and coupling mechanism) to the exterior of the rear of the body (at the opposite end of the body), including any protrusions.

8. The “fifth-wheel trailer,” which is a vehicular unit mounted on wheels, designed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use, of such size or weight as not to require a special highway movement permit, of gross trailer area not to exceed 400 square feet in the setup mode, and designed to be towed by a motorized vehicle that contains a towing mechanism that is mounted above or forward of the tow vehicle’s rear axle.

(2)(a) “Mobile home” means a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is 8 body feet or more in width and which is built on an integral chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling when connected to the required utilities and includes the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained therein. For tax purposes, the length of a mobile home is the distance from the exterior of the wall nearest to the drawbar and coupling mechanism to the exterior of the wall at the opposite end of the home where such walls enclose living or other interior space. Such distance includes expandable rooms, but excludes bay windows, porches, drawbars, couplings, hitches, wall and roof extensions, or other attachments that do not enclose interior space. In the event that the mobile home owner has no proof of the length of the drawbar, coupling, or hitch, then the tax collector may in his or her discretion either inspect the home to determine the actual length or may assume 4 feet to be the length of the drawbar, coupling, or hitch.

(b) “Manufactured home” means a mobile home fabricated on or after June 15, 1976, in an offsite manufacturing facility for installation or assembly at the building site, with each section bearing a seal certifying that it is built in compliance with the federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standard Act.

(3) “Owner” means any person, firm, corporation, or association controlling any motor vehicle or mobile home by right of purchase, gift, lease, or otherwise.

(4) “Trailer” means any vehicle without motive power designed to be coupled to or drawn by a motor vehicle and constructed so that no part of its weight or that of its load rests upon the towing vehicle.

(5) “Semitrailer” means any vehicle without motive power designed to be coupled to or drawn by a motor vehicle and constructed so that some part of its weight and that of its load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle.

(6) “Net weight” means the actual scale weight in pounds with complete catalog equipment.

(7) “Gross weight” means the net weight of a motor vehicle in pounds plus the weight of the load carried by it.

(8) “Cwt” means the weight per hundred pounds, or major fraction thereof, of a motor vehicle.

(9) “Truck” means any motor vehicle with a net vehicle weight of 5,000 pounds or less and which is designed or used principally for the carriage of goods and includes a motor vehicle to which has been added a cabinet box, a platform, a rack, or other equipment for the purpose of carrying goods other than the personal effects of the passengers.

(10) “Heavy truck” means any motor vehicle with a net vehicle weight of more than 5,000 pounds, which is registered on the basis of gross vehicle weight in accordance with s. [320.08\(4\)](#), and which is designed or used for the carriage of goods or designed or equipped with a connecting device for the purpose of drawing a trailer that is attached or coupled thereto by means of such connecting device and includes any such motor vehicle to which has been added a cabinet box, a platform, a rack, or other equipment for the purpose of carrying goods other than the personal effects of the passengers.

(11) “Truck tractor” means a motor vehicle which has four or more wheels and is designed and equipped

with a fifth wheel for the primary purpose of drawing a semitrailer that is attached or coupled thereto by means of such fifth wheel and which has no provision for carrying loads independently.

(12) "Gross vehicle weight" means:

(a) For heavy trucks with a net weight of more than 5,000 pounds, but less than 8,000 pounds, the gross weight of the heavy truck. The gross vehicle weight is calculated by adding to the net weight of the heavy truck the weight of the load carried by it, which is the maximum gross weight as declared by the owner or person applying for registration.

(b) For heavy trucks with a net weight of 8,000 pounds or more, the gross weight of the heavy truck, including the gross weight of any trailer coupled thereto. The gross vehicle weight is calculated by adding to the gross weight of the heavy truck the gross weight of the trailer, which is the maximum gross weight as declared by the owner or person applying for registration.

(c) The gross weight of a truck tractor and semitrailer combination is calculated by adding to the net weight of the truck tractor the gross weight of the semitrailer, which is the maximum gross weight as declared by the owner or person applying for registration; such vehicles are together by means of a fifth-wheel arrangement whereby part of the weight of the semitrailer and load rests upon the truck tractor.

(13) "Passenger," or any abbreviation thereof, does not include a driver.

(14) "Private use" means the use of any vehicle which is not properly classified as a for-hire vehicle.

(15)(a) "For-hire vehicle" means any motor vehicle, when used for transporting persons or goods for compensation; let or rented to another for consideration; offered for rent or hire as a means of transportation for compensation; advertised in a newspaper or generally held out as being for rent or hire; used in connection with a travel bureau; or offered or used to provide transportation for persons solicited through personal contact or advertised on a "share-expense" basis. When goods or passengers are transported for compensation in a motor vehicle outside a municipal corporation of this state, or when goods are transported in a motor vehicle not owned by the person owning the goods, such transportation is "for hire." The carriage of goods and other personal property in a motor vehicle by a corporation or association for its stockholders, shareholders, and members, cooperative or otherwise, is transportation "for hire."

(b) The following are not included in the term "for-hire vehicle": a motor vehicle used for transporting school children to and from school under contract with school officials; a hearse or ambulance when operated by a licensed embalmer or mortician or his or her agent or employee in this state; a motor vehicle used in the transportation of agricultural or horticultural products or in transporting agricultural or horticultural supplies direct to growers or the consumers of such supplies or to associations of such growers or consumers; a motor vehicle temporarily used by a farmer for the transportation of agricultural or horticultural products from any farm or grove to a packinghouse or to a point of shipment by a transportation company; or a motor vehicle not exceeding 1½ tons under contract with the Government of the United States to carry United States mail, provided such vehicle is not used for commercial purposes.

(16) "Road" means the entire width between the boundary lines of every way or place of whatever nature when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular traffic.

(17) "Brake horsepower" means the actual unit of torque developed per unit of time at the output shaft of an engine, as measured by a dynamometer.

(18) "Department" means the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

(19)(a) "Registration period" means a period of 12 months or 24 months during which a motor vehicle or mobile home registration is valid.

(b) "Extended registration period" means a period of 24 months during which a motor vehicle or mobile home registration is valid.

(20) "Marine boat trailer dealer" means any person engaged in:

(a) The business of buying, selling, manufacturing, or dealing in trailers specifically designed to be drawn

by another vehicle and used for the transportation on land of vessels, as defined in s. [327.02](#); or

(b) The offering or displaying of such trailers for sale.

(21) "Renewal period" means the period during which renewal of a motor vehicle registration or mobile home registration is required, as provided in s. [320.055](#).

(22) "Golf cart" means a motor vehicle that is designed and manufactured for operation on a golf course for sporting or recreational purposes and that is not capable of exceeding speeds of 20 miles per hour.

(23) "Apportioned motor vehicle" means any motor vehicle which is required to be registered, or with respect to which an election has been made to register it, under the International Registration Plan.

(24) "International Registration Plan" means a registration reciprocity agreement among states of the United States and provinces of Canada providing for payment of license fees on the basis of fleet miles operated in various jurisdictions.

(25) "Apportionable vehicle" means any vehicle, except recreational vehicles, vehicles displaying restricted plates, city pickup and delivery vehicles, buses used in transportation of chartered parties, and government-owned vehicles, which is used or intended for use in two or more member jurisdictions that allocate or proportionally register vehicles and which is used for the transportation of persons for hire or is designed, used, or maintained primarily for the transportation of property and:

(a) Is a power unit having a gross vehicle weight in excess of 26,001 pounds;

(b) Is a power unit having three or more axles, regardless of weight; or

(c) Is used in combination, when the weight of such combination exceeds 26,001 pounds gross vehicle weight.

Vehicles, or combinations thereof, having a gross vehicle weight of 26,001 pounds or less and two-axle vehicles may be proportionally registered.

(26) "Commercial motor vehicle" means any vehicle which is not owned or operated by a governmental entity, which uses special fuel or motor fuel on the public highways, and which has a gross vehicle weight of 26,001 pounds or more, or has three or more axles regardless of weight, or is used in combination when the weight of such combination exceeds 26,001 pounds gross vehicle weight. A vehicle that occasionally transports personal property to and from a closed-course motorsport facility, as defined in s. [549.09\(1\)\(a\)](#), is not a commercial motor vehicle if the use is not for profit and corporate sponsorship is not involved. As used in this subsection, the term "corporate sponsorship" means a payment, donation, gratuity, in-kind service, or other benefit provided to or derived by a person in relation to the underlying activity, other than the display of product or corporate names, logos, or other graphic information on the property being transported.

(27) "Motorcycle" means any motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, excluding a vehicle in which the operator is enclosed by a cabin unless it meets the requirements set forth by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for a motorcycle. The term "motorcycle" does not include a tractor or a moped.

(28) "Moped" means any vehicle with pedals to permit propulsion by human power, having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels, with a motor rated not in excess of 2 brake horsepower and not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on level ground, and with a power-drive system that functions directly or automatically without clutching or shifting gears by the operator after the drive system is engaged. If an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement may not exceed 50 cubic centimeters.

(29) "Interstate" means vehicle movement between or through two or more states.

(30) "Intrastate" means vehicle movement from one point within a state to another point within the same state.

(31) "Person" means and includes natural persons, corporations, copartnerships, firms, companies, agencies, or associations, singular or plural.

- (32) “Registrant” means a person in whose name or names a vehicle is properly registered.
- (33) “Motor carrier” means any person owning, controlling, operating, or managing any motor vehicle used to transport persons or property over any public highway.
- (34) “Motorized disability access vehicle” means a vehicle designed primarily for handicapped individuals with normal upper body abilities and designed to be fueled by gasoline, travel on not more than three wheels, with a motor rated not in excess of 2 brake horsepower and not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on level ground, and with a power-drive system that functions directly or automatically without clutching or shifting gears by the operator after the drive system is engaged. If an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement may not exceed 50 cubic centimeters.
- (35) “Resident” means a person who has his or her principal place of domicile in this state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months, who has registered to vote in this state, who has made a statement of domicile pursuant to s. [222.17](#), or who has filed for homestead tax exemption on property in this state.
- (36) “Nonresident” means a person who is not a resident.
- (37) “Electric vehicle” means a motor vehicle that is powered by an electric motor that draws current from rechargeable storage batteries, fuel cells, or other sources of electrical current.
- (38) “Disabled motor vehicle” means any motor vehicle as defined in subsection (1) which is not operable under its own motive power, excluding a nondisabled trailer or semitrailer, or any motor vehicle that is unsafe for operation upon the highways of this state.
- (39) “Replacement motor vehicle” means any motor vehicle as defined in subsection (1) under tow by a wrecker to the location of a disabled motor vehicle for the purpose of replacing the disabled motor vehicle, thereby permitting the transfer of the disabled motor vehicle’s operator, passengers, and load to an operable motor vehicle.
- (40) “Wrecker” means any motor vehicle that is used to tow, carry, or otherwise transport motor vehicles and that is equipped for that purpose with a boom, winch, car carrier, or other similar equipment.
- (41) “Tow” means to pull or draw any motor vehicle with a power unit by means of a direct attachment, drawbar, or other connection or to carry a motor vehicle on a power unit designed to transport such vehicle from one location to another.
- (42) “Low-speed vehicle” means any four-wheeled electric vehicle whose top speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but not greater than 25 miles per hour, including neighborhood electric vehicles. Low-speed vehicles must comply with the safety standards in 49 C.F.R. s. [571.500](#) and s. [316.2122](#).
- (43) “Utility vehicle” means a motor vehicle designed and manufactured for general maintenance, security, and landscaping purposes, but the term does not include any vehicle designed or used primarily for the transportation of persons or property on a street or highway, or a golf cart, or an all-terrain vehicle as defined in s. [316.2074](#).
- (44) For purposes of this chapter, the term “agricultural products” means any food product; any agricultural, horticultural, or livestock product; any raw material used in plant food formulation; and any plant food used to produce food and fiber.
- (45) “Mini truck” means any four-wheeled, reduced-dimension truck that does not have a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration truck classification, with a top speed of 55 miles per hour, and which is equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, taillamps, reflex reflectors, parking brakes, rearview mirrors, windshields, and seat belts.

**History.**—ss. 1, 6, ch. 7275, 1917; s. 1, ch. 7737, 1918; RGS 1006, 1011; ss. 2, 5, ch. 8410, 1921; s. 2, ch. 9156, 1923; s. 1, ch. 9157, 1923; ss. 1, 3, ch. 10182, 1925; CGL 1280, 1285, 1677; s. 3, ch. 15625, 1931; s. 3, ch. 16085, 1933; s. 1, ch. 20743, 1941; s. 1, ch. 20911, 1941; s. 1, ch. 26923, 1951; s. 1, ch. 59-351; s. 1, ch. 65-61; s. 1, ch. 65-446; ss. 23, 24, 35, ch. 69-106; s. 1, ch. 70-215; s. 1, ch. 70-391; s. 93, ch. 71-377; s. 1, ch. 72-339; s. 1, ch. 73-284; s. 2, ch. 74-243; s. 3, ch. 75-66; s. 2, ch. 76-135; s. 4, ch. 76-286; s. 1, ch. 77-180; s. 1, ch. 77-357; s. 1, ch. 78-221; s. 125, ch. 79-400; s. 12, ch. 81-151; s. 22, ch. 82-134; s. 3, ch. 83-188; s. 23, ch. 83-215; s. 1, ch. 83-318; s. 1, ch. 84-182; s. 7, ch. 84-260; s. 5, ch. 85-155; s. 43, ch. 85-180; s. 10, ch. 85-309; s. 4, ch.

85-343; s. 11, ch. 86-243; s. 11, ch. 87-161; s. 20, ch. 87-198; s. 5, ch. 87-225; s. 1, ch. 88-147; s. 66, ch. 89-282; s. 2, ch. 89-320; s. 1, ch. 90-163; s. 4, ch. 90-270; s. 5, ch. 92-148; s. 39, ch. 94-306; s. 910, ch. 95-148; s. 10, ch. 95-247; s. 10, ch. 95-333; s. 29, ch. 96-413; s. 3, ch. 97-58; s. 2, ch. 99-163; s. 15, ch. 99-248; s. 39, ch. 2001-196; s. 1, ch. 2007-242; s. 16, ch. 2008-176; s. 2, ch. 2008-179; s. 6, ch. 2009-183.

Copyright © 1995-2012 The Florida Legislature • [Privacy Statement](#) • [Contact Us](#)