

SB296 INTRODUCED



1 SB296
2 I4IDZ6W-1
3 By Senator Kelley
4 RFD: Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
5 First Read: 03-Apr-25



4 SYNOPSIS:

5 This bill would authorize the operation of
6 off-road vehicles on certain public roads in the same
7 manner as private passenger automobiles, provided the
8 off-road vehicles satisfy various registration,
9 licensure, equipment, and insurance requirements.

10 This bill would restrict the operation of
11 off-road vehicles to those public roads in the
12 unincorporated portions of a county which have a
13 maximum speed limit of 55 miles per hour.

14 This bill would require the operator of an
15 off-road vehicle on a public road to have a driver
16 license.

17 This bill would provide exemptions under certain
18 conditions, including when operated on private property
19 and for agricultural purposes.

20 This bill would also provide that operating an
21 off-road vehicle in violation of the law is a traffic
22 infraction.

23
24
25 A BILL
26 TO BE ENTITLED
27 AN ACT
28



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Relating to off-road vehicles; to provide for the operation of off-road vehicles on certain public roads; to provide for the registration and licensure of off-road vehicles; to require the Department of Revenue to adopt rules; and to provide a penalty for a violation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) An off-road vehicle, as defined under Section 32-8-2, Code of Alabama 1975, may be operated on a public road subject to the requirements of this section.

(b) An off-road vehicle operated on a public road shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

(1) The vehicle shall be registered pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 12 of Title 40, Code of Alabama 1975.

(2) The vehicle shall have a tag issued pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 6 of Title 32, Code of Alabama 1975. The tag shall be securely attached in the same manner as a private passenger automobile and shall indicate that the off-road vehicle is for restricted use.

(3) The off-road vehicle shall be certified by an off-road vehicle dealer, as defined under Section 32-8-2, Code of Alabama 1975, that the vehicle is equipped with all of the following:

a. Brakes.

b. Head lights and tail lights.

c. A horn meeting the requirements of Section 32-5-213, Code of Alabama 1975.

d. A seat belt for each passenger.

e. A roll bar.



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f. A manufacturer-installed or equivalent spark arrester.

g. A manufacturer-installed or equivalent muffler in proper working order and properly connected to the vehicle's exhaust system.

h. A windshield, with or without wipers.

(4) The vehicle is covered by a liability insurance policy in an amount no less than the minimum amounts required under Chapter 7A of Title 32, Code of Alabama 1975.

(c) An off-road vehicle may only be operated on a public road by an operator who is at least 16 years of age and who possesses a valid driver license from this state or an equivalent license from another state. The operator shall obey all of the duties applicable to the operator of a private motor vehicle under Chapter 5 and Chapter 5A of Title 32, Code of Alabama 1975, except as to those provisions that by their nature can have no application.

(d) The operation of an off-road vehicle under this section is limited to public roads in the unincorporated portions of a county which have a maximum posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour. Nothing in this section authorizes the operation of an off-road vehicle on an interstate highway or within a municipality.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section to the contrary, an off-road vehicle that does not otherwise meet the requirements of subsection (b) may be operated to cross from a county road, field, or other area of operation to another, or cross a state highway or other noncounty road, not



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to include an interstate or national defense highway system,
if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The crossing is made at an angle of approximately
90 degrees to the direction of the highway and at a place
where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing.

(2) The vehicle is brought to a complete stop before
crossing the shoulder or main traveled way of the highway.

(3) The operator yields the operator's right-of-way to
all oncoming traffic that constitutes an immediate potential
hazard.

(4) Both the head lights and tail lights are
illuminated when the crossing is made, if the vehicle is
equipped with head lights and tail lights.

(f) An off-road vehicle is exempt from the requirements
of subsection (b) while operated under any of the following
conditions:

(1) On private land with the permission of the owner
thereof.

(2) For agricultural purposes.

(3) For wildlife management, law enforcement, emergency
services, and other official governmental purposes.

(g) The annual license tax and registration fee for an
off-road vehicle, as defined in Section 32-8-2, Code of
Alabama 1975, shall be the same as a private passenger
automobile, and the fee shall be distributed in the same
manner as for a private passenger automobile.

(h) The Department of Revenue shall adopt rules to
implement and administer this section, including providing for



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113 the creation of an off-road vehicle certification form.

114 (i) A county or a county governing body shall not be
115 held liable for any damages or loss of property arising from
116 the operation of an off-road vehicle pursuant to this section.

117 (j) A person who operates an off-road vehicle in
118 violation of this section is guilty of a traffic infraction.

119 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
120 1, 2025.