

South Carolina Law Governing the Use of Golf Carts

TO AMEND SECTION 56-3-115, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE OPERATION OF GOLF CARTS ALONG THE STATE'S HIGHWAYS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT WHEN A GOLF CART OWNER'S RESIDENCE IS LOCATED WITHIN A GATED COMMUNITY THE TWO-MILE LIMIT WITHIN WHICH A GOLF CART OWNER MAY OPERATE HIS GOLF CART MUST BE MEASURED FROM THE COMMUNITY'S PRIMARY ENTRANCE AND NOT FROM THE OWNER'S RESIDENCE, TO PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATION OF A GOLF CART ALONG A SECONDARY HIGHWAY OR STREET ON CERTAIN SEA ISLANDS, TO PROVIDE A DEFINITION FOR THE TERM "GATED COMMUNITY", AND TO PROVIDE THAT A GOLF CART MAY CROSS CERTAIN SECONDARY HIGHWAYS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 2, Title 56 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 56-2-105. (A) For the purposes of this section, 'gated community' means any homeowners' community with at least one controlled access ingress and egress which includes the presence of a guard house, a mechanical barrier, or another method of controlled conveyance.

(B) An individual or business owner of a vehicle commonly known as a golf cart may obtain a permit decal and registration from the Department of Motor Vehicles upon presenting proof of ownership and financial responsibility for the golf cart and upon payment of a five dollar fee.

(1) During daylight hours only, a permitted golf cart may be operated within four miles of the address on the registration certificate and only on a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less.

(2) During daylight hours only, a permitted golf cart may be operated within four miles of a point of ingress and egress to a gated community and only on a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less.

(3) During daylight hours only, within four miles of the registration holder's address, and while traveling along a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less, a permitted golf cart may cross a highway or street at an intersection where the highway has a posted speed limit of more than thirty-five miles an hour.

(4) During daylight hours only, a permitted golf cart may be operated along a secondary highway or street for which the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles an hour or less on an island not accessible by a bridge designed for use by automobiles.

(D) A person operating a permitted golf cart must be at least sixteen years of age and hold a valid driver's license. The operator of a permitted golf cart being operated on a highway or street must have in his possession:

- (1) the registration certificate issued by the department;
- (2) proof of financial responsibility for the golf cart; and
- (3) his driver's license.

(E)(1) A golf cart permit must be replaced with a new permit every five years, or at the time the permit holder changes his address.

(2) Golf cart owners holding golf cart permits on or before October 1, 2011, will have until September 30, 2015, to obtain a replacement permit.

(F) A political subdivision may, on designated streets on roads within the political subdivision's jurisdiction, reduce the area in which a permitted golf cart may operate from four miles to no less than two miles. However, a political subdivision may not reduce or otherwise amend the other restrictions placed on the operation of a permitted golf cart contained in this section.

(G) The provisions of this section that restrict the use of a golf cart to certain streets, certain hours, and certain distances shall not apply to a golf cart used by a public safety agency in connection with the performance of its duties."

SECTION 2. Section 56-3-115 of the 1976 Code is repealed.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect October 1, 2011.