

# 4-WHEELER, ATV, UTV, SIDE-BY-SIDE, GOLF CART & OTHER LOW-SPEED VEHICLES

## STREET LEGAL REQUIREMENTS



Any vehicle originally manufactured for off-road use cannot be registered as street legal in the State of Alabama and therefore, cannot be used on any public roadway within the State.

Many residents are utilizing “golf carts on roadways and there are many misconceptions that we would like to clear up. A golf cart has a maximum speed of 20 mph and it does not meet street legal requirements. Vehicles called “Low-Speed Vehicles” (LSV) are considered street legal.



A LSV differs from golf carts. Here is how:

- LSVs have a 17 digit vehicle identification number (VIN) that meets requirements of the National Highway Safety and Traffic Administration.
- LSVs have a Manufacturer’s Statement of Origin (MSO) that states the vehicle complies with safety standards set for LSVs. LSVs are built with greater specifications than golf carts. Also, golf carts CANNOT be retrofitted to become LSVs as they will not have this MSO from the manufacturer.

Some States have restrictions on where LSVs can be driven based on a set speed limit- most state that LSVs cannot be driven on roadways where the speed limit exceeds 35 mph. Alabama does not have a law that directly states a speed limit. However, State law does specify that a LSV cannot be driven on a roadway where it impedes traffic and law enforcement officers interpret this as being on a roadway with a maximum speed of 35 mph.

It is also important to point out that a LSV is a vehicle and is to be handled as one:

- If your child is not old enough or not licensed to drive a car, he/she is not old enough or licensed to drive a LSV.
- You cannot drive a LSV on a sidewalk or stand on the side and drive- **all traffic laws that apply to your personal vehicle, apply to your LSV!**
- Like your vehicle, your LSV must be tagged/registered by the DMV and be driven only by a licensed and insured driver.

All Vehicles discussed above, if operated on streets or highways within city limits, are subject to all the rules of the road and State regulations regarding the use of those roadways, including the requirements respecting operators or drivers licenses.

### A low speed vehicle must have all of the following to be street legal:

- Basic standard that meets safety requirements (The manufacturer’s Statement of Origin)
- A min. threshold of 20 mph and top speed of 25 mph.
- Headlamps
- Front and rear turn signal lamps
- Tail lamps
- Stop Lamps Reflex reflectors: one red on each side as far to the rear as practicable, and one red on the rear.
- Exterior mirror mounted on the driver’s side of the vehicle and either an exterior mirror mounted on the passenger’s side of the vehicle or an interior mirror.
- Parking Brake
- Windshield that conforms to the Federal motor vehicle safety standard (AS-1 or AS-5 composition)
- A Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)
- Type 1 (lap belt) or Type 2 (shoulder belt)

This is an abbreviated version of the DOT 47 page document for golf carts and LSVs: 49 CFR Part 571. This document is available on the Dothan Police Department website and mobile app.

*\*Some manufacturers promote “golf carts” that exceed 20 mph. If they exceed 20 mph, the manufacturer must increase the safety features according to federal code which then classifies it as a LSV.*

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