

# UNLICENSED MOTORCYCLISTS IN TEXAS



## How Many Unlicensed Riders Are in Texas?

It's difficult to estimate how many motorcyclists ride without a valid motorcycle endorsement or license, known as a Class M, in Texas. For this reason, states often rely upon crash data to gain a better understanding of the problem.

In 2018, unlicensed motorcyclists accounted for

**46%** of motorcycle operator fatalities in Texas

Almost **1 in 2** motorcycle operators killed in Texas did not have a Class M at the time of the crash.<sup>1</sup>

## What is the Role of Law Enforcement and Unlicensed Riders?

Traffic enforcement can help promote legal riding. Receiving a warning or citation can be the motivating factor for many unlicensed riders to go on and get their Class M, and it can serve as a deterrent for other unlicensed riders.



From 2010 – 2017, the Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS) issued

**48,974** WARNINGS OR CITATIONS TO MOTORCYCLISTS

Which resulted in a total of **66,800** VIOLATIONS

OF THOSE:

**25.5%** were issued for **improper or lack of license for operating a motorcycle**<sup>2</sup> (invalid, suspended, expired, fictitious/deceptive driver's license, or no driver's license)

**13.1%** were issued for **improper driver's license for type vehicle** (riders did not have a Class M)

## Do Unlicensed Riders Continue Riding Unlicensed?

Unfortunately, some riders continue to ride unlicensed even after being issued a violation. And, worse, some of these riders have been involved in crashes.



**1,289** CRASHES From 2010 – 2018 there were involving a rider who had been issued a **warning or citation** by TxDPS for an **improper driver's license for type of vehicle** violation (riders did not have a Class M).

OF THOSE: **7%** were involved in **more than one reported crash** between the years of 2010 – 2018.

OF THOSE: **68%** had **no indication** of ever having obtained a Class M.



## How Can Unlicensed Riders Become Licensed?

To ride legally in Texas, riders must complete a TxDPS-certified motorcycle operator training course. There are several courses riders can complete that will meet this requirement, including:

- Motorcycle Safety Foundation Basic and Intermediate Rider Courses
- Total Control Beginner and Intermediate Riding Clinics

The transfer of the State's motorcycle operator training program from TxDPS to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) will take effect September 1, 2020. Updates regarding the program transfer can be found on the Look Learn Live website <https://www.looklearnlive.org>.