

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2021**

**SESSION LAW 2021-33  
SENATE BILL 241**

AN ACT AMENDING MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS REGULATING MODIFIED UTILITY VEHICLES AND DIRECTING THE USE OF CERTAIN FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-4.01(27) reads as rewritten:

"(27) Passenger Vehicles. –

...

g2. Modified utility vehicle. – A motor vehicle that (i) is manufactured or upfitted by a licensed manufacturer, dealer, or person or business otherwise engaged in vehicle manufacturing or modification for off-road use with equipment required by G.S. 20-121.1(2), G.S. 20-121.1(2a), except a vehicle identification number, and (ii) has four wheels, ~~an engine displacement greater than 2,400 cubic centimeters,~~ an overall length of 142-110 inches or greater, an overall width of 58 inches or greater, an overall height of 70-60 inches or greater, a maximum speed capability of 40 miles per hour or greater, and does not require an operator or passenger to straddle a seat. "Modified utility vehicle" does not include an all-terrain vehicle, golf cart, or utility vehicle, as defined in this section, or a riding lawn mower.

...."

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 20-121.1 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-121.1. Operation of a low-speed vehicle, mini-truck, or modified utility vehicle on certain roadways.**

The operation of a low-speed vehicle, mini-truck, or modified utility vehicle is authorized with the following restrictions:

- (1) A low-speed vehicle may be operated only on streets and highways where the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less. A mini-truck or modified utility vehicle may be operated only on streets and highways where the posted speed limit is 55 miles per hour or ~~less.~~ less; provided, a modified utility vehicle may not be operated on any street or highway having four or more travel lanes unless the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less. This subdivision does not prohibit a low-speed vehicle, mini-truck, or modified utility vehicle from crossing a road or street at an intersection where the road or street being crossed has a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.
- (2) A low-speed ~~vehicle, mini-truck, or modified utility~~ vehicle or mini-truck shall be equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, tail lamps, reflex reflectors, parking brakes, rearview mirrors, windshields, windshield wipers, speedometer, seat belts, and a vehicle identification number. Any such required equipment shall be maintained in proper working order. ~~If a modified~~



~~utility vehicle does not have a vehicle identification number, upon application by the owner, the Division shall assign a vehicle identification number to the modified utility vehicle prior to registration.~~

(2a) A modified utility vehicle shall be equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, tail lamps, reflex reflectors, parking brakes, rearview mirrors, a speedometer, seat belts, and a vehicle identification number. Any such required equipment shall be maintained in proper working order. If a modified utility vehicle does not have a vehicle identification number, upon application by the owner, the Division shall assign a vehicle identification number to the modified utility vehicle prior to registration. The operator of and all passengers on a modified utility vehicle that is not equipped with a windshield and windshield wipers shall wear a safety helmet, with a retention strap properly secured, that complies with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 218.

...  
(4) ~~The Notwithstanding the provisions of any other subdivision of this section, the Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of low-speed vehicles, mini-trucks, or modified utility vehicles on any road or highway if it determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.~~

...."

**SECTION 2.3.** G.S. 20-286(10) reads as rewritten:

"(10) Motor vehicle. – Any motor propelled vehicle, trailer or semitrailer, required to be registered under the laws of this State. This term does not include modified utility vehicles or mopeds, as ~~that term is defined in G.S. 20-4.01.~~

...."

**SECTION 3.** Notwithstanding Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, G.S. 136-28.1, and any other provision of law to the contrary, the Department of Transportation, Ferry Division, shall lease a passenger ferry vessel for operation between Hatteras and Ocracoke. The term of the lease shall end no later than August 15, 2021. Except as otherwise provided in this section, of the funds appropriated in S.L. 2020-91 from the Highway Fund to the Department of Transportation, the sum of seven hundred thousand dollars (\$700,000) in nonrecurring funds shall be used by the Division to lease and operate the ferry. The Division shall exercise the opt-out clause of the lease when the Division determines the State-owned ferry for passenger service on the Hatteras-Ocracoke route can be operationalized within 30 days if the cost of opting out is less than the cost of completing the term of the lease. Following the expiration or termination of the lease, any remaining funds shall be deposited in the Ferry Systemwide reserve account established in G.S. 136-82(f2) for use in accordance with that subsection.

**SECTION 4.** Sections 1, 2, and 2.3 of this act become effective October 1, 2021.  
The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021.

s/ Steve Jarvis  
Presiding Officer of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Roy Cooper  
Governor

Approved 3:32 p.m. this 14<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021