

**TITLE 13 – MOTOR VEHICLES
CHAPTER 1 - MOTOR TRAFFIC**



Republic of the Marshall Islands
Jepilpilin Ke Ejukaan

MOTOR TRAFFIC ACT 1986

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**TITLE 13 – MOTOR VEHICLES
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Jepilpilin Ke Ejukaan

MOTOR TRAFFIC ACT 1986

AN ACT to amend and consolidate the law relating to motor traffic, and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

<i>Commencement:</i>	<i>March 6, 1986</i>
<i>Source:</i>	<i>P. L. 1986-5</i>
<i>Amended By:</i>	<i>P. L. 1988-15 P. L. 1990-104 P. L. 1993-46</i>
	<i>P. L. 1996-2 P. L. 2004-18 P. L. 2005-32 P. L. 2007-83</i>
	<i>P. L. 2007-96 P. L. 2010-46 P. L. 2011-50 P. L. 2011-53</i>
	<i>P.L. 2013-27 P.L. 2017-36 P.L. 2017-50 P.L. 2023-82</i>

PART I - PRELIMINARY

§101. Short Title.

This Chapter may be cited as the Motor Traffic Act 1986.[P.L. 1986-5, §1.]

§102. Interpretation.

In this Chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) “**chauffeur’s license**” means an operator’s license issued to a person permitting him to operate:
 - (i) any motor vehicle of a capacity of ten (10) or more passengers while in use in conveying school children to and from school; or
 - (ii) any motor vehicle in use as a passenger-carrying conveyance for hire.

- (b) “**Commissioner**” means the Commissioner appointed under Public Safety Act of 1988;
- (c) “**crosswalk**” means that portion of a roadway included within the prolongation or connection of curb lines or lateral boundary lines of highways and property lines at intersections, or any other portion of a roadway clearly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other marking on the surface;
- (d) “**drug**” means any substance that affects a person’s mental or physical state, including gasoline, narcotics, marijuana, prescription medication, non-prescription medication, or any illegal substance;
- (e) “**foreign vehicle**” means any motor vehicle or trailer which shall be brought into the Republic and which has not been registered therein;
- (f) “**intersection**” means the area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines or, if none, then the lateral boundary lines of two or more highways which join one another at an angle, whether or not one highway crosses the other;
- (g) “**local government**” means Local Government Council established under the *Local Government Act 1980*
- (h) “**metal tires**” means all tires the surfaces of which are in contact with the highway and are wholly or partly of metal or other hard, non-resilient material;
- (i) “**motor vehicle**” means any vehicle, as defined in this Section, which is self-propelled;
- (j) “**official traffic sign**” means all signs and markings not inconsistent with this Chapter and placed or erected by authority of a public body or official having jurisdiction for the purpose of guiding, directing, warning or regulating traffic;
- (k) “**operator**” means any person who is in actual physical control of a motor vehicle upon a highway;
- (l) “**operator’s license**” means a license to operate a vehicle in any of the classes described under Section 114, but does not include a license described under Section 125, Division 3 of this Act.

- (m) **“owner”** means a person who holds the legal title to a vehicle. If a vehicle is the subject of an agreement for the conditional sale or lease thereof with the right of purchase upon performance of the conditions stated in the agreement and with an immediate right of possession vested in the conditional vendee or lessee, or if a mortgagor of a vehicle is entitled to possession, then such conditional vendee or lessee or mortgagor shall be deemed to be the owner for the purpose of this Chapter:
- (n) **“person”** means any natural person, firm, co-partnership, association or corporation;
- (o) **“policeman”** means any member of the Police Force of the Republic and includes a member of the Police Force of any Local Government Council;
- (p) **“privately owned vehicle”** as used in this Act refers to a vehicle that is privately owned by an individual(s), a corporation, organization or other legal entity that is used for purposes other than as a public motor vehicle.
- (q) **“Public Motor Vehicle”** refers to:
 - (i) any motor vehicle of a capacity of ten (10) or more passengers used for conveying school children to and from school; or
 - (ii) any motor vehicle in use as a passenger-carrying conveyance for hire or for a fare.
- (r) **“right of way”** means the privilege of the immediate use of the highway;
- (s) **“street”** or highway” means any way or place of whatever nature open to the use of the public, as a matter of right, for purposes of vehicular travel;
- (t) **“trailer”** means any vehicle without motor power designed to carry property or passengers;
- (u) **“vehicle”** means any device in, upon or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a public highway, except devices moved by human power or used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.

- (v) “you” includes a natural person, firm, partnership, corporation, association, or any legal entity.[P.L. 1986-5, §2, amended by P.L. 1993-46, §1.]new paragraphs (o) and (p) inserted by P.L. 2004-18,]“new (l) operators license” inserted by P.L. 2005-32, subsequent paragraphs re-lettered][referenced of Chief of Police is now changed to Commissioner by P.L.2023-82].

PART II - REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES

§103. Application for registration.

- (1) Every owner of a motor vehicle intended to be operated on any highway of the Republic shall, before such motor vehicle is so operated, apply to the Commissioner for and obtain registration of the motor vehicle.
- (2) Application for registration of a vehicle shall be made on the prescribed form and shall be signed by the owner, and contain his residential address and a brief description of the vehicle to be registered, including the name of the manufacturer, a description of the engine and serial numbers, and whether the vehicle is new or used.
- (3) The owner of any foreign vehicle shall exhibit such evidence as will satisfy the Commissioner that the applicant is the lawful owner of the vehicle.
- (4) No application for registration shall be accepted unless accompanied by a certificate of insurance as provided under Part VIII of this Chapter.[P.L. 1986-5, §3 amended by P.L. 1990-104, §1), repealing Subsection (4) and enacting a new Subsection (4).]

§104. Records.

- (1) The Commissioner shall file each application received, and shall register the vehicle therein described and the owner thereof on index cards as follows:
 - (a) numerically, under a distinctive registration number assigned to the vehicle and the owner thereof and
 - (b) alphabetically, under the name of the owner.

- (2) All registration and license records in the office of the Commissioner shall be public records and shall be open for inspection by the public during business hours.[P.L. 1986-5, §4.]

§105. Transfer; owner's duty.

- (1) An owner upon transferring a registered vehicle shall endorse the name and address of the transferee and the date of transfer upon the reverse side of the registration card issued for such vehicle and shall immediately forward such card to the Commissioner.
- (2) The transferee of such vehicle as is referred to in Subsection (1) of this Section shall, before operating or permitting operation of such vehicle upon a highway, apply and obtain the registration thereof as upon an original registration.
- (3) In the event of a transfer by inheritance, devise, bequest, execution, sale or repossession upon default of performance of an agreement of sale of a registered vehicle, the registration thereof shall expire and the vehicle shall not be operated upon the highway unless and until the person entitled thereto has applied for and obtained the registration thereof.[P.L. 1986-5, §5.]

§106. Fees

- (1) You must pay the following fees to the police department to register your vehicle:
 - (a) motorcycles, \$10;
 - (b) jeep, sedan, and other passenger vehicles, \$25;
 - (c) pickups, trucks, buses, and other vehicles not included in items (a) or (b), according to weight at the time of original sale in the Republic:
 - (i) up to 2,000 pounds, \$35;
 - (ii) from 2,000 pounds to 2,999 pounds, \$50;
 - (iii) from 3,000 pounds to 5,999 pounds, \$75;
 - (iv) from 6,000 pounds to 7,499 pounds, \$100;
 - (v) 7,500 pounds and over, \$150.

- (2) Registration fees are to be paid annually; if paid for less than 12 months they will be prorated by the month.[P.L. 1986-5, §6, amended &v P.L.1 993-46, §2 replacing previous section.]

§107. Registration card.

- (1) The Commissioner shall issue to the owner a registration card which shall contain on the face of it the date of issue, the date of expiration, the registration number, the name and address of the owner, and a description of the registered vehicle including the engine number.
- (2) The registration card shall at all times, while the vehicle is being operated on a highway, be carried in the vehicle.[P.L. 1986-5, §7.][Subsection (1) amended by P.L. 2007-96]

§108. Display of plates.

Every owner whose vehicle has been registered shall display a number plate issued by the Commissioner showing the registration number and year. Such plate shall be attached to the rear of the vehicle.[P.L. 1986-5, §8.]

§109. Expiration and renewal.

- (1) The registration of every vehicle registered under this Chapter shall expire on the expiration date stated on the registration card, and shall be renewed annually upon application by the owner and payment by him of the prescribed fee.
- (2) The owner of a vehicle must register his or her vehicle before the expiration date stated on the registration card.[P.L. 1986-5, §9.][Amended by P.L. 2007-96.]

§110. Offenses and penalties.

- (1) It is a violation for you to drive any vehicle, even if it is not your own, on a street if it is not registered or you do not have the registration card with you or if there is no license plate on the vehicle. If convicted you shall be liable to pay a fine of not less than \$50 but not exceeding \$100.
- (2) It is a violation for your vehicle to be parked on a street if it is not registered. If convicted you shall be liable to pay a fine of not less than \$50 but not exceeding \$100. In addition, your vehicle is subject

- to being towed and stored at your expense until you show proof that you have registered it.
- (3) It is a violation if you:
- (a) display or have with you a registration card, license plate, or driver's license that you know is false or that you know has been taken away either temporarily or permanently by the police department or the court (suspended, revoked, cancelled), or changed by anyone (altered);
 - (b) lend your registration card, license plate, or driver's license to anyone who is not entitled to it;
 - (c) use a false name or address or use any other false information in an application for a registration card or a driver's license.
- (4) If convicted of (3)(a), (b), or (c) you shall be liable to pay a fine of not less than \$50 but not exceeding \$100. The Court may however give you community service duty instead of a fine.[P.L. 1986-5, §10; amended by P.L.1 993-46, §3 replacing previous section.][Amended by P.L.2013-27].

PART III - LICENSING OF OPERATORS

DIVISION 1- LICENSING GENERALLY

§111. License and fees.

- (1) No person except those expressly exempted under this Chapter shall operate any motor vehicle upon a highway in the Republic unless such person has been licensed as an operator under this Chapter.
- (2) A fee of \$10 or such other fee as may be prescribed from time to time by regulation under Section 172 of this Chapter shall be paid to the Commissioner for each such license issued.[P.L. 1986-5, §11.]

§112. Exemptions.

- (1) Every person in the service of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Air Force of the United States of America when furnished with an official operator's permit and when operating an official motor vehicle, shall be exempt from licensure under this Chapter.

- (2) A non-resident over the age of eighteen (18) years who has been duly licensed in his home state, territory or country and who has in his immediate possession a valid operator's license shall for thirty (30) days from the time of his entry into the Republic be permitted without examination under this Chapter to operate a motor vehicle upon the highways of the Republic, after which time such non-resident shall have a valid operator's license in accordance with Section III of this Chapter except that no examination shall be required.[P.L. 1986-5, §12.]

§113. Non-eligibility for license generally.

- (1) No operator's license shall be issued by the Commissioner to any person:
- (a) who is under the age of seventeen (17) years;
 - (b) who has been determined as a habitual drunkard or addicted to the use of narcotic drugs;
 - (c) who has been previously adjudged insane or an idiot, imbecile, epileptic or feeble-minded; or
 - (d) who is afflicted with or suffering from such physical or mental disability or disease as to prevent such person from exercising ordinary control over a motor vehicle while operating the same.[P.L. 1986-5, §13, amended by P.L. 1988-15, §2, creating Subsection (1), and introducing new Paragraph (a) in Subsection (1). and new Subsection(2)][P.L. 2004-18, raising the eligibility age to 21 and repealed subsection (2)][paragraph (a) further amended to fix eligibility for operators license at age 18 -P.L. 2005-32][amended by P.L.2017-50].

DIVISION 2- OPERATORS' LICENSES IN GENERAL

§114. Classes of licenses and requirements.

- (1) There shall be established the following classes of operator's licenses:
- (a) all motorcycles, motor scooters or motor bikes;
 - (b) all vehicles not specified elsewhere in this Subsection and having a gross weight of 3,000 pounds or less;
 - (c) all vehicles not specified elsewhere in this Subsection and having a gross weight of more than 3,000 pounds;
 - (d) all vehicles of a nature intended primarily for off-road, agricultural, industrial, or construction use.

- (2) Consistent with Section 113 of this Act, no operator's license shall be issued to any class of license specified in Paragraph (c) or (d) of Subsection (1) of this Section unless the applicant has attained the age of seventeen (17) years.
- (3) In the case of an operator's license or learner's permit under Subsection (1)(d) of this Section, the applicant shall also be the holder of an operator's license issued under Subsection (1)(c) of this Section.
- (4) An operator's license or learner's permit issued for any class specified in Subsection (1) of this Section shall be valid only for the operation of vehicles included in that class except that operator's licenses or learner's permits issued under Paragraph (b) or (c) thereof shall also be valid as licenses or permits to operate vehicles specified in any of the preceding Paragraphs of that Subsection.[P.L. 1986-5, §14, amended by P.L. 1988-15, by introducing a new Subsection (2).][further amended by P.L. 2005-32][age is amended by P.L.2017-50].

§115. Learner's permit and fees.

- (1) Upon receiving from any person qualified under the provisions of this Part an application for a temporary learner's permit in any class, the Commissioner shall issue such permit on being satisfied after due examination of such person, as to his physical and mental qualifications to operate a motor vehicle in the class applied for.
- (2) Other than an applicant who attained the age of sixteen (16), learner's permits shall be valid for sixty (60) days from the date of their issue, or until sooner cancelled by law or suspended or revoked, or until the holder thereof has successfully qualified for an operator's license of the same class as the learner's permit.
- (2A) A learner's permits for applicant who attained the age sixteen (16) years shall be valid for six months from the date of their issuance, or until sooner cancelled by law or suspended or revoked, or until the holder thereof has successfully qualified for a restricted license of the same class as the learner's permit.
- (3) The holder of a learner's permit shall be permitted to operate a motor vehicle of the class for which the permit is issued when accompanied by a driver licensed to operate motor vehicles of the same class. He shall at all times when he is operating such motor vehicle display prominently the sign "L" written in thick and clear print on two

boards, one attached to the front buffer and the other to the rear buffer or there-above.

- (4) Any learner who, without a learner's permit duly obtained and in his immediate possession, operates any motor vehicle for which such a permit is required under this Section, or operates such motor vehicle unaccompanied by a driver or without displaying the sign "L" as required under the last preceding Subsection, shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine of \$50. The Court may however sentence the learner to community service duty instead of a fine.
- (5) A fee of five dollars or such other fee as may be prescribed from time to time by regulation under Section 164 of this Chapter shall be paid to the Commissioner for each permit issued under this Section. [P.L. 1986-5, §16.] [Subsection (4) amended by P.L.2013-27] [§2A is inserted by P.L.2017-50].

§115A. Restricted operator's license.

An applicant, who reaches the age of sixteen (16) and have successfully qualified after holding a learner's permit for six months, may apply for a restricted license to operate a vehicle for six (6) months.

For the purposes of this Section, restricted license means a license which a holder is restricted to drive during night hours from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m and where no more than two passengers of age 21 or above is allowed to travel with the holder of the license or atleast with one family member with a valid driver's license. [§115A is inserted by P.L.2017-50].

§116. Application for license.

Every application for an operator's license shall state the name, age, sex and residence of the applicant and whether or not the applicant has heretofore been licensed and when and by what state, and whether or not such license has at any time been suspended or revoked and the date of and reason for suspension or revocation. [P.L. 1986-5, §16]

§117. Examination of applicant.

- (1) The Commissioner or his duly authorized representative shall, before issuing an operator's license, examine each applicant for an

operator's license of any class as to his physical and mental qualifications and knowledge and skill to operate a motor vehicle in the class applied for.

- (2) The Commissioner shall issue or cause to be issued, in the manner which is or may be provided by law, regulations consistent with the provisions of this Chapter pertaining to the nature of the qualifications required under this Section.[P.L. 1986-5, §17.]

§118. Register of operator; notation of class to be included on license.

- (1) The Commissioner shall file every application for an operator's license or learner's permit and shall index the same by name, number and class of license or permit. He shall maintain proper records of all licenses issued, all applications for licenses denied, all violations of this Chapter, and all suspensions or revocations of licenses or permits under the provisions of this Chapter.
- (2) The Commissioner shall note or cause to be noted on each operator's license or learner's permit the class of the said license or permit, and the type of vehicles which may or may not lawfully be operated under the said license or permit.[P.L. 1986-5, §18.]

§119. Possession of license.

Every person licensed as an operator shall have such license in his immediate possession at all times when driving a motor vehicle.[P.L. 1986-5, §19]

§120. Term.

Unless otherwise provided in this Chapter, every operator's license issued shall be valid for three (3) years unless suspended or revoked as provided in this Part.[P.L. 1986-5, §20]

§121. Suspension or revocation.

- (1) A court in addition to any other punishment prescribed in this Chapter may, in its discretion, suspend or revoke the license of any person upon the conviction for any offense under this Chapter.
- (2) In the case of an offense under Sections 129, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, or 138 of this Chapter, maximum period of suspension a court may impose shall be thirty (30) days. Upon a second conviction,

within twelve (12) months, for the same offense the maximum period of suspension shall be ninety (90) days but not less than thirty (30) days. Upon third or subsequent conviction under any of the offenses set forth herein above, a court may revoke the license of such person.

- (3) In the case of an offense under Sections 122, 124, 139 or 141 of this Chapter, the maximum period of suspension a court may impose shall be ninety (90) days. Upon a second or subsequent conviction under any of the offenses set forth above, a court may revoke the license of such person.
- (4) In the case of an offense where death is caused by rash and negligent driving a court may revoke the license of such person.[P.L. 1986-5, §21.]

§122. Operating without having been licensed.

- (1) Any person who operates a motor vehicle of any class without having been duly licensed in that behalf shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$100. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.
- (2) When any such person as is referred to in Subsection (1) of this Section causes injury or death to any other person while so driving he shall be guilty of a felony and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding five (5) years, or both. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.[P.L. 1986-5, §22.][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§123. Operating without license in immediate possession.

Any person who operates a motor vehicle of any class without a license therefor in his immediate possession as is required under the provisions of this Chapter for that class of motor vehicle shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$50. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.[P.L. 1986-5, §23][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§124. Operating while license suspended or revoked.

Any person whose operator's license has been suspended or revoked and who operates any motor vehicle upon a highway while such license is

suspended or revoked shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$150. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.[P.L. 1986-5, §24][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

DIVISION 3- CHAUFFEUR'S LICENSE

§125. Chauffeur's license.

In addition to the classes of operator's licenses mentioned in Section 114 of this Chapter, there shall be established a class of license called chauffeur's license.[P.L.19865. §25]

§126. Requirements.

- (1) An applicant for a chauffeur's license shall:
 - (a) be twenty-one (21) years of age or older;
 - (b) hold a valid license issued to him under Section 114(l)(b) or (c) of this Chapter; and
 - (c) not fall within any of the prohibitions set forth in Section 113(b), (c) and (d) of this Chapter.
- (2) Every chauffeur's license issued shall be valid for a period of one year unless suspended or revoked as provided in this Part.
- (3) In addition to the provisions of subsections (1) and (2) above, an applicant for a chauffeur's license is hereby required to attach to his application, a certification by a physician that the applicant has been examined and that he or she is not suffering from any communicable diseases, including tuberculosis (TB). This certification is required both at the initial application for a chauffeur's license as well as for the renewal of such license. No chauffeur's license shall be issued or renewed where:
 - (a) the applicant fails to attach the certification required under subsection (3) above; or
 - (b) the applicant has been certified as suffering from a communicable disease, including Tuberculosis (TB).
- (4) All persons who were issued chauffeur's licenses prior to the effective date of this Act are hereby required to undergo a medical examination within 21 days after the effective date of this Act, and to

submit a certification of the examination to the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall revoke or withdraw a chauffeur's license:

- (a) for failure to comply with this subsection; or
 - (b) if the person is certified as suffering from a communicable disease, including Tuberculosis (TB).
- (5) All person operating a taxicab in the Marshall Islands shall obtain from the Marshall Islands Police Department a taxicab drivers' certificate set out in Schedule 1 of this Chapter. The taxicab driver certificate shall not be removed from the inside of the vehicle unless there is a change in driver or taxicab to which the driver shall obtain a new driver certificate and is made visible. Failure to adhere to this requirement shall be punishable in accordance with Section 182 of this Chapter. A taxicab driver certificate shall make visible and mount onto the passenger side dashboard and on the backseat of every taxi vehicle the following information:
- (a) A photo of the driver of the taxicab;
 - (b) Full legal name of the taxicab driver;
 - (c) Date of birth;
 - (d) Driver License Number including a chauffeur's number if any;
 - (e) Date of issuance and expiration of driver's license;
 - (f) Taxicab license plate number;
 - (g) Taxicab identification number;
 - (h) full name of the legal owner or owners of the taxi vehicle and company.
- (6) All persons applying to operate a taxicab shall first obtain a police clearance from the Marshall Islands Police Department.
- (7) "Communicable disease "as used herein includes those enumerated by the World Health Organization, the Center for Disease Control, and the Health Services of the South Pacific Commission in their epidemiological reporting system, and any other diseases declared to be communicable diseases by the Secretary of Health Services.[P.L. 1986-5, §26., [Amended by P.L. 2004-18][Amended by P.L. 2023-82].

§127. Applicability of general provisions to chauffeur's license.

The provisions of Sections 116, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123 and 124 of this Chapter, with the necessary changes having been made, shall apply to chauffeur's licenses.[P.L. 1986-5, §27][Amended by P.L.2013-27].

PART IV - REGULATION OF TRAFFIC**§128. Application of Part IV**

The provisions of this Part shall apply to the operators of all vehicles owned or operated within the Republic except as provided in Section 112 of this Chapter. Every person riding a bicycle or an animal upon a roadway, and every person driving an animal, shall be subject to the provisions of this Part.[P.L. 1986-5, §28.]

§129. Obedience to police officers.

It shall be unlawful for any person to refuse or fail to comply with any lawful order, signal or direction of any policeman with authority to direct, control or regulate traffic.[P.L. 1986-5, §29.]

§130. Erection and maintenance of signs and markings.

The Commissioner may cause appropriate signs to be erected and maintained designating business, school or residential areas, and such other signs and markings, consistent with the provisions of this Part, as may be necessary to direct and regulate traffic, including signs notifying operators of vehicles to stop before entering or crossing highways designated as through highways, and such additional signs as may be appropriate under the provisions of this Chapter.[P.L. 1986-5,§30.]

§131. Obedience to official traffic signs.

It shall be unlawful for the operator of any vehicle to disobey the instructions of any official traffic sign placed in accordance with these provisions unless otherwise directed by a policeman. [P.L. 1986-5, §31]

§132. Interference with official traffic signs.

- (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to deface, damage, knock down or remove official traffic sign placed or erected as provided in this Part.
- (2) Any person who intentionally commits any of the acts mentioned in Subsection (1) of this Section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine of \$100, or where the act complained of is intentional, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding two (2) weeks, or both. Such person shall also be liable to pay the cost of restoring, repairing or replacing the official traffic sign so affected. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine. [P.L. 1986-5, §32][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§133. Driving on right side of roadway; overtaking and passing.

Upon all highways of sufficient width, other than one-way highways, the operator of a vehicle shall drive that vehicle upon the right half of the highway except when the right half is impassable or when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction, in which case he shall pass to the left thereof at a safe distance and shall not again drive to the right side of the highway until safely clear of such overtaken vehicle. The operator of a vehicle shall not overtake and pass another vehicle proceeding in the same direction unless the left side of the way is clearly visible and free of oncoming traffic for a distance of 300 feet.[P.L. 1986-5, §33.]

§134. Following too closely.

The operator of a vehicle shall not follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, having due regard to the speed of such vehicles and the traffic upon condition of the highway.[P.L. 1986-5, §34]

§135. Right of way; approaching or entering intersection; turns at intersections; entering highway.

The operator of a vehicle approaching an intersection shall yield the right of way to a vehicle which has entered the intersection. When two vehicles enter an intersection at the same time the driver of the vehicle on the left shall yield to the driver on the right. The operator of a vehicle within an intersection intending to turn to the left shall yield to any vehicle approaching from the opposite direction which is within the intersection or

so close thereto as to constitute an immediate hazard. The operator of a vehicle entering a public highway from a private road or driveway or from any unpaved road to a paved road shall yield the right of way to all vehicles approaching on such public highway or paved road. The operator of a vehicle upon a highway yield the right of way to emergency vehicles. [P.L. 1986-5, §35]

§135A. Right of Way: Funeral Procession.

- (1) An operator of a vehicle in a funeral procession shall have the right of way, except for an emergency vehicle or when directed by a local or a national police officer.
- (2) Any vehicle in a funeral procession shall:
 - (a) follow the hearse and maintain a practical and safe distance;
 - (b) be equipped and use flashing or emergency light during the procession.
- (3) An operator of a vehicle proceeding in the opposite direction of the funeral procession shall yield to the procession by reducing speed, or temporary stopping until the hearse passes.
- (4) An operator of a vehicle proceeding in the same direction as the funeral procession shall not pass or attempt to pass the funeral procession.
- (5) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent national or local police officer from escorting funeral processions in a law enforcement vehicle upon request.
- (6) For the purposes of this Section:

“**funeral procession**” means two or more vehicles accompanying the hearse or travelling to the church, chapel, cemetery, or other location at which the funeral service is held, or the deceased is buried or both.

“**hearse**” refers to the vehicle used for transporting or carrying the deceased person. [P.L. 2010-46, §35A]

§136. Pedestrians’ right of way.

The operator of any vehicle shall yield the right of way to a pedestrian on any portion of an unpaved road or crossing within any marked or unmarked crosswalk of a paved road. This provision, however, shall not

relieve the operator or the pedestrian from the duty of exercising due care.
[P.L. 1986-5, §36.]

§137. Signals on stopping or turning.

The operator of any vehicle upon a highway intending to stop or turn from a direct line shall give signals thereof either by means of the hand and arm or by a signal light or lights or mechanical signal device. When a motor vehicle is equipped with illuminated directional signal devices front and rear, and stop signal light or lights on the rear, such devices, when in proper working order, may be used in lieu of such hand and arm signals. Otherwise the following hand and arm signals shall be used:

- (a) the extension of the left hand and arm downward from and beyond the left side of the vehicle at an angle of forty-five (45) degrees from the horizontal shall signify stopping;
- (b) the extension of the left hand and arm horizontally from and beyond the left side of the vehicle shall signify the making of a left turn;
- (c) the extension of the left hand and arm horizontally from and beyond the left side of the vehicle with forearm extending upward at an angle of ninety (90) degrees from the horizontal shall signify the making of a right turn.[P.L. 1986-5, §37]

§138. Speed limits.

- (1) No person shall operate a vehicle upon a highway at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent, having due regard to the traffic, surface and width of the highway and the hazard at intersections and any other conditions then existing. Except where otherwise indicated by the Commissioner the speed limits shall be as follows:
 - (a) fifteen (15) miles per hour when passing a school building or the grounds thereof during the school recess or while children are going to or leaving school during opening or closing hours; when passing a church on Sunday mornings; when passing public processions or assemblages on or near any highway;
 - (b) twenty-five (25) miles per hour in any business or residential area;
 - (c) forty (40) miles per hour outside of a business or residential area.

- (2) The Commissioner may in his discretion establish by regulation higher speed limits than those herein indicated upon highways or between widely spaced intersections or lower speed limits than those herein indicated in particularly hazardous areas, if signs are erected giving notice of the speed limits so established.
- (3) The speed limits set forth or established in Subsections (1) and (2) of this Section shall not apply to emergency vehicles when operated in emergencies and when the drivers thereof sound an audible signal by horn, bell, siren or exhaust whistle. This provision, however, shall not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle from the responsibility to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons using a street, road or highway.
- (4) Save as provided in Subsection (3) of this Section it shall be unlawful for any person to operate a vehicle upon a highway at a speed in excess of those set forth or provided for by this Section.[P.L.1986-5, §38.]

§139. Negligent or reckless driving.

- (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a vehicle upon a highway in such manner as to constitute a substantial deviation from the standard of care which a reasonable man would exercise in the circumstances.
- (2) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a vehicle upon a highway recklessly or with gross, willful or wanton disregard of the lives or safety of the public.[P.L. . 1986-5, §39.]

§140. Penalties.

- (1) Any person who does or omits to do any act in contravention of the provisions of Section 129, 131, 132(1), 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, or 138 of this Chapter shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not less than \$50 and not exceeding \$200. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.
- (2) Any person who does or omits to do any act in contravention of the provisions of Section 139(1) of this Chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not less than \$50 and not exceeding \$200 or to a term of imprisonment not

exceeding six (6) months, or both. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.

- (3) Any person who by operates a motor vehicle upon a highway in the manner stated in Section 139(2) of this Chapter, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not less than \$50 and not exceeding \$200 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding twelve (12) months, or both; provided, however, if the person operating a motor vehicle in such a manner causes injury to any other person shall be guilty of a felony and shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished as for aggravated assault. [P L1986-5, §40.][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§141. Requirement for seat belt usage.

- (1) It is unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle unless:
 - (a) the person is restrained by a seat belt;
 - (b) each passenger in the front seat is restrained by a seat belt; or in a case of an infant child, is restrained by a restraining device.
- (2) Any driver of a motor vehicle who violates subsection (1) shall be punishable by a fine of \$50 or an imprisonment not more than 3 months or both.
- (3) For the purpose of this section, "infant" includes any child below the age of 3 years, and "restraining device", includes car seat for children or any special restraining device for children.
- (4) Any payment of fine made under subsection 2 shall be deposited into the Ministry of Justice Special Revenue Fund. [P.L. 2011-50 §41.][§4 is amended and para (a) and (b) deleted by P.L 2017-36.]

§142. Stopping, standing and parking.

Any person parking any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon any highway shall park such vehicle as far to the right thereof as is practicable. It shall be unlawful for the operator of a vehicle to stop, stand or park such vehicle, whether attended or unattended, in any of the following places:

- (a) within an intersection;
- (b) on a crosswalk;

- (c) within thirty (30) feet upon the approach to any official stop sign located at the side of the roadway;
- (d) within fifteen (15) feet of the driveway entrance to any fire station;
- (e) within fifteen (15) feet of a fire hydrant;
- (f) in front of a private driveway;
- (g) on a sidewalk;
- (h) alongside or opposite any street or highway excavation or obstruction when such stopping, standing or parking would obstruct traffic;
- (i) on the roadway side of any vehicle stopped or parked at the edge of a highway; and
- (j) at any place where official traffic signs have been erected prohibiting standing or parking. [P.L./986-5. S12.]

§143. Conditions for leaving vehicle unattended on highway.

No person having control or charge of a motor vehicle shall allow such vehicle to stand on any highway unattended without first effectively setting the brakes thereon, stopping the motor and placing it in gear. [P.L. 1986-5, §43.]

§144. Obstruction of driver's view or driving mechanism.

It shall be unlawful for the operator of any vehicle to operate the same when it is so loaded as to obstruct the view of the operator to the front or sides or to interfere with the operator's control over the driving mechanism of the vehicle. To this end no more than two (2) persons (including the driver) shall be seated in the front seat of any jeep and no more than three (3) persons (including the driver) shall be seated in the front seat of any other type of vehicle, except that one child under seven (7) years of age may be seated in addition to the above. [P.L. 1986-5, §44.]

§145. Penalty.

Any person who acts in contravention of the provisions of Section 142, 143 or 144 of this Chapter shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$50. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine. [P.L. 1986-5, §15][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§146. Operating vehicle without owner's consent or proper authorization.

Any person who operates a vehicle, not his own, without the consent of the owner thereof, or a vehicle belonging to the Government of the Marshall Islands or any entity thereof without proper authorization, and without, in either case, intent to steal the same, shall be guilty of violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not less than \$50 and not exceeding \$500. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine. [P.L. 1986-5, §46.][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§147. Injuring, tampering with, etc., vehicle.

Any person who wilfully breaks, injures, tampers with or removes any part or parts of any vehicle shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$100 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three (3) months, or both. Such person shall also be liable to pay the cost of the damage to the vehicle so affected and to replace the parts removed therefrom or pay the cost of replacement of such parts. [P.L. 1986-5, §47.]

§147A. Riding an overcrowding pickup vehicle.

- (1) Except for the purpose of testing, repairing or engaging in any activity directly relating to maintenance of road or any property, no driver of a pickup vehicle shall allow any person to sit or stand on sides, roofing, canopy or elsewhere outside of a pickup vehicle while it is moving.
- (2) The owner or driver of a pickup shall not allow more persons to ride or be carried on the pickup vehicle more than the load the vehicle is license to carry, or allow overcrowding of such vehicle that such proceeding is unsafe by reason of insufficiency of space available for such persons to position themselves securely while the vehicle is moving.
- (3) Any driver of a pickup vehicle who violates this section shall be punishable to a fine not exceeding \$50 or to imprisonment not more than 3 months or both. [P.L. 2011-53, §47A.]

PART V - ACCIDENT REPORTS

§148. Duties of drivers in accidents resulting in injury, death or damage.

The operator of any vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury or death to any person or damage to property shall immediately stop such vehicle and shall give his name, address and the registration number of his vehicle and exhibit his operator's license to the person struck or the operator or occupants of any vehicle collided with and shall render to any person injured in such accident reasonable assistance.[P.L. 1986-5, §48]

§149. Written report.

The operator of any vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury or death to any person or property damage to an apparent extent of \$50 or more, shall, within twenty four (24) hours or as soon thereafter as normal means of transportation and communication permit, forward a written report of such accident to the Commissioner of the area in which such accident occurred. All accident reports shall be without prejudice and shall not be open to public inspection.[P.L. 1986-5, §49.]

§150. Reports by garages.

The persons in charge of any garage or repair shop to which is brought any vehicle which shows evidence of having been involved in an accident or struck by any bullet shall report to the nearest police station within twenty-four (24) hours or as soon thereafter as normal means of transportation and communication will permit, after such vehicle is received, giving the engine number, registration number and the name and address of the owner or operator of such vehicle. [P.L. 1986-5, §50]

§151. Penalties.

Any person who contravenes the provisions of Section 148, 149 or 150 of this Chapter shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not less than \$100 and not exceeding \$500. The Court may however sentence the person to community service duty instead of a fine.[P.L. 1986-5, §51][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§152. Report forms.

The Commissioner shall supply the police and other suitable agencies with forms for accident reports calling for sufficiently detailed information to disclose with reference to a highway accident the cause, conditions then existing and the persons and vehicles involved.[P.L. 1986-5, §52.][Amended by P.L. 2023-82].

PART VI- EQUIPMENT**§153. Lights and lighting equipment.**

Every vehicle upon a highway during the period from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise and at any other time when there is not sufficient light to render clearly discernible any person on the highway at a distance of 200 feet shall be equipped with the required lighting equipment.[P.L. 1986-5, §53.]

§154. Headlights on motor vehicles.

Every motor vehicle other than a motorcycle or a farm tractor shall be equipped with two headlights at the front and on opposite sides of it. Every motorcycle shall be equipped with at least one and not more than two headlights. All headlights shall produce a driving light sufficiently clear to render clearly discernible a person 200 feet ahead, but shall not project a glaring or dazzling light to persons in front of such headlights.[P.L. 1986-5, §54.]

§155. Taillights.

Every motor vehicle and trailer shall carry at the rear, a light which exhibits a red light plainly visible at a distance of 200 feet.[P.L. 1986-5, §55.]

§156. Mufflers.

Except in the case of any mechanical breakdown on the way, no person shall operate a motor vehicle unless it is equipped with a muffler in good working order.[P.L. 1986-5, §56.]

§157. Lights on other vehicles and equipment.

- (1) Every bicycle used on the paved portion of a highway shall be equipped with a light in the front thereof and shall also be equipped with a reflex mirror on the rear.
- (2) Every cart or wagon on a paved highway shall be equipped with a light placed in such a position as to be plainly visible at a distance of 200 feet from both the front and the rear thereof. [P.L. 1986-5,§57.]

§158. Brakes.

Every motor vehicle when operated on a highway shall be equipped with brakes adequate to control the movement of and to stop and to hold such vehicle. Every motorcycle when operated on a highway shall be provided with at least one brake which may be operated by hand or foot. All brakes shall be adequate to stop the motor vehicle within a safe distance and shall be maintained in good working order. [P.L. 1986-5, §58.]

§159. Metal tires.

No motor vehicle with metal tires shall be operated on a highway without the permission of the Commissioner. [P.L. 1986-5, §59.]

§160. Requirement for Clear Windows.

- (1) All public motor vehicles operating on all highways and roads in the Republic must exhibit clear windows in the front, the sides and the rear. Accordingly, no person shall:
 - (a) operate or allow to be operated as a public motor vehicle, any vehicle that has any of its windows fully or partially covered by any degree of tint film; or
 - (b) operate or allow to be operated as a public motor vehicle, any vehicle fitted with factory tinted window.

§161. Reserved .[Repealed by P.L.2007-83]**§162. Penalties.**

The owner or operator of any vehicle who fails or neglects to comply with any of the provisions of this Part shall be guilty of a violation and shall upon

conviction be liable to a fine of \$50. The Court may however sentence the owner or operator to community service duty instead of a fine. [P.L. 1 986-5, §62.][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

PART VII- GENERAL

§163. Variation of fees.

The Minister in charge of the subject of Public Safety may, after consultation with the Minister of Finance, vary the fees set out in Parts II, III, and VI, by regulation. [P.L. 1 986-5, §63.]

§164. Reserved [Repealed by P.L. 2004-18]

§165. Reserved

§166. Reserved.

§167. Revenue.

Out of all monies collected by the Commissioner under this Chapter, fifty percent (50%) shall be credited to the Local Government Council of the area and the remaining fifty percent (50%) shall be credited to the Marshall Islands General Fund. [P.L. 1986-5, §67.]

§168. Applicability of the Chapter to the Government.

The provisions of this Chapter shall apply to the Government of the Marshall Islands. [P.L. 1986-5, §68.]

§169. Savings.

The regulations made under 83 TTC 1980, and in force on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Chapter shall, insofar as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Chapter, continue, in force in like manner as if they were made under this Chapter, and may be amended, varied or rescinded by regulations made under this Chapter. [P.L. 1986-5, §69.]

PART VIII- MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE

§170. Obligations of the Insured.

- (1) No application for registration under Section 103 of this Chapter shall be accepted unless accompanied by a certificate of insurance with respect to the particular vehicle insured for all risks against third-party liability in a sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (US \$25,000) for the current year of registration.
- (2) An owner of a registered motor vehicle who fails to maintain insurance as required under this Section shall, for each vehicle for which insurance has not been maintained:
 - (a) immediately surrender the registration certificate and number plate for that vehicle to the national police; and
 - (b) not operate or permit operation of the vehicle until insurance has again been obtained.
- (3) Any person who:
 - (a) operates or allows another person to operate a vehicle that does not comply with the insurance requirements specified under this Section; or
 - (b) makes, issues, displays or knowingly uses any fictitious or fraudulently altered certificate of insurance, is guilty of a violation and, upon conviction, shall be liable to a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (US \$100) and not exceeding five hundred dollars (US \$500).The Court may however sentence the owner or operator to community service duty instead of a fine. [P.L. 1990-104, §2(2)].[Amended by P.L.2013-27].

§171. Obligations of the Insurer.

- (1) For purposes of this Section, “insurer” means any person who is authorized to engage in the business of making contracts of motor vehicle insurance in the Republic, and includes any agent, subagent, solicitor or other representative of that person.
- (2) The insurer shall issue a certificate of insurance in accordance with Section 170 of this Chapter, which shall indicate that the insurance premiums with respect to the vehicle in question have been fully paid to insure coverage for the current year of the registration period.

- (3) The insurer for each registered vehicle shall notify the national police immediately upon the termination, cancellation or expiration, for any reason, of an insurance policy issued pursuant to Section 170 with respect to that vehicle.
- (4) Payment of benefits shall be made as the benefits accrue, except that in the case of death, payment of benefits may be made immediately in a lump sum payment, at the option of the beneficiary.
- (5) The insurer shall pay benefits within thirty (30) days after the insurer has received reasonable proof of the fact and amount of benefits accrued, and demand for payment thereof.
- (6) If the insurer elects to deny a claim for benefits in whole or in part, the insurer shall within thirty (30) days notify the claimant in writing of denial and the reasons for the denial.
- (7) If the insurer denies the claim for benefits because additional information or loss documentation is needed, the insurer shall, within thirty (30) days, forward the claimant an itemized list of all the required documents.
- (8) Amounts of benefits which are unpaid thirty (30) days after the insurer has received reasonable proof of the fact and the amount of benefits accrued, and demand for payment thereof, after the expiration of thirty (30) days, shall bear interest at the rate of one percent (1%) per month.
- (9) Any insurer who violates the provisions of this Section shall be assessed a civil penalty of not less than one thousand dollars (US \$1,000) and not exceeding five thousand dollars (US \$5,000) for each such violation. The imposition of any civil penalty under this Section shall be in addition to, and shall not in any way affect the application of, any other civil or criminal penalty provided by law .[P.L. 1990-104, §2(2)].[Amended by P.L.2023-82].

§172. Regulations.

The Commissioner of Police shall, subject to approval by the Cabinet, promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective administration of the provisions of this Act.[P.L. 1990-104, §2(2)].[amended by P.L. 2004-18]

§173. **Reserved.**

§174. **Reserved**

§175. **Reserved**

§176. **Reserved**

§177. **Reserved**

§178. **Reserved**

§179. **Reserved**

PART IX - VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTION

§180. **Vehicle Safety Inspection and Certification Required.**

All vehicles of all types intended to run or operate on all public streets or highways shall be subject to safety inspection and upon having met all safety requirements to be promulgated by the Minister of Justice, shall be certified and permitted to run and operate on public thoroughfare as provided under such regulations and laws.[added by P.L. 1996-2, §2.]

§181. **Prohibition.**

No vehicle as described above shall run and operate on any public street or highways without having been inspected and certified under such regulations as to be promulgated by the Minister of Justice.[added by P.L. 1996-2, §2.]

§182. **Violation and Punishment.**

Any vehicle violating this Act, or the safety regulations shall be subject to fines set forth under the safety regulations of the Minister of Justice.[added by P.L. 1996-2, §2.]

§183. Authority to promulgate Regulations.

The Minister of Justice is hereby authorized to develop and promulgate necessary regulations subject to the approval of the Cabinet for the purpose of executing the intent and purpose of this Act, setting forth the procedure and conditions under which the administration and punishment of violations are carried out.[added by P.L. 1996-2, §2.]

PART X – CITATIONS FOR MISDEMEANOR AND VIOLATION OFFENCES**§184. Establishment of a citation system.**

- (1) A citation system is hereby established for the imposition and direct payment of fines under this Act by those persons that elect to do so.
- (2) Notwithstanding the penalties prescribed for misdemeanor or violation offences in this Act, the Cabinet may approve a Schedule of Fines for offences committed under this Act. A fine set by the Cabinet shall not be less than the minimum amount or exceed the maximum amount prescribed for an offence under this Act.
- (3) The Schedule of Fines approved by the Cabinet under this subsection (2) shall be promulgated in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, 1979.
- (4) If a person elects to do so, he or she may pay the fine directly to the [court] within 14 days of receiving the citation notice from a police officer. The court shall immediately issue a receipt and notify the police prosecutor that the fine has been paid, at which time the traffic citation against that person will be cancelled.
- (5) Where a person does not elect to pay a fine, the traffic citation will be referred to the court in the usual manner.
- (6) A citation notice under this section shall be in a prescribed form approved by the Minister. [New section inserted by P.L. 2007-96.][Amended by P.L.2013-27]

§185. Issuance of citation notices.

- (1) A police officer may issue a citation notice to a person that has or is committing an offence under this Act.

- (2) The officer must inform the person to whom the notice has been issued that he or she may elect to pay the fine or to go to court in the usual manner.
- (3) The Police Commissioner must ensure that a police officer carries out his or her duties responsibly under this section. [New section inserted by P.L. 2007-96.]

§186. Collection and disbursement of fines.

The [court] shall ensure that all fines imposed and collected under this Act and the Safety Inspection Regulations shall be paid into the Ministry of Justice Special Revenue Fund in accordance with section 104(1)(b) of the Judiciary Fund Act, 1989 and the Ministry of Justice Special Revenue Fund Act, 1989. [New section inserted by P.L. 2007-96.]