

## **FACT SHEET**

### **For Information Contact**

877.RIDE.411

### **How to Obtain a California Motorcycle Operator License**

To get your motorcycle operator license in California, there are three different licensing processes, depending on your age – younger than 18; 18 to 20; age 21 and older.

#### **Younger than 18**

**Step 1:** You must successfully complete a driver's education and driver's training program if you are between the ages of 15½ and 17½. You may begin with Step 2 if you have a Class C automotive driver's license, have completed driver's education and training, or are older than 17½.

**Step 2:** You must successfully complete the CHP-approved Basic *RiderCourse*<sup>SM</sup> offered by the California Motorcyclist Safety Program. Before you enroll in the Basic *RiderCourse*, check to make sure you have done one of the following: 1) successfully completed a classroom driver's education program; 2) obtained a motorcycle or motor vehicle instruction permit; 3) hold a valid Class C automotive driver's license. To enroll in the Basic *RiderCourse* call toll-free, 877.RIDE.411. Upon successful completion of the Basic *RiderCourse*, you will be given a Certificate of Completion of Motorcycle Training (DL 389).

#### **Age 18 to 20**

**Step 1:** You must successfully complete the CHP-approved Basic *RiderCourse* offered by the California Motorcyclist Safety Program. Before you enroll in the Basic *RiderCourse*, check to make sure you have done one of the following: 1) successfully completed a classroom driver's education program; 2) obtained a motorcycle or motor vehicle instruction permit; 3) hold a valid Class C automotive driver's license. To enroll in the Basic *RiderCourse* call toll-free, 877.RIDE.411. Upon successful completion of the Basic *RiderCourse*, you will be given a Certificate of Completion of Motorcycle Training (DL 389).

#### **Age 21 and Older**

**Step 1:** You are encouraged, but not required to complete the CHP-approved Basic *RiderCourse* offered by the California Motorcyclist Safety Program. Before you enroll in the Basic *RiderCourse*, check to make sure you have done one of the following: 1) successfully completed a classroom driver's education program; 2) obtained a motorcycle or motor vehicle instruction permit; 3) hold a valid Class C automotive driver's license. To enroll in the Basic *RiderCourse* call toll-free, 877.RIDE.411. Upon successful completion of the Basic *RiderCourse*, you will be given a Certification of Completion of Motorcycle Training (DL 389).

### **For All Applicants**

**Interim Step:** If you wish to obtain a motorcycle instruction permit and use public roadways while learning to ride, you must pass the DMV's written test on traffic and safe driving rules plus the written motorcycle test. You cannot ride after dark, on freeways or carry passengers. Research shows that riders are much less likely to be involved in accidents after completing the *Basic RiderCourse*. We recommend that you complete the *Basic RiderCourse* prior to riding on the road.

**Final Step:** Go to the DMV and complete the licensing process. The motorcycle skills test given by the DMV may be waived if you have a Certificate of Completion of Motorcycle Training (DL 389). If you haven't completed the written DMV motorcycle test, you must also pass it prior to receiving your license. The license will be issued depending on the classification of the motorcycle: Class M1 for all motorcycles; Class M2 for motorized bicycles\*. If you already have a valid Class C automotive driver's license, you will receive an M1 or M2 motorcycle endorsement. However, when applying for a motorcycle license only, you must still pass the on-street riding test to obtain a motorcycle license.

\*Any two-wheeled or three-wheeled device having fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power, or having no pedals if powered solely by electrical energy and an automatic transmission and a motor which produces less than 2 bhp and is capable of propelling the device at a maximum speed of not more than 30 mph on level ground.

*The information in this document is derived from the California vehicle code and has been approved by the California Highway Patrol. This information is subject to change.*