

§ 1103. Further Definitions.

In this title, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions also apply:

(a) “Non-resident” means a person who is not a resident of the Commonwealth.

(b) “Odometer” means an instrument for measuring and recording the actual distance a motor vehicle travels while in operation.

(c) “Official traffic signs” means signs, signals, devices and markings not inconsistent with this title placed, authorized, or erected by the bureau for the purpose of guiding, directing, warning, or regulating traffic.

(d) “Operator” means a person who operates or is in actual physical control of a vehicle.

(e) “Owner” means a person having all the incidents of ownership including the legal title of a vehicle whether or not such person lends, rents or pledges the vehicle; the person entitled to the possession of a vehicle as the purchaser under a conditional sales contract; the mortgagor of a vehicle; the government, when entitled to the possession and use of a vehicle under a lease, lease-sale, or rental-purchase agreement for a period of 12 months or more.

(f) “Passenger restraint system” means the seat belt assembly required to be in the motor vehicle under the federal motor vehicle safety standards issued pursuant to the federal National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, as amended [[15 U.S.C. §§ 1381 et seq.](#)], unless original replacement seat belt assemblies are not readily available, in which case seat belts of federally approved materials with similar protective characteristics may be used. Such replacement seat belt assemblies shall be permanently marked by the belt manufacturer indicating compliance with all applicable federal standards.

(g) “Person” includes a natural person, firm, partnership, association or corporation.

(h) “Reconstructed vehicle” means a vehicle of a type required to be registered under this title which is materially altered from its original construction by the removal, addition or substitution of essential parts, new or used.

(i) “Residential district” means that portion of a highway and the property contiguous thereto, other than a business district, upon one or both sides of which is closely built up with residences, or by residences and other buildings in use for business.

(j) “Right of way” means the right of one vehicle or pedestrian to proceed in a lawful manner in preference to another vehicle or pedestrian.

(k) “Semitrailer” means a vehicle designed for carrying persons or property used in conjunction with a motor vehicle and so constructed that some part of its weight and that of its load rests upon, or is carried by, another vehicle.

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(l) “Service brake” means any braking gear or mechanism for applying braking effort to at least two wheels of a motor vehicle, normally operated by the operator’s foot.

(m) “Sidewalk” means that portion of a highway set apart for pedestrian travel.

(n) “Spot light” means an auxiliary illuminating device, either fixed or movable, for the purpose of projecting a beam of light.

(o) “Stop sign” means a sign that requires complete cessation from movement.

(p) “Tail lights” means a light located upon the rear of a motor vehicle, trailer, and semitrailer, so arranged as to show red to the rear. A red reflector shall not be considered a tail light.

(q) “Taxicab” means a passenger vehicle, other than a motor bus, for hire.

(r) “Through highway” means a highway or portion of highway at the entrance to which vehicular traffic from intersecting highways is required by law to stop before entering or crossing the same, and where stop signs, yield signs or other appropriate official traffic signs are erected as provided in this title.

(s) “Trailer” means a vehicle designed for carrying persons or property on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and so constructed that no part of its weight rests upon any other vehicle.

(t) “Transferee” means a person who has acquired the sole ownership of or an equity in a vehicle of a type required to be registered under this title.

(u) “Government transit bus” means a government-operated commercial vehicle under the authority of the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA), used for public transportation of passengers along fixed routes or other designated services, including but not limited to shuttle and demand-responsive services.

Source: PL 3-61, § 1 (§ 102); amended by PL 7-29 § 3; PL 7-33 § 4; (h) amended by PL 17-73 § 2 (May 14, 2012); (d) amended by PL 19-13, § 3 (Oct. 23, 2015); subsec. (u) amended by PL 24-24, § 2 (Mar. 12, 2026).

Commission Comment: When codifying the amendment to subsection (h) made by PL 17-73 § 2, the Commission, pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(a), redesignated subsection (h) to subsection (p) and subsections (i)-(p) to subsections (h)-(o).

For the short title and findings and purpose sections of PL 19-13 (Oct. 23, 2015), see Commission Comment to 9 CMC § 5852.