

# KAWARABAN

**October, 2015**

## “Updated Bicycle Traffic Safety Rules” and “Process for Obtaining a Motorized Scooter License”

### ◆Updated Bicycle Traffic Safety Rules

Revisions to the Road Traffic Act in June of this year have brought major changes to regulations regarding bicycle traffic. Due to an increase in accidents caused by bicycle traffic violations, as well as bicycle-related fatalities, these revisions will implement stricter control of bicycle traffic violations.

#### 1. Mandatory safety courses for repeated dangerous actions

Bicyclists who violate safety regulations two or more times in a three year period must complete safety courses. The courses will be three hours long, and will carry a fee of 5,700 yen. Upon failing to complete the course, violators will be summoned to court and face a penalty of up to 50,000 yen.

#### 2. What are “dangerous actions”?

The main actions regarded as violations by the policy are the following:

- Ignoring traffic signals
- Riding on roads or in areas in which bicycle traffic is prohibited
- Riding outside of an available bike lane
- Obstructing pedestrian traffic on a sidewalk or a road with no sidewalk
- Entering a closed or closing railroad crossing
- Blocking the path of vehicles at an intersection
- Failing to stop at stop sign or any place where required
- Riding a bicycle with broken or malfunctioning brakes
- Riding a bicycle under the influence of alcohol
- Riding a bicycle while using an umbrella
- Riding a bicycle while using a mobile phone
- Riding a bicycle while listening to music with headphones or ear buds
- Riding beside another bicycle, or two people riding on a one-seat bicycle

Additionally, causing a traffic accident is considered a dangerous violation.

### ◆Process for Obtaining a Motorized Scooter License

A motorized scooter is classified as any two-wheeled vehicle with an engine displacement of 50 cc or lower. Motorized scooters do require a license for operation. A foreign motorcycle or motorized scooter license can be converted to a Japanese license. For detailed information, please see Kawaraban Issue No. 42 (April, 2013).

Below is the process for obtaining a new motorized scooter license in Miyagi.

#### ① Make a reservation for the motorized scooter licensing course by phone

Motorized scooter licensing courses require a reservation, which can only be made by phone.



Organizing Body	Address	Phone number and hours for reservations	Day and time of courses	Course check in time
Miyagi Prefecture Driving License Center	65 Takakura Ichinazaka, Izumi-ku, Sendai-shi	022-375-2929 (Mon. – Fri., 8:00 - 16:00)	Mon. – Fri. (※ 1)	8:30 – 8:50
Ishinomaki Driving License Center	134 Minamiichi, Akai, Higashimatsushima-shi		2nd Wed. of each month (※ 2)	
Furukawa Driving License Center	3-4-30 Omiya, Furukawa, Osaki-shi		3rd Wed. of each month (※ 2)	
Sennan Driving License Center	3-1 Nanpei, Ogawara-machi Shibata-gun		4th Wed. of each month (※ 2)	
Kesenuma Chuo Driving School	61 Matsuzaki Shimokanetori, Kesenuma-shi	0226-22-0124 (Mon. – Fri., 9:30 – 17:00)	2nd and 4th Sat. of each month	13:30

(※ 1) Excludes 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Wed. of each month, public holidays, year-end, and New Year holidays

(※ 2) If the course day falls on a public holiday, the course will be held the following day.

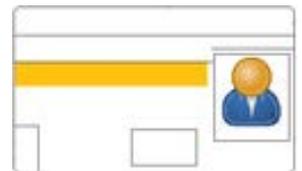
## ② Completing the motorized scooter licensing course

The course is three hours long. The fee for the course is 4,200 yen. The course includes practical skills, so please dress appropriately for riding, with long sleeves and long pants. Sandals, heels, and shoes with thick soles or platforms are not permitted. In the event of rain, please bring your own rain wear.

## ③ Submission of the exam ticket and license application

Apply for the written exam after completion of the motorized scooter licensing course. The following documents are required.

- License application (Forms are available at the License Center.)
- Exam ticket (Forms are available at the License Center.)
- “Jūminhyō” (original copy of resident record) including nationality
- Two identification pictures 3 cm in height by 2.4 cm in width (must have been taken within 6 months of application)
- Certificate of completion of the licensing course (This certificate is valid for one year.)
- ※ Please also bring legal identification such as a health insurance card or a passport.



## ④ Aptitude Test

This test will confirm vision (0.5 or better in both eyes on Japanese scale, may use glasses or contacts) color differentiation, hearing, and physical capability.

## ⑤ Written exam

The fee for the written exam is 1,500 yen. The test is out of 50 points, and a grade of 45 or greater is a passing score. Aside from Japanese, the test questions are available in English and Chinese.

Upon passing the written test, applicants will have their picture taken, and can receive their license on the same day. The license issuing fee is 2,050 yen.

## ◆ Please secure insurance for bicycles and motorized scooters.

There are types of insurance that cover injuries resulting from bicycle accidents and injuries caused to pedestrians or other bicyclists. Please see Kawaraban Issue No. 48 (April, 2014).

When purchasing a motorized scooter, make sure to also purchase mandatory vehicle insurance. Please note that there are cases in which the mandatory vehicle insurance does not sufficiently compensate for accidents, so it is a good idea to also secure voluntary insurance. Coverages and premiums vary by company, so please contact an insurance agency about policy details.

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〒981-0914 仙台市青葉区堤通雨宮町 4-17 宮城県仙台合同庁舎 7 階

TEL : 022(275)3796 FAX : 022(272)5063 E-mail : mail@mia-miyagi.jp

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