

# SPEED LIMITS IN OHIO

HOW ARE SPEED LIMITS DETERMINED ON INTERSTATE, STATE, US, AND LOCAL ROUTES



Statutory speed limits in Ohio are established in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) for all roadway types. For speed limit information on a specific route, visit ORC Section 4511.21 or the QR code link.



Changes to speed limits may take place. Local authorities may request that the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) approve a revised speed limit based on the findings of a 'speed zone study.' The ODOT Traffic Engineering Manual (TEM) lays out the requirements for these speed zone studies.

ODOT must approve speed zones that lower statutory speed limits on all state, federal, interstate, and local roadways, and keep a record of all these approved speed limit revisions. Speed zones to raise speed limits can, in some cases, be accomplished by local municipalities, without ODOT's approval.

## How ODOT sets safe speed zones

ODOT strives to achieve an optimal balance between the safety of road users while still enabling travelers to move with minimal delay to their destinations. It is important that speed limits are considered reasonable by a majority of drivers. Most drivers tend to drive at a speed with which they are comfortable. Sometimes the statutory speed limits don't cover all of the different conditions that might make them higher (or lower) than desirable for the circumstances. However, when the speed limit is set at a level that most drivers consider reasonable, the speed of vehicles is more uniform, resulting a smoother flow of traffic. When doing speed zone studies, ODOT considers various factors such as the development of the area, roadway features, traffic volume, crashes, the presence of vulnerable road users, and the speed vehicles are traveling.

## ODOT's Speed Zoning Committee

The committee is comprised of ODOT staff, local municipalities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the County Engineers Association. The group intends to focus on the following goals & objectives:

- Provide updated, clear guidance material on the speed limits established by the ORC.
- Review recent research on setting speed limits.
- Update the speed zoning study process to focus on only the necessary data.
- Consider vulnerable roads users into the current speed zoning processes.
- Provide updated and simplified study templates, along with new training materials.
- Incorporate bike and pedestrian data into the speed limit criteria where appropriate.

## 20 MPH

School zones during school recess and while children are going to or leaving school during the opening or closing hours

## 25 MPH

All other portions of a municipal corporation, except on state routes outside business districts, through highways outside business districts, and alleys

## 35 MPH

All state routes or through highways within municipal corporations outside business districts, with exceptions

## 50 MPH

Controlled-access highways and expressways within municipal corporations, state routes within municipal corporations outside urban districts, with exceptions

## 55 MPH

Highways outside municipal corporations, all portions of freeways or expressways in congested areas as determined by the Director and that are located within a municipal corporation or within an interstate freeway outerbelt with exceptions

## 60 MPH

Two-lane state routes outside municipal corporations as established by the director, rural expressways with traffic control signals and on all portions of rural divided highways, with exceptions

## 65 MPH

All urban and rural freeways and expressways without traffic control signals, with exceptions

## 70 MPH

All rural freeways

Ohio Revised Code (ORC)  
Section 4511.21  
Scan code for more info

