

# Lane Splitting and Motorcycle Safety Laws in Georgia

## What Georgia Law Says About Lane Splitting

Lane splitting—when a motorcycle rides between two lanes of traffic moving in the same direction—is a controversial practice across the United States. In Georgia, the law is crystal clear: lane splitting is illegal. Under [O.C.G.A. § 40-6-312](#), motorcyclists are not allowed to operate between lanes of traffic or between adjacent rows of vehicles. If a rider is caught lane splitting, they may be cited for a traffic offense, which could impact both their insurance and liability in the event of a [motorcycle accident](#).

The law also reinforces a broader truth about motorcycle safety: Georgia places strict limits on how and where motorcycles can be operated. For example, riders must keep both wheels on the ground, ride no more than two abreast in a lane, and wear approved helmets. These laws are intended to reduce the risk of serious injuries on roads that are often dominated by larger, faster-moving vehicles.

## Why Riders Might Be Tempted to Lane Split

Even though it's not legal in Georgia, many riders are tempted to lane split—especially in congested urban areas like Atlanta. Sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic on I-285 or the Downtown Connector can feel dangerous for motorcyclists, as they're more exposed to rear-end collisions. In other states, such as California, lane splitting is permitted and sometimes encouraged for safety reasons. But in Georgia, doing so can put a rider at risk both physically and legally.

The main reasons riders attempt lane splitting include:

- Avoiding overheating in slow or stopped traffic
- Reducing the risk of being rear-ended in congestion
- Saving time during long commutes

Unfortunately, even if the rider's intent is safety, breaking the law can compromise their ability to recover compensation after a crash.

## Legal Risks and How Lane Splitting Affects Liability

If a motorcycle rider is involved in an accident while lane splitting in Georgia, the legal consequences can be significant. Because the act itself is a violation of state traffic laws, it can be used against the rider in any personal injury claim.

Georgia follows a modified comparative negligence rule with a 50% bar. That means if a rider is found to be 50% or more at fault for a crash, they are barred from recovering any compensation.

So, if a rider is lane splitting and a driver suddenly changes lanes without signaling, both parties could be partially at fault. The rider's ability to collect damages would depend on how fault is apportioned. In close cases, insurance companies will use the illegality of lane splitting to push more blame onto the motorcyclist.

This is one of the reasons it's critical for injured riders to work with a motorcycle accident lawyer who understands how to present evidence, challenge assumptions about rider behavior, and fight back against biased insurance tactics.

### **What If a Driver Was Reckless or Aggressive?**

Even when a motorcyclist was lane splitting, that doesn't give drivers a free pass to behave recklessly. Georgia law requires all drivers to exercise reasonable care and caution. If a driver:

- Suddenly swerved without signaling
- Was texting or distracted
- Made an aggressive move to block a motorcyclist
- Was speeding or impaired

...that conduct can be used to show they shared responsibility for the crash. In some cases, the court or insurance adjuster may still award the rider a portion of damages if the driver's actions were egregious enough to outweigh the rider's traffic violation. But that outcome depends on skilled legal advocacy and clear supporting evidence.

### **How to Protect Your Rights If You Were Injured While Lane Splitting**

If you were injured in a motorcycle crash and lane splitting is part of the story, you should still talk to an attorney. Don't assume that being partially at fault means you have no legal case. A lawyer can:

- Investigate whether the driver also violated any laws
- Determine whether the accident could have been avoided regardless of lane splitting
- Gather expert analysis or crash reconstruction data
- Negotiate with insurers who try to use lane splitting as an excuse to deny or minimize your claim

The sooner you act, the better your chances of preserving evidence, protecting your claim, and getting the care and compensation you need to move forward.

### **Legal Motorcycle Maneuvers That Can Improve Safety**

While lane splitting is not legal in Georgia, there are other riding behaviors that *are allowed* and can help motorcyclists stay safer:

- **Lane Sharing:** Two motorcycles may ride side by side in a single lane.

- **Positioning For Visibility:** Riders may shift left or right within their lane to improve visibility and avoid road hazards.
- **Using HOV Lanes (If Permitted):** Georgia allows motorcycles to use HOV lanes, which can reduce the need to sit in dense traffic.

By adhering to legal maneuvers and defensive riding strategies, motorcyclists can help reduce their crash risk and strengthen their legal position if they are involved in an accident.

### **Why Legal Representation Is So Important for Georgia Riders**

Motorcyclists face more than physical danger after a crash—they also face bias. Insurance companies often assume the rider was reckless, even without clear evidence to support this assumption. When lane splitting is involved, that bias only grows stronger.

That's why it's so important to have an attorney who understands bikers, who knows the law, and who knows how to hold negligent drivers accountable. At the Law Offices of Gary Martin Hays & Associates, we fight hard for injured riders. Whether you were lane splitting or not, we'll investigate every detail and fight for the maximum compensation you deserve.

### **Talk to a Georgia Motorcycle Accident Lawyer Today**

If you were hurt in a motorcycle crash in Georgia—even if you were lane splitting at the time—don't let insurance companies walk all over your case. [Contact the Law Offices of Gary Martin Hays & Associates, P.C. today](#) for a free consultation. We have office locations across Metro Atlanta and proudly represent injured riders throughout the state.

Let us fight for your rights, protect your future, and help you move forward with confidence.