

# Autonomous Vehicles

This Act defines autonomous technology and autonomous vehicle and provides legislative intent regarding vehicles with autonomous technology. It authorizes the operation of autonomous vehicles and provides requirements for autonomous vehicles, including liability for autonomous vehicles.

The legislation also requires the department of highway safety and motor vehicles to submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives recommending additional legislative or regulatory action that may be required for the safe testing and operation of motor vehicles equipped with autonomous technology.

Submitted as:

Florida

[CS/HB 1207 \(Enrolled version\)](#)

Status: Enacted into law in 2012.

## Suggested State Legislation

(Title, enacting clause, etc.)

1           Section 1. [*Short Title.*] This Act shall be cited as “The Autonomous Vehicles Act.”

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3           Section 2. [*Legislative Intent.*] It is the intent of the [legislature] to encourage the safe  
4 development, testing, and operation of motor vehicles with autonomous technology on the public  
5 roads of the state. The [legislature] finds that the state does not prohibit or specifically regulate the  
6 testing or operation of autonomous technology in motor vehicles on public roads.

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8           Section 3. [*Definitions.*] As used in this Act:

9           (1) “Autonomous technology” means technology installed on a motor vehicle that has the  
10 capability to drive the vehicle on which the technology is installed without the active control or  
11 monitoring by a human operator. The term excludes a motor vehicle enabled with active safety  
12 systems or driver assistance systems, including, without limitation, a system to provide electronic  
13 blind spot assistance, crash avoidance, emergency braking, parking assistance, adaptive cruise  
14 control, lane keep assistance, lane departure warning, or traffic jam and queuing assistant, unless any  
15 such system alone or in combination with other systems enables the vehicle on which the technology  
16 is installed to drive without the active control or monitoring by a human operator.

17           (2) “Autonomous vehicle” means any vehicle equipped with autonomous technology.

18

19           Section 4. [*Autonomous Vehicles.*]

20           (A) An autonomous vehicle registered in this state must continue to meet federal standards  
21 and regulations for a motor vehicle.

22           (B) The vehicle shall:

23           (1) Have a means to engage and disengage the autonomous technology which is  
24 easily accessible to the operator.

25           (2) Have a means, inside the vehicle, to visually indicate when the vehicle is  
26 operating in autonomous mode.

27 (3) Have a means to alert the operator of the vehicle if a technology failure affecting  
28 the ability of the vehicle to safely operate autonomously is detected while the vehicle is operating  
29 autonomously in order to indicate to the operator to take control of the vehicle.

30 (4) Be capable of being operated in compliance with the applicable traffic and motor  
31 vehicle laws of this state.

32 (C) Federal regulations promulgated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
33 shall supersede this section when found to be in conflict with this section.

34

35 Section 5. [*Operating Autonomous Vehicles.*]

36 (A) A person who possesses a valid driver license may operate an autonomous vehicle in  
37 autonomous mode.

38 (B) A person shall be deemed to be the operator of an autonomous vehicle operating in  
39 autonomous mode when the person causes the vehicle's autonomous technology to engage,  
40 regardless of whether the person is physically present in the vehicle while the vehicle is operating in  
41 autonomous mode.

42 (C) Vehicles equipped with autonomous technology may be operated on roads in this state by  
43 employees, contractors, or other people designated by manufacturers of autonomous technology for  
44 the purpose of testing the technology. For testing purposes, a human operator shall be present in the  
45 autonomous vehicle and they shall have the ability to monitor the vehicle's performance and  
46 intervene, if necessary, unless the vehicle is being tested or demonstrated on a closed course. Prior to  
47 the start of testing in this state, the entity performing the testing must submit to the [department of  
48 highway safety and motor vehicles] an instrument of insurance, surety bond, or proof of self-  
49 insurance acceptable to the [department] in the amount of [\$5 million].

50 (D) The original manufacturer of a vehicle converted by a third party into an autonomous  
51 vehicle shall not be liable in, and shall have a defense to and be dismissed from, any legal action  
52 brought against the original manufacturer by any person injured due to an alleged vehicle defect  
53 caused by the conversion of the vehicle, or by equipment installed by the converter, unless the  
54 alleged defect was present in the vehicle as originally manufactured.

55 (E) By [insert date] the [department of highway safety and motor vehicles] shall submit a  
56 report to the [President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives]  
57 recommending additional legislative or regulatory action that may be required for the safe testing  
58 and operation of motor vehicles equipped with autonomous technology.

59

60 Section 6. [*Severability.*] [Insert severability clause.]

61

62 Section 7. [*Repealer.*] [Insert repealer clause.]

63

64 Section 8. [*Effective Date.*] [Insert effective date.]