



# County of Marquette

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT/DEVELOPMENT DEPT.

*Planning, Community Development, Forestry, and Recreation  
Division*

Phone 906.225.8192  
[www.co.marquette.mi.us](http://www.co.marquette.mi.us)

## Public Notice

January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### **Subject: Public Hearing on Proposed Amendment to the Marquette County ORV Ordinance**

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners invites the public and all interested stakeholders to a public hearing regarding a proposed amendment to the **Marquette County Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Ordinance**.

**To:** Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Marquette County Road Commission, City of Marquette, City of Negaunee, City of Ishpeming, Champion Township, Chocolay Township, Ely Township, Ewing Township, Forsyth Township, Humboldt Township, Ishpeming Township, Marquette Township, Michigamme Township, Negaunee Township, Powell Township, Republic Township, Richmond Township, Sands Township, Skandia Township, Tilden Township, Turin Township, Wells Township, West Branch Township

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, March 18th, 2025, 6:00 pm

**Location:** Room 213, Henry A. Skewis Building, 234 W Baraga Avenue, Marquette, MI 49855

The purpose of this hearing is to provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the proposed changes to the ordinance. This amendment aims to address updated regulations, more closely mirror State of Michigan statute, and improve the framework for ORV usage in Marquette County. Copies of the proposed ordinance amendment are available for review prior to the hearing at the Marquette County Clerk's Office and on the Marquette County website at [www.mqtco.org](http://www.mqtco.org). Those unable to attend in person may submit written comments to the Marquette County Clerk's Office by March 4th, 2025 at:

Marquette County Clerk's Office  
234 W Baraga Avenue, Marquette, MI 49855  
Or via email: [sgonstead@mqtco.org](mailto:sgonstead@mqtco.org)

For further information or questions, please contact Sven Gonstead at the Marquette County Planning, Community Development, Forestry, and Recreation office at [sgonstead@mqtco.org](mailto:sgonstead@mqtco.org), 906/225-8197.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COUNTY OF MARQUETTE  
ORV ORDINANCE OF 2025**

An ordinance adopted for the purpose of authorizing and regulating the operation of Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) on roads in Marquette County for the purpose of providing penalties for the violation thereof, to provide for the distribution of public funds resulting from those penalties pursuant to 2008 PA 240, MCL 324.81131, and for the purpose of repealing the County's existing ORV Ordinance adopted on June 18th, 2013.

**THE COUNTY OF MARQUETTE ORDAINS:**

**Section 1.** As used in this ordinance, the following definitions shall apply:

"ATV" or "All-Terrain Vehicle" refer to as defined by Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451, 324.81101(b)

"County" means the County of Marquette;

"Driver license" means an operator's or chauffeur's license or permit issued to an individual by the Secretary of State under Chapter III of the Michigan Vehicle Code, 1949 PA 300, MCL 257.301 to 257.329, for that individual to operate a vehicle, whether or not conditions are attached to the license or permit;

"Operate" refer to as defined by Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451, 324.81101(s)  
ORV;

"Operator" refer to as defined by Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451, 324.81101(t)

"ORV" refer to as defined by Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451, 324.81101(u)

"Road" means a County primary or County local road as described in Section 5 of 1951 PA 51, MCL 247.655, and does not include State or Federal highways or rights-of-way;

"Road Commission" means the Board of County Road Commissioners for the County of Marquette;

"Safety Certificate" refer to as defined by Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451, 324.81101(v)

"Township" means an individual township within the County of Marquette;

“Township Board” means a board of trustees of any township within the County of Marquette; and

“Visual supervision” means the direct observation of the operator with the unaided or normally corrected eye, where the observer is able to come to the immediate aid of the operator.

**Section 2.** An ORV may be operated on the far right of the maintained portion of a Road within the County with these exceptions:

a) Roads within the Charter Township of Chocolay, the Charter Township of Marquette, the Township of Sands, and the cities of Marquette, Negaunee and Ishpeming; and,

b) Roads closed to the operation of ORVs either by the Road Commission or by a Township, pursuant to MCL 324.81131(4).

c) The County, in cooperation with the Townships and the Road Commission, shall maintain a map that depicts all roads closed to ORV use, which map shall be posted on the County website; together with a listing of all townships and cities closed to all ORV use, and a listing of all townships and cities that maintain their own ORV ordinance.

**Section 3.** Pursuant to MCL 324.81131(4), the Township Board of a Township in the County may adopt an ordinance to close any Roads within the boundaries of the Township to the operation of ORVs permitted by this Ordinance. The Township Board of a Township in the County may adopt an ordinance authorizing the operation of ORVs “on the maintained portion of one (1) or more roads located within the Township,” pursuant to MCL 324.81131(3).

**Section 4.** Pursuant to MCL 324.81131(4), the Road Commission may close no more than thirty (30%) percent of the total linear miles of Roads in the County to protect the environment or if the operation of ORVs poses a particular and demonstrable threat to public safety. The Road Commission may not close a municipal street to ORVs opened under Section 5 of MCL 324.81131.

**Section 5.** An ORV may not be operated on the road surface, roadway, shoulder, or right-of-way of any state or federal highway in the County.

**Section 6.** Except as otherwise set forth herein or otherwise provided by law, an ORV meeting all of the following conditions may be operated on Roads in the County:

a) at a speed of no more than 25 miles per hour or a lower posted ORV speed limit;

b) by a person not less than twelve (12) years of age;

c) with the flow of traffic;

d) in a manner that does not interfere with traffic on the Road;

- e) traveling single file except when overtaking and passing another ORV;
  - f) when visibility is not substantially reduced due to weather conditions unless displaying a lighted headlight and lighted taillight;
  - g) one-half (1/2) hour before sunrise until one-half (1/2) hour after sunset unless displaying a lighted headlight and lighted taillight;
  - h) while displaying a lighted headlight and lighted taillight at all hours beginning January 1, 2010;
  - i) while the operator and each passenger is wearing a crash helmet and protective eyewear approved by the United States Department of Transportation unless the vehicle is equipped with a roof that meets or exceeds standards for a crash helmet and the operator and each passenger is wearing a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt;
  - j) with a throttle so designed that when the pressure used to advance the throttle is removed, the engine speed will immediately and automatically return to idle;
  - k) while the ORV is equipped with a spark arrester type United States Forest Service approved muffler in good working order and in constant operation;
  - l) pursuant to noise emission standards defined by law; and,
- consistent with all other applicable laws, rules, regulations and ordinances.

**Section 7.** A child less than sixteen (16) years of age shall not operate an ORV on a Road in the County unless the child is under the direct visual supervision of an adult and the child has in his or her immediate possession a Michigan issued ORV safety certificate or a comparable ORV safety certificate issued under the authority of another state or a province of Canada.

**Section 8.** Traveling in a golf cart refer to as defined by Michigan Vehicle Code 257.657a A golf cart that is operated as an ATV shall require an ORV registration.

**Section 9.** Unless a person possesses a valid driver's license, a person shall not operate an ORV on a Road in the County if the ORV is registered as a motor vehicle and is either more than sixty-five (65) inches wide or has three (3) wheels.

**Section 10.** Operation of ORV, prohibited acts, crash helmet and protective eyewear required; exception; assumption of risk, refer to as defined by Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 324.81133.

**Section 11.** Any person who violates this ordinance is guilty of a municipal civil infraction and may be ordered to pay a civil fine of not more than Five Hundred (\$500.00) Dollars.

**Section 12.** A court may order a person who causes damage to the environment, a Road, or other property as a result of the operation of an ORV to pay full restitution for that damage above and beyond the penalties paid for civil fines.

**Section 13.** The County Treasurer shall deposit all fines and damages collected under this ordinance into a fund to be designated as the ORV Fund. The County Board of Commissioners shall appropriate revenue in the ORV Fund as follows:

- a) Fifty (50%) percent to the County Road Commission for repairing damage to Roads and the environment that may have been caused by ORVs, and for posting signs indicating ORV speed limits, or indicating whether Roads are open or closed to the operation of ORVs; and,
- b) Fifty (50%) percent to the County Sheriff for ORV enforcement and training.

**Section 14.** This Ordinance shall become effective the day following publication of notice of its adoption in a newspaper of general circulation in the County.

**Section 15.** The existing County ORV Ordinance adopted by the Marquette County Board of Commissioners on [month] [date], 2025, shall be and hereby is repealed as of the effective date of this Ordinance.

This Ordinance is adopted by action of the Marquette County Board of Commissioners this XX<sup>th</sup> day of [month], 2025.

Commissioners voting "Aye."

Commissioners voting "Nay."

Absent.

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Joseph Derocha, Chair  
Marquette County Board of Commissioners

CERTIFICATION

I, Linda Talsma, Clerk of the County of Marquette, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Ordinance duly adopted by the Marquette County Board of Commissioners on the XX<sup>th</sup> day of [month], 2025.

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Linda Talsma, Marquette County Clerk