

IMPLEMENTS OF HUSBANDRY.

An implement of husbandry is farm equipment that is equipped with pneumatic tires, is infrequently operated or moved on highways and is used for the benefit of the farmer's agricultural operations to perform agricultural production or harvest activities or transport agricultural products or agricultural supplies (PVC § 102). Implements of husbandry can also be earthmoving equipment used in farming operations (PVC § 102). Farm tractors and combines are typical examples of what would be considered to be implements of husbandry.

An implement of husbandry is exempt from registration if it is operated on:

- Roads that adjoin the implement owner's farm (PVC § 1302(2)(i));
- Roads between the implement owner's farms located not more than 25 miles apart (PVC § 1302(2)(ii)); or
- Roads between the implement owner's farm and a place of business within a radius of 25 miles of the farm for the purpose of buying or selling agricultural commodities or supplies or for the purpose of repairing or servicing the implement (PVC § 1302(2)(iii)).

Implements of husbandry that operate outside these boundaries will be required to be registered. Also, implements of husbandry that are used for-hire to perform custom farm services for other farms will be required to be registered. In cases where an implement is required to be registered, the annual registration fee is \$18 (PVC § 1922).

Implements of husbandry are exempt from requirements to display a fuel tax decal and all other requirements related to the administration of the state fuel tax (PVC § 2105(a)(6)). Implements of husbandry are also exempt from requirements to have a rearview mirror (PVC § 4534). If not equipped by the original manufacturer, implements of husbandry are not required to have a horn (PVC § 4535(c)) or front or rear bumpers (PVC § 4536). Implements of husbandry are exempt from requirements for periodic vehicle inspection (PVC § 4703(b)(2)).

Lighting equipment is not required for implements of husbandry operated between sunrise and sunset during periods other than periods of reduced visibility (such as inclement weather) (PVC § 4303(e) and PaDOTRegs § 175.225). However, during nighttime hours and periods of reduced visibility, implements of husbandry must meet the lighting requirements prescribed in state regulations. The regulations require two headlights controlled by a dimmer switch, one amber reflector or reflective tape at least 3 square inches in area, one red reflector or reflective tape at least 3 square inches in area, and a flashing hazard lamp system with either one double-faced lamp warning with amber to the front on each side of the vehicle or two amber lamps on the front and red lamps on the rear of the vehicle (PaDOTRegs § 175.225). An implement of husbandry transporting highly perishable crops during nighttime hours for processing must also have and use two rotating yellow beacons (PVC § 4307(e)).

Vehicles towed by an implement of husbandry between sunrise and sunset are not required to have rear lighting, if the implement is properly displaying a slow moving on the rear of the implement (PVC § 4905(e)).

Implements of husbandry and other vehicles designed to be operated at 25 miles per hour or less must also display a slow moving vehicle emblem on the rear of the vehicle (PVC § 4529(a)). If the implement is towing a trailer or other vehicle and the slow moving emblem on the rear of the implement is not clearly visible to those approaching from the rear, a slow moving vehicle emblem must also be placed on the rear of the towed vehicle (PVC § 4529(c)).

Farm tractors may not tow more than two other vehicles when engaged in agricultural operations (PVC § 4904(b)).

Drivers of Implements of Husbandry.

A driver's license is not required for operating an implement of husbandry, if the driver is at least 14 years of age (PVC § 1502(5)). However, substantial limitations are placed on persons 14 and 15 years of age. They may only operate an implement on one or two-lane roads that immediately adjoin or bisect the premises where the driver resides (PVC § 1502(5)). Since implements of husbandry are not considered to be "commercial motor vehicles" (PVC § 1601), drivers of implements should not be required to obtain a commercial driver's license.

Even though a driver's license is not required for operating an implement of husbandry, persons operating implements while their driver's license is suspended or revoked may find themselves in trouble with the law. At least one case has held a person with a suspended driver's license can be found in violation of operating a motor vehicle without a license, even where the vehicle operated did not require a driver's license. The decision was based on traditional reasoning that operating motor vehicles is not a legal right but a privilege. The court held that suspension or revocation of the driver's license terminates all privileges to operate motor vehicles on roads..

The Vehicle Code requires drivers of vehicles such as implements of husbandry that are operating at a speed that is less than the normal speed of traffic to operate the vehicle as "close as practicable" to the right-hand curb or right-hand edge of the roadway (PVC § 3301(b)). When the vehicle is being operated on a one-lane or two-lane road and the vehicle's speed is impeding the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, the Vehicle Code requires the vehicle driver to operate the vehicle on the berm or shoulder of the road at the first opportunity "when and where it is reasonable and safe to do so" (PVC § 3364(b)). The driver of the slower vehicle operating on the berm or shoulder may only return to the roadway when it can be done safely and when it will not impede normal and reasonable movement of traffic (PVC § 3364(b)).