

# How to Prove You Had the Right-of-Way in a Bicycle Accident

## Get a local lawyer who knows how to fight for injured cyclists

If you have ever ridden a bike in New Orleans traffic, you know the road can feel like a stage where everyone believes they are the star. Drivers think they own the spotlight, cyclists are trying to stay upright, and every now and then, someone forgets the choreography. When a driver hits a cyclist and then insists the cyclist “came out of nowhere,” the script gets rewritten fast. That is why proving you had the right-of-way in a [bicycle accident](#) can make or break your claim.

Right-of-way determines who legally has priority in a given moment, and it often becomes the center of dispute in bicycle accident cases. Drivers tend to assume they always have the upper hand, even when traffic laws say otherwise. Read on to find out how the right-of-way works, what evidence matters, and how showing you were following the rules gives you a strong advantage when a driver or an insurance company tries to shift blame your way.

## What does “right-of-way” mean in a New Orleans bicycle accident?

Right-of-way in Louisiana refers to the legal order of movement on the road. It determines who is allowed to proceed and who must yield. Cyclists are fully included in that system. Under Louisiana law, bicycles are recognized as legitimate vehicles, which means cyclists share many of the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. They are allowed to use the roadway, enter intersections, take a lane when conditions make it safer, and move through traffic just as any motor vehicle would.

Right-of-way doesn't give a cyclist unlimited freedom. It simply means that in certain situations, such as riding straight through an intersection with the right signal or traveling inside a marked bike lane, the cyclist has legal priority. When a driver fails to yield and causes a crash, Louisiana traffic law places the responsibility on the driver rather than the cyclist.

Because riding in Louisiana can involve bike lanes, shared lanes, sidewalks in some areas, shoulders, and busy urban intersections, right-of-way questions are not always simple. But the core rule remains the same. If you were riding where Louisiana law allows and doing what the law expects, you likely had the right-of-way.

## When do cyclists usually have the right-of-way in Louisiana?

Cyclists in Louisiana often have the right-of-way in everyday traffic situations, even though many drivers are unaware of it or simply fail to recognize it. These are some of the most common scenarios where a cyclist has legal priority on Louisiana roads:

## **Going straight through an intersection**

If you enter an intersection on a green light, a steady yellow, or at a four-way stop where you arrived first, Louisiana law gives you the right-of-way. Many bicycle crashes happen because a driver makes a left turn across a cyclist's path or rolls through a right turn without stopping and checking for approaching bikes.

## **Riding in a bike lane**

Bike lanes in Louisiana are designated spaces for cyclists, and drivers must yield before entering them. This includes turning, merging, or drifting across the lane. When a driver moves into the bike lane without looking, the cyclist typically has the right-of-way.

## **Taking the lane**

Louisiana allows cyclists to take the full lane when it is too narrow for a bicycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side. When a cyclist shifts into the center of the lane to protect their safety, they hold the same right-of-way priority as a motor vehicle occupying that space.

## **Using a crosswalk**

If you are walking your bicycle, you are treated as a pedestrian under Louisiana law and have the same protections. In some municipalities, cyclists who ride slowly and enter the crosswalk legally may still have right-of-way priority. Drivers often check only for other vehicles and overlook cyclists who are already crossing.

## **Moving straight past driveways or parking lot exits**

Drivers leaving a driveway, business entrance, or parking lot must yield to all traffic already moving along the roadway. This includes cyclists traveling in designated bike lanes, on the shoulder, or on sidewalks in municipalities where sidewalk riding is allowed.

## **When does right-of-way become unclear or disputed?**

Some crashes happen in situations where the rules are less obvious. These are common problem areas:

- **Uncontrolled intersections:** No stop signs or traffic lights often means confusion. Priority depends on who entered first and who was traveling straight. If both parties reach the intersection at nearly the same time, disputes are common.
- **Sidewalk cycling:** Sidewalk rules vary by city. If it is legal locally and you entered a crosswalk at a safe speed, you may still have right-of-way protections. If it is not allowed, the driver's insurance company may argue you contributed to the crash.

- **Driveways and parking lots:** Drivers often claim they did not see the cyclist. Legally, they must still yield before crossing bike lanes, sidewalks, or roadway edges used by cyclists.
- **Dooring accidents:** Drivers or passengers sometimes blame the cyclist for riding too close to parked cars. The law says the person opening the door must check first. When they fail to do so, the cyclist typically has the right-of-way.
- **Poor road markings:** If a bike lane is faded or a crosswalk is partly missing, the situation may seem unclear. The cyclist may still have had priority if they were riding predictably and lawfully.

### How should I document the scene to protect my claim?

Insurance companies look for reasons to reduce or deny claims. They may argue that you were outside the bike lane, riding too fast, or not visible enough. Some may misinterpret bicycle laws or claim you should have acted differently, even when the driver clearly broke the rules. They may also rely heavily on the driver's version of events, even when it is not supported by evidence.

This is why documenting the scene and gathering proof matters so much. Here is the evidence that can help you build a strong case:

- **Video footage:** Traffic cameras, security cameras, doorbell cameras, dashcams, and rideshare recordings can show how the accident unfolded. Video is often the strongest evidence available.
- **Scene photos:** Photographs can capture bike lanes, stop signs, traffic lights, crosswalks, skid marks, debris fields, and the location of both vehicles immediately after the crash.
- **GPS and cycling app data:** Apps such as Strava or Garmin can show your direction, speed, and exact location. This data can refute claims that you were riding unpredictably.
- **Damage to the bicycle:** The pattern of damage often shows how and where the impact happened.
- **Witness statements:** People who saw the crash can confirm who arrived first, who had a green light, or who made a sudden turn.
- **Traffic signal reports:** These reports show the timing of lights and can help establish whether you entered the intersection lawfully.

### How can a bicycle accident lawyer strengthen your claim?

If you were hurt in a bicycle accident in New Orleans, you don't have to pedal through the aftermath on your own. [The Law Offices of John S. Williams, LLC](#) is here to steady the path and make sure you're not left carrying the cost of someone else's carelessness. Attorney John Williams knows how quickly a crash can turn your life upside down. He brings the kind of hands-

on guidance that makes a complicated situation feel manageable. When drivers point fingers or insurance adjusters try to downplay your injuries, John is the one who steps in, pushes back, and fights for what's fair.

John treats clients like family and never settles for less than what an injured cyclist truly needs. From investigating the crash to dealing with the insurance company, he handles every step with the determination and attention to detail your case deserves. Since he works on a contingency fee basis, you won't pay anything upfront. John only gets paid if he recovers money for you. That means you can focus on healing while he focuses on holding the at-fault party accountable.

The next move is easy. [Contact us online](#) or call for a free consultation and get answers from someone who knows Louisiana bicycle accident law inside and out. One conversation can give you clarity, confidence, and a clear path forward after your crash.