

January 4, 2021

Dear Municipal Stakeholder,

I am pleased to announce that effective **January 1, 2021**, the province has expanded the on-road opportunities for off-road vehicle riders in some parts of Ontario. Off-road vehicle riders are expected to experience enhanced trail access resulting from the increased on-road connections to Ontario's off-road vehicle trail network. The changes apply only to municipalities listed in Ontario Regulation 8/03 and amend the way permitted off-road vehicles are allowed on-road access to municipal highways.

In municipalities listed in [Ontario Regulation 8/03](#), permitted off-road vehicles will be allowed by default on municipal highways unless the municipality has an existing by-law that restricts their use or creates a new by-law to prohibit or restrict the use of some or all off-road vehicles. These new provisions replace the previous requirement that municipalities had to enact a by-law to permit off-road vehicles to operate on municipal highways. The updated regulations can be found at [Ontario Regulation 316/03](#), and [Ontario Regulation 863](#).

It is important to note that the on-road access rules for off-road vehicles in municipalities that are not listed in Ontario Regulation 8/03 will continue to be subject to the existing regulatory framework under Ontario Regulation 316/03 and these municipalities are not affected by this change.

The equipment configuration and performance requirements for off-road vehicles as set out in Section 10 of Ontario Regulation 316/03 also remain unchanged. The *Highway Traffic Act* prohibition of drivers of any motor vehicles causing the vehicle to make unnecessary noise, for example through modification, also applies and violations are subject to fines.

In order to support municipalities with these changes, the ministry has provided a Municipal Guidance Document (attached) to help municipalities decide whether they need to take action to revoke, update or pass new by-laws related to on-road access by off-road vehicles on the highways under their jurisdiction.

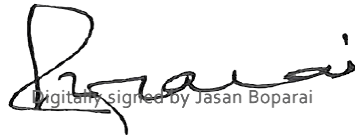
I ask you to kindly forward this notice and the attached Municipal Guidance Document to municipal staff responsible for traffic safety and those responsible for enforcing off-road vehicle laws in your area. Although changes have been previously announced on the Ontario Newsroom site and there will be a communication in the backgrounder issued by the Premier's Office, municipalities should ensure that the public and off-road vehicle riders are made aware of the rules in their area.

If there are any questions regarding off-road vehicles licencing, operation or equipment requirements referenced in the attached guidance material, please contact Angela Litrenta, Manager, Road Safety Program Development Office at (416) 235-5130 or Angela.Litrenta@ontario.ca.

If there are any questions regarding amendments to Ontario Regulation 316/03, and Ontario Regulation 863, please contact Ron Turcotte, Head, Safety Information Management Section, Provincial Traffic Office at (289)-407-9880 or Ron.Turcotte@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in communicating this change.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by Jasan Boparai

Jasan Boparai
Director

Attachment – Municipal Guidance document