



WHY YOUR STATE SHOULD ADOPT THE UNIFORM AUTOMATED OPERATION OF VEHICLES ACT (2019)

Automated vehicles have the potential to drastically reduce traffic fatalities and make motor vehicle travel more accessible. The Uniform Automated Operation of Vehicles Act (UAOVA) provides a technology neutral framework for the safe and responsible deployment of automated vehicles. Enacting the UAOVA is the first step to ensuring that your state will be at the forefront of this technological revolution.

- ***What does the act cover?*** The UAOVA applies to the deployment of automated vehicles (colloquially referred to as autonomous, driverless, or self-driving) on roads held open to the public. This act does not cover testing of aspirational automated vehicles for the purposes of research and development. It does not cover remote driving, in which a human drives a vehicle while outside of or far from it. And it does not cover vehicle features that merely assist a human driver; even if these features brake, steer, and accelerate, they are still designed with the expectation that a human driver will monitor the road.
- ***What types of vehicles does the act cover?*** The UAOVA applies to vehicles that fall within SAE Levels 3 to 5 as defined in the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) International report titled J3016 Levels of Driving Automation. Vehicles that fall within SAE Levels 0 to 2 do not fall within the scope of the UAOVA and will be subject to existing law in each state.
- ***Who is the legal driver when the automated vehicle is under automated operation?*** The legal driver when an automated vehicle is under automated operation will be the “automated driving provider” or “ADP”. Under UAOVA, an automated driving provider declares itself to the state and designates the automated vehicles for which it will act as the legal driver. This provider might be an automated driving system developer, a vehicle manufacturer, a data provider, a fleet operator, or another kind of market participant that has yet to emerge.
- ***How do I register an automated vehicle in a state that adopts UAOVA?*** Only an automated vehicle that is associated with an automated driving provider (ADP) may be registered. Once the automated vehicle has been associated with an ADP, the UAOVA adopts a state’s existing motor vehicle registration process. In this way, the act uses the motor vehicle registration framework that already exists in states—and that applies to both conventional and automated vehicles—to incentivize self-identification by automated driving providers. By harnessing an existing framework, the act also seeks to respect and empower state motor vehicle agencies.

- ***Do I need a driver’s license to sit in the conventional driver’s seat of an automated vehicle?*** It depends. An individual who takes a “completely automated trip” as defined in the act does not need a driver’s license, even if the individual sits in the conventional driving position, turns on the vehicle, or performs other actions that may constitute driving in more conventional contexts. Conversely, because a state’s existing vehicle code continues to apply, an individual who drives for part of a trip does need a driver’s license, even if the individual relies on an automated driving system for a portion of the trip.
- ***Who gets the ticket if an automated vehicle is pulled over by a police officer for violating the rules of the road?*** It depends. An automated driving provider is responsible for a violation of the rules of the road by an associated automated vehicle under automated operation. If the associated automated vehicle under automated operation is pulled over for speeding, the ADP would receive the speeding ticket. If, however, the automated vehicle is not under automated operation when it is pulled over for speeding, the human driver would receive the speeding ticket.

For further information about the UAOVA, please contact ULC Legislative Counsel Libby Snyder at lsnyder@uniformlaws.org or (312) 450-6619.