

# Do Pedestrians Have the Right-of-Way in Pennsylvania?



*...It's complicated, but, YES, drivers must yield when a pedestrian is in a crosswalk at an unsignalized intersection, when the person is proceeding with a pedestrian "walk" signal or green light, or when a person is crossing at a marked mid-block crosswalk or marked trail crossing. The pedestrian must give the driver enough time to yield and not step out suddenly!*

CAT examines relevant pedestrian laws in PA Vehicle Code, Title 75.

**Right-of-Way of Pedestrians in Crosswalks** - Pedestrians have the right-of-way in marked or unmarked crosswalks at intersections and marked crosswalks at mid-block locations/trail crossings. The pedestrian must be "IN" the crosswalk, i.e. at least one foot off the curb with intent to cross the street.

§ 3542(a) ...the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk or within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection.

**Exercise of Care by Pedestrian** - Pedestrians must give motorists and bicyclists enough time/distance to yield without needing to make an emergency maneuver.

§ 3542(b) No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close as to constitute a hazard.

**Crossing at Signalized Intersections** - At signalized intersections, pedestrians should cross only with a pedestrian "Walk" signal, or in its absence, in a parallel direction to a green light; in both cases having the right-of-way over turning vehicles.

§ 3112(a) & 3113(a) ...pedestrians facing any green signal... "Walk" or walking person signal... may proceed across the roadway within a crosswalk. (CAT Note: Use of the phrase "may proceed" in these sections should not be used to infer that a pedestrian should cross on a "Don't Walk" or red signal. See also local ordinances, i.e. City of Bethlehem Ord. 1769 §11 changes "may" to "shall... only")

**Pedestrians Crossing Not at Crosswalks** - Pedestrians may cross between intersections without a mid-block crosswalk, but they do not have the right-of-way. Pedestrians shall not cross between adjacent signalized intersections in urban districts.

§ 3543(a) -Every pedestrian crossing a roadway at any point other than within a crosswalk at an intersection or any marked crosswalk shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway.

§ 3543(c) says that the only time crossing between intersections is completely prohibited is in urban districts between adjacent intersections that are signalized.

§ 3543(d) says that pedestrians may not cross intersections diagonally unless specifically authorized.

## **Driveways and Alleys are Treated as Crosswalks**

§ 3547. The driver of a vehicle emerging from or entering an ...driveway shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian approaching on any sidewalk extending across the ...driveway.

## **Other Relevant Subsections**

§ 3541(b) Obedience of pedestrians to traffic-control devices and regulations – regarding local ordinances

§ 3542(c) Passing Stopped Vehicles at Crosswalks.

§ 3544. Pedestrians walking along or on highway.

§ 3549. Blind pedestrians.

Also read CAT's handout "What Constitutes a Crosswalk on Pennsylvania Streets?"  
More discussion at: <http://www.lvcat.org/lvcat/pa-pedestrian-laws-dissected/>

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