



**TOWN OF EMERALD ISLE**  
**GOLF CART REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Operation of Golf Carts Permitted.** The operation of golf carts on the public streets, roads and highways with a posted speed limit of 35 mph or less within the Town and on property owned or leased by the Town in compliance with the provisions of EITO 11-40 through 11-46 shall be permitted. However, it shall be unlawful to operate any golf cart that is not properly registered with and permitted by the Town or to operate any golf cart at any place or in any manner not authorized therein.

**Registration and Permit Required.** No golf cart may be operated on any public street, road, or highway within the Town or on any property owned or leased by the Town unless the golf cart has first been registered with the Town and permitted as required herein. The registration and permit shall be renewed annually thereafter in accordance with the provisions of this article.

**Application and Permit.** The owner shall complete an application provided by the Town and the golf cart shall be inspected by designated Town staff for compliance with the provisions of this article prior to the issuance of an annual permit for the golf cart. To evidence the registration, the owner shall be issued a unique license plate and annual registration decal which shall be displayed on the rear of the golf cart. The Board of Commissioners may establish, and amend from time to time, an annual registration fee for golf carts.

**Basic Requirements.** In order to register a golf cart and secure an annual permit, the owner and golf cart must meet the following basic requirements:

1. The owner must be at least 18 years old and possess a valid drivers license, and
2. The owner must possess and maintain liability insurance in an amount not less than required by North Carolina law for traditional motor vehicles operated on a public highway in North Carolina, and
3. The golf cart must be registered to a physical address in Emerald Isle, unless a commercial rental, and
4. The golf cart must not have been modified to exceed a speed of 20 mph, and
5. The golf cart must have an identifiable identification number.

**Required Safety Features.** In order to register a golf cart and secure an annual permit, a golf cart must have the following safety features installed:

1. Two operating front headlights, visible from a distance of at least 250 feet,
2. Two operating tail lights, with brake lights and turn signals, visible from a distance of at least 250 feet,
3. A rear vision mirror,
4. At least one reflector per side,
5. A parking brake,

6. Seat belts for all seating positions on the golf cart,
7. A windshield,
8. Must be limited to a maximum of three rows of seats.
9. Town issued rules safety sticker affixed to the windshield (issued at time of golf cart inspection)

**Inspection.** Prior to the issuance of an initial permit or annual renewal, designated Town staff shall inspect the golf cart for compliance with the requirements of this article. No golf cart shall be registered and permitted unless it is in compliance with all requirements.

**Acknowledgement.** Prior to the issuance of an initial permit or annual renewal, the owner shall sign an acknowledgment that he/she has read and understands the provisions of this article.

**Disqualified Vehicles.** All-terrain vehicles, 4-wheel utility vehicles, go-karts, and other similar utility vehicles which are not manufactured for operation on a golf course, and/or a golf cart which has been modified so that it no longer meets the definition of golf cart may not be registered as a golf cart under this article nor shall such vehicles be operated on the public roads, streets, and highways within the Town, unless such vehicles are registered and permitted under the motor vehicle laws of North Carolina.

**Standards of Operation.** It is unlawful to operate a golf cart on a public street, road, or highway within the Town unless the following requirements are met:

1. Golf carts ARE NOT PERMITTED to be operated on any portion of the bicycle path, sidewalks, Coast Guard Road or Hwy 58/Emerald Drive. Golf carts are permitted to cross directly over Coast Guard Road or Hwy 58/Emerald Drive so long as it is in a straight line and at a 90-degree angle. Golf Carts ARE NOT PERMITTED to cross at the intersection of Coast Guard Rd and NC58/Emerald Drive.
2. OPEN CONTAINERS OF ALCOHOL ARE NOT PERMITTED on a golf cart, to include passengers! Anyone operating a golf cart under the influence of alcohol or other drugs can be arrested for Driving While Impaired!
3. No one UNDER THE AGE OF 18 is allowed to operate a golf cart.
4. Anyone operating a golf cart must have a valid State Issued driver's license in their possession while operating a golf cart and must comply with all conditions and restrictions on their license.
5. A golf cart must display a valid town issued registration plate and current year decal on the REAR of the golf cart and an Emerald Isle Rules and Regulations sticker on the windshield during operation.
6. A golf cart may only transport as many people as there are seat belts. The seating capacity of seat belts may not be exceeded.
7. Each operator/passenger is required to be properly seated and have their own individual seat belt securely fastened while the golf cart is in motion. Children who are required by law to be in a car seat in a motor vehicle are also required to be in a car seat on a golf cart.
8. Golf carts may not be operated at a speed that is greater than reasonable and prudent under existing conditions and in no circumstances at a speed greater than 20mph.
9. Golf carts may not be operated in a careless or reckless manner.
10. Golf carts are required to be operated in accordance with all state motor vehicle laws, local traffic laws and local ordinances.
11. Golf carts are subject to the same parking restrictions, rules and regulations governing traditional motor vehicles and may only be parked in the same manner and same places designated for the parking of traditional motor vehicles. Golf carts are permitted to park in specially designated "golf cart only" parking spaces as may be provided by the Town in various locations.

12. Golf carts may only park in designated handicapped parking spaces if the operator/driver or passenger has a handicapped placard or sticker and it is clearly posted or displayed in the golf cart.
13. Golf carts may not be used to tow another cart, trailer or vehicle of any kind including a person on roller skates, bicycles, skateboards or other device.
14. Golf carts are required to yield the right of way to traditional motor vehicles.

**Penalties and Remedies.**

1. Each operator/passenger found to be in violation of a rule or regulation shall be subject to a civil citation and a fine of \$50.00 per violation.
2. Any operator/passenger in violation of the North Carolina Motor Vehicle Code shall be subject to the penalties and fines prescribed in North Carolina law for said violation.
3. Operation of a golf cart while under the influence of an impairing substance on a public street, road or PVA is a violation of North Carolina law and is punishable as provided therein.
4. The Town may refuse to register and issue a permit for the operation of a golf cart, or may immediately revoke a previously issued permit, if the registered golf cart and/or the owner of the golf cart is involved in three (3) or more violations of this article and/or violations of North Carolina law within a three (3) year period. Said revocation shall be effective for one (1) year.
5. The Town may refuse to register and/or issue a permit for the operation of a golf cart, or may immediately revoke a previously issued permit, if the registered golf cart and/or the owner of the golf cart is charged with operating a golf cart under the influence of an impairing substance, aiding and abetting the operation of the golf cart under the influence of an impairing substance, or operating a golf cart in a careless and reckless manner. Said revocation and/or denial of a permit shall be effective for one (1) year, unless the charge is dismissed or the owner and/or operator is acquitted, in which event the permit shall either be immediately reinstated or the application for the permit shall be approved if the conditions of the ordinance have been met.

**Exceptions.** The operation of golf carts in the following circumstances is not subject to the provisions of this article:

1. The operation of golf carts on private property, with the consent of the owner,
2. The operation of golf carts within private, gated, or limited access communities, unless the streets of the community are dedicated for public use and maintained by the Town,
3. The use of a golf cart in connection with a parade, a festival, or other special event provided the consent of the sponsor is obtained, the Police Department is notified, and provided the golf cart is only used during such event, and
4. The use of golf carts by Town personnel, other governmental agencies, and/or public service agencies on official business.

**Disclaimer.** Golf carts are not designed for nor manufactured to be used on public streets and the Town neither advocates nor endorses the golf cart as a safe means of travel on public streets, roads, and highways. The Town shall in no way be liable for accidents, injuries, or deaths involving or resulting from the operation of a golf cart.

**Assumption of risk.** Any person who owns, operates, or rides on a golf cart on a public street, road, or highway within the Town does so at his or her own risk and peril and assumes all liability resulting from the operation of the golf cart.

**To continue in the application process:**

1. Complete Golf Cart Application form online by visiting [www.emeraldisle-nc.org](http://www.emeraldisle-nc.org) or in person at the Emerald Isle Police Department, 7500 Emerald Drive, and upload or attach a copy of your current insurance policy showing financial responsibility for the golf cart.
2. Upon receipt of application Emerald Isle Police Department will coordinate inspection of the golf cart. Any noted deficiencies must be corrected and a copy of the repair bill must be attached to the inspection form.