Age-appropriate Size-fit Standards for New Mexico:

Age appropriate size-fit. Standards governing the relationship between the engine displacement level (in cubic centimeters, or cc.) of an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and the minimum age an operator must attain before he may operate an ATV with higher than minimum engine displacement levels, combined with objective measurements of how a rider physically fits on an ATV and can operate basic equipment features, are called "age appropriate size-fit" standards.

(1) No person under six (6) years of age shall operate an all-terrain vehicle on public land.

(2) Operators under the age of ten (10) shall not operate an ATV with an engine size greater than 100cc. and shall comply with the physical fit standards set forth below in Subsection D of this section.

(3) Operators from ages ten (10) through fifteen (15) shall not operate an ATV with an engine size greater than 250cc. and shall comply with the physical fit standards set forth below in Subsection D of this section.

(4) Notwithstanding Paragraph (3) of this subsection, operators who are fourteen (14) or fifteen (15) years of age and who possess a valid driver's license may operate an ATV with an engine size not greater than 450 cc.

(5) Operators at least sixteen (16) years of age may operate an ATV with an engine size greater than 250cc.

D. Physical fit standards. Unless the relationship between an operator and the ATV being operated complies with the following standards, there is a violation of the age appropriate size-fit standards of these rules, regardless of whether the operator is in compliance with the engine size standards of Subsection C immediately preceding.

(1) Clearance between ATV seat and inseam while standing up on foot pegs - The intent for requiring a clearance is two-fold: the first is to permit the rider to stand up and absorb shocks through the legs while traversing rough terrain; the second is to minimize the possibility of the rider being struck by the seat and catapulted over the handle bars. Three to six inches should be a minimum clearance. The maximum will be controlled by the reference point below.

(2) Upper legs- The upper portion of the leg, roughly from the top of the knee to the hip (or the lap if sitting in a chair) should be approximately horizontal. A little above or below the horizontal is not a violation of this standard, but gross departures (knees significantly below or above the hips) shall warrant further inquiry. Knees that are significantly above the hips and which contact the handlebars in both directions when they are turned constitute a violation of this standard.

(3) Foot length- With the heel of the right shoe locked against the footpeg or in the proper position on the running board, the toe should be able to depress the foot brake with a simple downward rotation of the foot. Contact with engine or exhaust protrusions should be examined. The rider should be able to operate the brakes consistently without hesitation. The same principle applies to the left side of the ATV where the gearshift is located.

(4) Grip reach- With the rider in the normal seated position (not leaning forward) and the hands on the handlebars, the elbows should have a distinct angle between the upper arm and the forearm. If the elbows are straight out, the rider has no ability to turn the handlebars. If the elbows are less than right angles, the rider is too large for the ATV and steering is difficult possibly throwing the rider off balance.

(5) Throttle reach- With the right hand in the normal operating position, the thumb must easily operate the throttle. The rider must be able to turn the handlebars to both the extreme left and extreme right position without any interference with easy operation.

(6) Brake reach- With the hands in the normal operating position and the fingers straight out, the first joint (from the tip) of the middle finger should extend beyond the brake lever. If not, the hand is too small to effectively grasp the lever in an emergency. The thumb must also reach the engine stop switch. The rider should be able to squeeze the brake lever comfortably and repeatedly.

[18.15.3.9 NMAC - N, 1/1/2007]