

**AGGRAVATED UNLICENSED OPERATION OF A
MOTOR VEHICLE IN THE THIRD DEGREE**
Vehicle and Traffic Law 511(1)(a)
(Committed on or after April 1, 1992)
(Revised January, 2008)¹

The (*specify*) count is Aggravated Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle in the Third Degree.

Under our law a person is guilty of Aggravated Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle in the Third Degree when such person operates a motor vehicle upon a public highway while knowing or having reason to know that his or her license or privilege of operating such motor vehicle in this state or privilege of obtaining a license to operate such motor vehicle issued by the commissioner is suspended, revoked or otherwise withdrawn by the commissioner.²

The following terms used in that definition have a special meaning:

MOTOR VEHICLE means every vehicle operated or driven upon a public highway which is propelled by any power other than muscular power.³

To OPERATE a motor vehicle means to drive it.

¹ The purpose of the revision was to provide a clearer definition of “operates” by removing the language “for the purpose of placing it in operation” and replacing such language with “for the purpose of placing the vehicle in motion.” See *People v Alamo*, 34 NY2d 453, 458 (1974); *People v Marriott*, 37 AD2d 868 (3d Dept. 1971); *People v. O’Connor*, 159 Misc.2d 1072, 1074-1075 (Dist.Ct., Suffolk, 1994). See also *People v. Prescott*, 95 NY2d 655, 662 (2001).

² “Commissioner” is defined as “the commissioner of motor vehicles of this state.” VTL § 108.

³ The term “motor vehicle” is defined in VTL § 125. That definition contains exceptions which are not set forth in the text of this charge. The term “public highway” appearing the definition of “motor vehicle” is itself separately defined in VTL § 134 and the terms within that definition are also separately defined in article 1 of the VTL. If an exception or definition is in issue, then the charge should be amplified accordingly.

[NOTE: Add the following if there is an issue as to operation:

A person also OPERATES a motor vehicle when such person is sitting behind the wheel of a motor vehicle for the purpose of placing the vehicle in motion, and when either the motor vehicle is moving, or even if it is not moving, the engine is running.⁴]

In order for you to find the defendant guilty of this crime, the People are required to prove, from all of the evidence in the case beyond a reasonable doubt, each of the following two elements:

1. That on or about (*date*), in the county of (*county*), the defendant (*defendant's name*) operated a motor vehicle on a public highway; and
2. That the defendant did so while knowing or having reason to know that his/her license or privilege of operating such motor vehicle in this state or privilege of obtaining a license to operate such motor vehicle issued by the commissioner is suspended, revoked or otherwise withdrawn by the commissioner.

If you find the People have proven beyond a reasonable doubt both of those elements, you must find the defendant guilty of this crime.

If you find the People have not proven beyond a reasonable doubt either one or both of those elements, you must find the defendant not guilty of this crime.

⁴ See cases in note 1, which define the term “operate” a motor vehicle in the statutes defining “operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs” [VTL § 1192].