

Scooter-sharing service Revel is racking up injury lawsuits months after launch

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This makes for some uneasy riders.

[Moped-rental service Revel](#) has only accelerated chaos on the streets of Brooklyn and Queens, endangering riders and other travelers alike through shoddy training and faulty parts, a series of lawsuits claim.

With just \$5, a valid driver's license and Revel's smartphone app, users can ride off on one of the 1,000 electric-powered scooters the company has rolled out in the boroughs since May 2019 — no training required.

That level of ease has turned outer-borough traffic into a high-stakes road test, according to lawyer Daniel Flanzig, who represents two people bringing personal-injury suits against Revel in Brooklyn Supreme Court.

“New York City is not the proper place to be learning for the first time how to ride a scooter,” said Flanzig. “It’s not all that far off from a motorcycle.”

Among Flanzig’s clients is Paul Dicesare, a bicyclist who claims he suffered a broken ankle in a June collision with a Revel rider near York and Gold streets in Downtown Brooklyn, filings show.

Revel “was vicariously liable for the reckless, careless and negligent acts of its driver,” argues the suit, which seeks unspecified damages.

But the rides — which can hit a top speed of 30 miles per hour — aren’t just alleged to be dangerous to other travelers.

In a suit filed through another attorney, Revel rider Afadikwei Reyes claims that a moped locked up on him mid-ride, causing a crash that left him with two fractures in his leg.

As Reyes was riding along Bergen Street near Buffalo Avenue in Crown Heights early one August morning, “the vehicle began malfunctioning, with the steering mechanism locking and the breaking [sic] system failing to slow the moped,” according to that suit.

Dicesare and Reyes are among seven people who have filed personal-injury suits against the company — a rate of nearly one per month since the service expanded to 1,000 two-wheelers in May 2019.

Under state law, a motorcycle license is not required for mopeds that top out at 30 mph — a low barrier to entry that regular motorcycle riders say is a recipe for disaster.

“They’re making it exponentially more dangerous,” said Nick Trocano, manager of the Union Garage motorcycle shop in Brooklyn.

Trocano said that he's regularly spotted Revel riders flouting laws by cutting against traffic through bike lanes, riding without helmets — which are required by law — and zipping along areas that are supposed to be off-limits to the scooters, including the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and the bridges over the East River.

“In this densely-populated area, if you crash one of their scooters, you are not just hurting you and your passenger,” said Trocano. “The mom and the little girl in the crosswalk [are] hit by a sliding scooter.”

The NYPD said that it does not track the number of motor-vehicle accidents specifically involving Revel mopeds.

In a statement, Revel said that the company does not comment on pending lawsuits, but insisted that novice users can learn to their hearts' content before hitting the mean streets of the city.

“Revel offers free, in-person lessons seven days a week so new riders who want to learn more about our vehicles and practice driving them in a comfortable, supervised setting have that opportunity,” said a spokesman for the Brooklyn-based start-up.

But even some of its own customers said that they take their lives into their own hands by mounting up.

“Someone is going to die and then they are going to have to figure it all out,” said Michael Flaherty, as he parked his Revel scooter in front of a Williamsburg deli. “It'll be a slow process. But this is the future of transportation in New York City, ride-sharing.

“Just try to find parking and you'll see why.”

Additional reporting by Craig McCarthy