



Fitchburg State University Police Department

Subject: BICYCLE PATROL

Reference: MPAC: N/A
IACLEA: N/A

Rescinds: Section 17

Effective Date:
July 9, 2020

Review Date:

By Order of: Michael J Cloutier, Chief of Police

General Order

9.2

PURPOSE:

The Fitchburg State University Police Department Bicycle Patrol promotes positive community relations and is a sensible approach to patrolling the unique terrain of the Fitchburg State University campus. Officers while on Bike Patrol tour the campus and respond to calls for service while they endeavor to provide positive community relations by their interactions with campus community.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Fitchburg State University Police Department to be approachable, and responsive to the needs of the community. Through utilization of bike patrols, officers can support the departments' mission, vision, and values.

PROCEDURES:

I. Police Image and Appearance

- A. Bike Patrol Officers are expected to promote a professional image at all times while exhibiting a police presence. Officers should remain cognizant that a friendly attitude and taking the time to interact with community members in non-enforcement roles when possible, is an important part of the police function.
- B. The professional police image is enhanced by the officer's courtesy toward pedestrian and vehicular traffic and by observance of standard bicycle riding laws as detailed in MGL Chapter 85 § 11 B, entitled "Operation of Bicycles Regulated".

II. Training and Job Description of the Bike Patrol Officer

- A. In addition to normal police officer duties listed for a Fitchburg State University Police Officer, each officer may be assigned to bike patrol at the need of the department and the discretion of the shift supervisor.
- B. Officers assigned to bike patrol will be provided an opportunity to receive training in police bicycle operations.

III. Daily Bicycle Equipment and Safety Inspection

- A. Officers should inspect the bicycle and bicycle accessories prior to riding each shift or after the bike has been left unattended, or whenever the officer feels it is necessary, he/she shall complete a safety check.
- B. The equipment should be checked for proper operation, tension, clearances and cleanliness. Adjustable parts such as seats and handlebars should be positioned properly, in order to avoid preventable stress or injuries to the rider.
- C. Equipment requiring maintenance or repair will be promptly reported to the appropriate fleet manager and/ or shift supervisor. Officers shall not utilize equipment which they judge to be a safety hazard to themselves or others.
- D. All patrol bikes shall be kept in good repair. The department authorized maintainer shall check each bike monthly to ensure that each bike is being appropriately cared for. As directed by the Chief of Police, or designee, he/she shall replace tires, tubes, cables and other needed items. Once this is completed a memo noting specifically what was done shall be forwarded to the Chief.
- E. Any other required repairs shall be completed by an authorized repair shop.

IV. Patrol Procedures (Routine Patrol)

A. Definition

- 1. Routine patrol is defined as patrol of the Fitchburg State University property on the main campus under normal conditions, using the Mountain Bike as primary transportation.

B. Function

- 1. While acknowledging that the use of a Mountain Bike can serve as a great public relations tool, officers must remember that their primary obligation is to protect and serve the University community. Consequently, the diligent and timely patrol of assigned areas remains a primary focus.

C. Assignment of Duty

1. Deployment of Mountain Bike Patrol will be at the discretion/direction of the shift supervisor. Shift supervisors may decline to deploy Mt. Bike Patrol for reasons of inclement weather, staffing, special events, or other circumstances.
2. Prior to dressing for Mt. Bike Patrol, officers should verify their shift assignment with shift supervisors. If the officer is assigned to a bike, but believes the conditions are not safe they will relay this information to the supervisor and may be reassigned at the direction of the supervisor.

D. D. Rest Breaks

1. Officers are reminded that patrol on the Mountain Bike is an active undertaking. Officers shall take proper rest breaks, and satisfy appropriate health and nutritional needs during patrol. Officers should dismount and walk or stretch for at least ten minutes of every riding hour.

E. Bicycle Operation

1. In order to set a proper example, and obey existing law, in the absence of exigent circumstances pertaining to their duties as a police officer, the Bike Patrol officers should be familiar with and observe the provisions of MGL Chapter 85 § 11 B, entitled "Operation of Bicycles Regulated."
2. Courtesy to pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic above and beyond statutory requirements should be the norm. Care should be taken to not unnecessarily startle the public by unannounced approaches. In order to minimize that potential problem, a voiced warning should be utilized when appropriate. In addition, officers shall:
 - a. At all times while operating the bike, wear the approved protective helmet that meets ANSI or Snell Standards.
 - b. Operate in a manner that does not endanger the public, the officer, or property.
 - c. Remember that the safe and timely arrival at an assigned call of any nature does not allow for reckless operation or the endangerment of the Bike Patrol officer or others merely to hasten the response time. At all times, reasonable efforts shall be made to patrol and to respond to calls in a safe manner.

F. Inclement Weather Policy

1. Officers should not ride if weather conditions make it unsafe, such as heavy rain, ice or snow. Light rain, with proper rain gear, should not in and of itself, preclude riding. Officers will not ride if other conditions are determined as unsafe by the shift supervisor.

V. 7. Patrol Procedures (Specialized Patrol)

- A. The Bike Patrol Unit may be used on special assignment with the city of Fitchburg, for city-sworn specials. Bike Patrol Officers may also be assigned to other police agencies on a mutual aid basis.
- B. Other Fitchburg State University properties shall be patrolled on an as-needed basis.
- C. From time-to-time the Bike Patrol may be assigned to special details such as parades, sporting events and concerts.

VI. Uniform Wear

- A. The department approved bike uniform is to be worn when assigned to bike patrol or bike detail. The bike uniform will not be worn when assigned to patrol in a cruiser or for traffic details unless part of shift responsibilities. When two or more bike officers are assigned together, they shall dress uniformly in order to maintain a professional appearance.

1. Warm Weather Riding

a. Mandatory Equipment Wear

- i. Department issued ANSI or Snell approved helmet.
- ii. Department issued shorts or lightweight riding pants
- iii. Officers are advised to wear chamois or gel lined cycling shorts as needed to protect the officer from discomfort and injury.
- iv. Department issued bike shirt.
- v. Duty belt with all proper issued equipment.
- vi. No tie shall be worn at any time while assigned to the bicycle for safety concerns.

b. Optional Equipment Wear

- i. Department issued bike jacket, a lightweight patrol jacket, or rain gear dictated by the weather.
- ii. Flashlight on belt or in patrol rack bag.

2. Cold Weather Riding


a. Optional Equipment Wear

- i. Black turtle neck sweater.
- ii. Military style boots.

VII. Bike Patrol Specific Rules and Regulations

- A. Officers shall only ride department-authorized bikes while on duty.
- B. At no time shall an officer ride without his issued helmet.
- C. Officers shall use care in the operation of the bike and shall not take an action that endangers themselves or the public.
- D. Officers shall comply with all bicycle maintenance requirements.
- E. Officers shall dismount prior to contacting a subject.
- F. Officers shall comply with the department's **General Order 7.1 Use of Force** when pursuing and effecting a custody.
- G. Officers shall report any fall and/or injury to the on duty supervisor, both in person and in memo form. The officer shall also forward a copy to the Unit Commander.
- H. Officers shall report to the duty supervisor any accident with another person, fixed obstacle, motor vehicle or bicycle as soon as possible.

Approval:



Chief of Police

07/09/2020
Date