



# University of Wisconsin–Madison Police

## Policy: 41.6

**SUBJECT: MOUNTED POLICE UNIT**

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### POLICY:

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Mounted Police Unit has been established to provide assistance at special events, large gatherings, and difficult areas to access by other means, as well as to participate in crime prevention, crowd management, and community engagement.

### DEFINITIONS:

“Mounted” police are police officers who patrol on horseback.

“Tack” – riding equipment such as saddle, saddle blanket, stirrups, cinch, bridle, reins, etc.

“Farrier” - a craftsman who trims and shoes horses' hooves.

### PROCEDURE:

#### 41.6.1 ADMINISTRATION

The following shall govern procedures for the administration of the Mounted Police Unit:

- A. The Mounted Unit will be led by a Unit Commander and overseen by the Special Operations Captain. The Unit Commander’s responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Approval of all tack, horse, and rider equipment before use for training or duty assignment
  - 2. Maintaining of training requirements and qualifications
  - 3. Approving and scheduling officers for riding assignments in cooperation with Patrol Leadership
    - i. On-campus and/or UW affiliated requests for mounted services shall take precedent over off-campus and/or non-UW affiliated requests.
    - ii. For requests for services that occur while the mounted officer is off-duty, supervisory approval is required before the mounted officer is called into service. If a supervisor is not available, the MOC shall be notified of the request.
  - 4. Ensuring that each mounted officer has exhibited a satisfactory level of proficiency and safety with their horse in mounted police training before conducting field work
  - 5. Documentations of all events, deployments, and activities of the Unit, including budget plans.
  - 6. The Unit Commander will work with the riders to establish annual training and discuss upcoming specialty events.
- B. The Mounted Officer’s duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Responsible for the best practical application and deployment of their horse at all times.
  - 2. The care and grooming of their Police horse, which is owned by the Department. This includes the horse being cleaned, brushed, and hooves picked prior to and after tacking.
  - 3. Ensure the safety of the horse.
  - 4. Report and document all horse behavioral issues and training problems to the Unit Commander.
  - 5. Provide care and maintenance of all horse equipment.

6. Assure truck and trailer maintenance is being conducted and report any issues to the Fleet/Logistics team
7. Maintain training and daily deployment records.
8. Provide patrol coverage when not deployed for a special event or training
9. Contact the OIC and Unit Commander when inclement weather or other reasons prevent riding during scheduled deployments
10. Public speaking or demonstrations as requested and as scheduling allows.
11. Perform other duties as assigned by the Unit Commander

#### **41.6.2 PERSONNEL SELECTION & TRAINING**

The following shall govern required qualifications and training for mounted officers:

- A. When a vacancy exists, information regarding the vacancy shall be distributed electronically to all qualifying sworn personnel. The selection process includes, but is not limited to the following, in accordance with UWPD Directive 16.2 – Specialty Officer, Collateral & Alternative Duty Assignments:
  - a. Submission of a letter of interest to the Mounted Unit Commander.
  - b. Strong performance in panel interview(s) including internal and external partners
  - c. Successful completion of probationary period
  - d. Have a minimum of 2 years law enforcement experience
- B. Once Selected, Mounted Officers must have:
  - a. A general knowledge of horses, including horse anatomy, proper grooming, care, feeding, and first aid for the horse;
  - b. Knowledge of saddling, bridling, and the use and care of all necessary tack and equipment;
  - c. Knowledge of horse health and safety;
  - d. Safe ground handling and trailering procedures; and
  - e. An understanding of horsemanship.
- C. For new unit members, riding lessons shall be taken, until rider is able to demonstrate basic understanding and riding abilities. Lessons with a Department-approved riding instructor will be required before approval to join the unit is granted. Each member must complete training with a mounted police instructor before working duty assignments. Upon completion of those assignments, the Commander will evaluate the horse and rider's ability to work alone.
- D. Each mounted officer will continue monthly trainings, which could include working with other outside mounted units from other agencies, to maintain the skills necessary for effective mounted policing. This training will include horsemanship, formation riding, riding with common obstacles, hazards, and sensory disturbances, arrest, search, and stabilization procedures, crowd control tactical formations, and any other necessary training.

#### **41.6.3 HORSE AND BOARDING QUALIFICATIONS**

The following outlines qualifications for Unit horses:

- A. Horses must be manageable, well trained and even tempered with a willing attitude. Any inclination to bite, strike, or kick will disqualify a horse from duty assignments until or unless the problem can be completely rectified.
- B. Final approval of any horse regarding size, color, sex, age, temperament and training is at the discretion of the Commander. The decision to remove a horse and rider from the field may be made by the Unit Commander at any time.
- C. Each police horse will be boarded at a department approved stable. The Department shall incur all costs of boarding, which includes feeding.

#### **41.6.4 CONDUCT**

- A. Horses will not be allowed to move faster than a trot on pavement, blacktop, concrete or any hard surface, unless there is a duty-related reason for faster speed.
- B. Horses are not to be mounted by unauthorized people.

- C. Riding double is prohibited.
- D. While mounted, helmets for Mounted Officers are required at all times.
- E. While on duty, Mounted Horses shall be secured and controlled at all times. Examples include an authorized person holding onto the lead rope/reigns, tied up with a quick release knot, or in the mounted horse trailer. On a call for service, one rider or authorized person, shall remain with the horses at all times.
- F. Horse droppings will be immediately picked up and disposed of by a Mounted Patrol Officer or UWPD employee. In the event it would be unsafe for the Officer to dismount, or unable to in that moment, an effort will be made to return at a later time and dispose of droppings.
- G. Caution will be exercised when riding in the street with traffic. In heavy traffic, it may be necessary to ride on the sidewalk or terrace.

#### **41.6.5 EQUIPMENT**

- A. While on routine patrol, horses will be tacked with all the proper authorized equipment including breast collars. In low light or night situations, LED breast collars and mounted officer lights will be utilized. No unauthorized equipment or training aids will be added without prior approval from the Mounted Patrol Commander.
- B. Basic Mounted Patrol uniform will be the approved Mounted Patrol polo shirt, with dark navy pants or breeches. Black paddock boots or approved leather tall boots will be worn. During cold weather, officers may wear black insulated boots.
  - 1. Dress uniform will be required for certain specialty units. These events will be discussed between the Unit Commander and riders. This could include but not limited to the Class A uniform.
- C. Tack should have a clean appearance at the beginning of each shift.
- D. Trailer and tack room will be cleaned out at the end of day/use.

#### **41.6.6 INJURY CAUSED BY MOUNTED PATROL HORSE**

If a mounted patrol horse injures a person, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Evaluate the person's injury and ensure that they receive prompt and appropriate medical attention.
2. Notify the OIC and Unit Commander
3. Obtain photographs of the injury, if possible
4. Obtain a statement from the person, if possible
5. Obtain witness statements, if possible
6. Attempt to obtain an authorization for release of medical information from the injured person
7. The horse handler shall document the incident in a report.

#### **41.6.7 USE OF FORCE**

- A. Each Mounted Officer is responsible for the appropriate use and control of their horse. Only that force that is reasonably necessary to accomplish a lawful objective may be employed. Prior to using a horse as an instrument of force, Mounted Officers will, unless impracticable, provide verbal warnings to the suspect/subject(s) in an attempt to gain compliance. Verbal warnings provided by other UWPD personnel (such as an order for crowd to disperse) will suffice.
- B. Under the direction of its rider – a UWPD Mounted Patrol horse, may be used as an instrument of force to:
  1. Detain a person reasonably suspected of unlawful behavior
  2. Affect a lawful arrest
  3. Achieving/maintaining control of resistive subjects
  4. Preventing escape
  5. Protecting oneself or another
  6. Maintaining order

7. Taking a person into custody
- C. Officers shall use the degree of force believed to be objectively reasonable to control a situation considering the following factors:
    1. The existence of alternative methods of control
    2. Physical size, strength and weaponry of the person as compared to the Officer
    3. The nature of the encounter.
    4. Actions of the other person
    5. Severity of the offense
    6. Whether the subject poses a threat to the safety of Officers or other persons
    7. Whether the subject is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.

#### **41.6.8 HORSE MAINTENANCE, HEALTH, AND SAFETY**

- A. Police horses must be serviceably sound and healthy. Mounted officers will use discretion regarding their mount's suitability for any and all assignments.
- B. Riders are expected to know their horse and terminate a ride if there is any indication of poor condition or signs of possible illness. A horse may also be removed from duty at the discretion of the Commander.
- C. The Mounted Unit will not be expected to work in extremely cold, windy, icy, or extremely hot or stormy conditions, as these may pose a particular safety concern for the horse and rider.
- D. Each mounted officer should work with the Unit Commander to coordinate farrier services for their ridden horse. The Department is responsible for all farrier expenses.
- E. A negative Coggins Test for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) is required annually and prior to training or working with other horses.
- F. The Department shall incur all costs of veterinary care. Documentation of all veterinary visits and treatment shall be provided to the Department

#### **41.6.9 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- A. Full liability insurance is provided by University Risk Management for the officers and horses while performing police functions on or off university property. Injury insurance for the police horses is provided by University Risk Management.
- B. Horses, tack, trailer, and equipment, are owned by the Department and covered by University Risk Management. Personal use is prohibited.
- C. The purpose of the Mounted Unit Trailer is to provide for safe and efficient transportation of Department approved Mounted police horses. Use of the Trailer is limited to Department approved functions. Only Department Mounted Unit Commander authorized personnel shall utilize the Trailer.