



UW-Madison Police Department

Policy: 41.7

SUBJECT: POLICE MOTORCYCLE UNIT

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POLICY:

The UW-Madison Police Department Motorcycle Unit shall be utilized during special events, special assignments and/or patrol operations.

DEFINITIONS:

“Pursuit” is an active attempt by a law enforcement officer in a vehicle to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving motor vehicle, where the driver of the fleeing vehicle is aware of the attempt and is resisting apprehension.

PROCEDURE:

41.7.1 ADMINISTRATION OF MOTORCYCLE UNIT

- A. The Motorcycle Unit shall be staffed by personnel who are endorsed, trained, equipped and physically able to operate Department-supplied motorcycles. Until approved training has been completed, unit personnel shall be restricted from motorcycle patrol enforcement.
- B. The Specialty Services Lieutenant shall serve as the Unit Commander. The Unit Commander shall oversee all aspects of the Unit and shall designate the Unit Coordinator. The Unit Coordinator is responsible for assigning training and special details and ensuring maintenance is up-to-date.

41.7.2 PERSONNEL SELECTION

- A. When a vacancy exists, officers that are interested in being selected for the unit should forward a letter to the Unit Coordinator detailing their experience, qualifications and interest in the position.
- B. The selection process shall include an oral interview by the Commander, Coordinator, and one other Department member.
- C. Final selection shall be made by the Unit Coordinator and Unit Commander.
- D. Selected Motorcycle Unit candidates shall successfully complete a Department certified qualification course before they become members of the Unit.
- E. Motorcycle Unit members shall successfully complete any required in-service in order to retain full riding status.
- F. Officers assigned to the Motorcycle Unit are required to commit to the Unit for a minimum of three years. The Department shall not differentiate unit members when considering shift changes, special assignments and/or promotional opportunities.

41.7.3 OPERATION OF MOTORCYCLE UNIT

- A. Any requests for use of the Unit should be directed to the Unit Coordinator. Department needs and use of the Unit should always take precedent over outside requests.

- B. Transportation of passengers on Department motorcycles is prohibited.
- C. If a motorcycle is left unattended, then the ignition, fork and storage areas shall always be locked.
- D. In an effort to minimize risk of a crash, the unit should not operate during periods of inclement weather.
- E. Due to the unstable nature of motorcycles on unpaved surfaces, extreme care should be taken when operating or parking the motorcycle when not on a hard surface.
- F. During unit operations, status and location changes shall be updated by the motor officer via the mobile data computer or by the law enforcement dispatcher.
- G. Deployment of motorcycles for patrol use must be consistent with Department need. There must be a sufficient number of police squads on patrol.

41.7.4 UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT

- A. The following safety equipment shall be worn at all times while the motorcycle is in operation:
 - 1. Helmet
 - 2. Boots
 - 3. Full fingered gloves
 - 4. Eye protection (not provided by the Department)
- B. The following safety equipment shall be worn when appropriate while the motorcycle is in operation:
 - 1. Rain suit
 - 2. Motorcycle riding breeches
 - 3. Motorcycle jacket
- C. Personnel assigned to the unit must provide their own protective eyewear that must be worn at all times that the motorcycle is in operation. Eye protection worn at night must not be tinted.
- D. Regular maintenance and safety inspections are critical to the safe operation of the unit's motorcycles and should be performed according to the manufacturer's recommendations and specifications.
- E. In addition to normal uniform items issued to sworn personnel, unit personnel may wear an approved motorcycle pin on their uniform.

41.7.5 MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE

- A. One officer assigned to the unit shall be designated as responsible for the overall maintenance of the Department motorcycles.
- B. Any person operating Department motorcycles are responsible for checking the following on a daily basis when the unit is in operation:
 - 1. Tire pressure and inspect tires for damage.
 - 2. Oil level (with side stand down).
 - 3. Inspect and check for operation of all lamps, flashers, horn, siren and both front and rear brakes.
 - 4. Suspension pressure per manufacturer's recommendations.
- C. Unit personnel are responsible for maintaining the motorcycles in a clean condition according to the manufacturer's specifications.

41.7.6 PURSUITS

- A. Motorcycles are not intended to be, nor should they be considered, pursuit vehicles. UWPD Police Motorcycles are only authorized to be involved in pursuits of violent felony offenders, where the risk of letting the violator escape outweighs the danger to the operator. Pursuits involving motorcycles shall be subject to the following restrictions:

1. Officers shall terminate and discontinue pursuit when the act of pursuit, in and of itself, creates an unreasonable danger of death or great bodily harm to the public, officers, or the suspect.
 2. Due to the increased vulnerability to the operator of a police motorcycle, any pursuit initiated by the motorcycle operator shall be replaced with a pursuit vehicle as soon as possible.
 3. A motorcycle officer who has turned over the primary pursuit to a pursuit vehicle shall not continue to be involved in the pursuit unless otherwise directed by the officer in charge monitoring the pursuit.
- B. Officers operating motorcycles or unmarked police vehicles shall immediately request assistance of a marked police squad when they are involved in a pursuit and shall relinquish primary unit status immediately upon the presence of a marked squad.