

BIKE PATROL UNIT

POLICY & PROCEDURE NO. 4.51	EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/2/17
	REVISION DATE: _____
MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	REVIEW DATE: 11/29/19

I. BACKGROUND

The services of the Great Barrington Police Department are supplemented with the implementation of the GBPD Bike Patrol Unit. This specialized unit was started as another facet of the department's proactive approach to law enforcement and service to the community. By utilizing mountain bikes, police officers are able to quickly and efficiently patrol the town and in the process increase the visibility and approachability of the officers to community members.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE BIKE UNIT

The Great Barrington Police Bike Patrol promotes positive community relations and is a sensible approach to patrolling the unique terrain of the town. Officers of the Bike Patrol tour the town and respond to calls for service while they endeavor to provide positive community relations by their interactions with community members.

POLICE IMAGE AND APPEARANCE

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.

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 section 11 B, entitled "Operation of Bicycles Regulated".

SELECTION PROCESS

The following criteria will be used to select an officer as the department's Bike Patrol Officer:

1. Letter of intent
2. Good communication skills
3. Personnel Records (commendations, complaints, etc.)
4. Department interview

TRAINING AND JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE BIKE PATROL OFFICER

The GBPD Bike Patrol is a voluntary assignment. Training is provided by International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA). In addition to normal police officer duties, newly assigned Bike Officers are required to demonstrate proficiency to perform certain tasks of maneuverability and control of the patrol bicycle. Officers will attend a one week training held by an IPMBA instructor and demonstrate the skills at the end of that training. **[33.6.1]**

DAILY BICYCLE EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY INSPECTION

Prior to any training ride or patrol ride, and periodically throughout those rides, 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 as described in their training.

The equipment should be checked for proper operation, tension, clearances and cleanliness. Adjustable parts such as seats and handlebars should be positioned properly in accordance with training received, in order to avoid preventable stress or injuries to the rider.

Equipment requiring maintenance or repair will be promptly reported to the Senior Bike Patrol Officer who will check each bike monthly to ensure that each bike is being appropriately cared for. All patrol bikes shall be kept in good repair. He/she shall replace tires, tubes, cables and other needed items

Officers shall not utilize equipment which they judge to be a safety hazard to themselves or others.

Any other required repairs shall be completed as well. All repairs needed or damage to an officer's issued bike shall be documented in an e-mail to the Senior Bike Patrol Officer and copied to the Chief of Police as soon as possible.

PATROL PROCEDURES (ROUTINE PATROL)

A. Definition

Routine patrol for this specialized unit is defined as patrol of the town under normal conditions, using the Bike as primary transportation.

B. Function

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

C. Assignment of Duty

Deployment of Bike Patrol will be at the discretion/direction of the shift supervisor. Shift supervisors may decline to deploy Bike Patrol for reasons of inclement weather, staffing, special events, or other circumstances.

The Bike Patrol area will be on Main Street from Cottage Street to Maple Avenue; including all side streets thereof; the River Walk; and the Skate Park.

The officer assigned will be required to enforce all parking regulations and to establish themselves as a liaison with local merchants and businesses, etc. within the respective area.

The officer assigned will be subject to any other assignments that may be given by the Command Staff.

When so assigned, the Bike Patrol Officer will assist the department's patrol officers with day to day call volume in the downtown area. This will include accidents, any criminal investigations and general complaints.

Prior to dressing for Bike Patrol, unit members should verify their shift assignment with shift supervisors. If the officer is assigned to bike, but believes the conditions are not safe they will relay this information to the supervisor and be reassigned at the direction of the supervisor.

D. Rest Breaks

Officers are reminded that patrol on the 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

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 section 11 B, entitled "Operation of Bicycles Regulated".

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.

1. Operate in a manner that does not endanger the public, the officer, or property.
2. 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.

E. Inclement Weather Policy

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.

PATROL PROCEDURES (SPECIALIZED PATROL)

From time to time the Bike Patrol may be assigned to special details such as parades, sporting events and concerts.

UNIFORM WEAR [22.2.5]

(see Department Policy 'Uniforms' 4.34)

The department approved bike uniform is to be worn only 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.

A. Warm Weather Riding

1. Mandatory Equipment Wear

- a. Department issued ANSI or Snell approved helmet.
- b. Department issued riding shoe.
- c. Department issued shorts or light weight riding pants
Officers are advised to wear chamois or gel lined cycling shorts as needed to protect the officer from discomfort and injury.
- d. Department issued bike shirt.
- e. Duty belt with all proper issued equipment.
- f. No tie shall be worn at any time while assigned to the bicycle for safety concerns.

2. Optional Equipment Wear

- a. Department issued Bike Jacket of lightweight patrol jacket or rain gear dictated by the weather.
- b. Flashlight on belt or in patrol rack bag.

B. Cold Weather Riding

1. Optional Equipment Wear

- a. Black police sweater.
- b. Black turtle neck sweater.
- c. Military style boots.

UNIT RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. Officers shall only ride the bike they are issued.
- 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 departments Use of Force policy when pursuing and effecting a custody.
- G. Officers shall report any fall and/or injury.
- H. Officers shall report to the duty supervisor any accident with another person, fixed obstacle, motor vehicle or bicycle as soon as possible.

ISSUING AUTHORITY:

Chief William R. Walsh Jr.:

