



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **BICYCLE PATROL**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

REFERENCE:

NUMBER: 6.32
ISSUED: 04/07/2025
EFFECTIVE: 04/07/2025
 RESCINDS
 AMENDS
WILEAG 5TH EDITION
STANDARDS: N/A

Currently the Portage Police Department Does not have a bike patrol program, but if one is created this policy would be in effect.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to provide to the members of the Portage Police Department guidance on the use, utility, and development of police bicycles and the general management of police bicycle operations.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. PROCEDURE

I. POLICY

- A. Bicycle patrol officers are an important component of the department's strategy for accomplishing its enforcement objectives due to their mobility and stealth as well as their ability to facilitate a variety of law enforcement and crime prevention operations. They are also advantageous in community policing efforts because they are generally perceived as less authoritarian than officers in police motor vehicles.

II. PROCEDURE

- A. Deployment - Police bicycles are intended for and authorized to conduct the following primary deployment functions:
 - 1. Police cyclists may be dispatched or may initiate response to all calls for service

in which their response time is comparable to that of a motorized patrol vehicle, unless otherwise indicated by this Policy & Procedure.

2. Police cyclists should not normally be dispatched or initiate response to incidents in which their reduced emergency equipment capabilities (such as emergency warning devices) may present service problems or dangers. These include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Traffic accidents in which a vehicle is not moveable.
 - b) High-risk felony motor vehicle stops.
 - c) Situations in which the lack of cover typically afforded by a motor vehicle would be dangerous. Response to such situations may be permitted where exigent circumstances exist and motorized units are not readily available, or as backup where patrol vehicles are already on the scene.
3. Police cyclists may be used for targeted patrol operations based on specific crimes, geographic areas, or crime targets.
4. Police cyclists may be given preference where appropriate in response to the following:
 - a) Off-road emergencies, to include search and rescue, enforcement, and preventative patrol as required on trails designated for horses or walking, hiking, and biking.
 - b) Medical emergencies, if officers are properly equipped and trained, and if their proximity or response time to the incident may be advantageous.
 - c) Urban incidents in which the volume of vehicle or pedestrian traffic may inhibit the response of police motor vehicles.
 - d) Special events, such as parades, festivals, fairs, sporting, and other indoor and outdoor events.
 - e) Demonstrations, for monitoring and controlling crowds.
 - f) Disaster situations in which movement by conventional motorized emergency response vehicles is limited or impossible.
5. Police cyclists may initiate traffic stops, giving particular attention to motorist and officer safety.
 - a) Physical contact with a moving vehicle is not authorized unless exigent or related emergency circumstances dictate.
 - b) Whenever possible, drivers should be instructed to move out of the traffic

lane for the duration of the stop.

- c) Police bicycles should be kept out of traffic.
 - d) Officers are encouraged to use other available cover.
 - e) Marked patrol units should be requested where appropriate to provide emergency lighting and cover from traffic.
6. Prior to initiating bicycle patrol, officer shall inspect their equipment to ensure that it is in proper working order. If a problem is discovered that the officer cannot fix, notice shall be given to the Chief or designee, who will forward it to a bicycle mechanic. The officer may take another bicycle for duty.
 7. Police cyclists and supervisors shall exercise discretion in determining whether or not to use a bicycle on patrol when excessively high or low temperatures or other weather conditions may make the use of bicycles inadvisable or hazardous.
 8. While patrolling at night, unless employing stealth, police cyclists should use the legally mandated lights and reflective equipment.
 9. While patrolling on sidewalks, police cyclists must be alert to pedestrians, recognizing that they have the right-of-way. Whenever possible, officers should give an audible warning of their approach from the rear, and maintain reasonable speeds and caution on sidewalks.
 10. When possible, police cyclists shall notify communications of all potential enforcement contacts, and include their exact location.
 11. In arrest situations, police cyclist shall request a motorized transport unit for the prisoner.
 - a) A police cyclist shall not secure a prisoner to an object and leave him or her unattended, unless an emergency exists that requires immediate action by the police cyclist.
 - b) The police cyclist shall respond to the appropriate facility to process the arrestee at the earliest convenience or in accordance with the department's normal procedure.
 12. During plainclothes operations, police cyclists shall:
 - a) Wear helmets and protective eyewear;
 - b) Carry at least the minimum equipment required by the plain clothes assignment;
 - c) Use only bicycles approved by a certified mechanic authorized by the

department.

13. When leaving bicycles unattended officers shall whenever possible, do the following:
 - a) Secure their bicycles with a locking device. Police cyclists are not expected to secure bicycles when the situation does not allow, as in a foot pursuit.
 - b) Secure the frame of the bicycle to an immovable stationary object.
 - c) Take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the bicycle does not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
 - d) Remove and carry with them such easily removed items as the helmet.
14. If minor damage is sustained during the shift, the police cyclist shall notify the Chief or designee by the end of the shift. If substantial damage to the bike or injury to the officer or a civilian is sustained, the officer shall immediately notify the Chief or designee.
15. When not in use, all police bicycle equipment shall be stored and locked in the designated area.

B. Personnel Selection

1. Candidates must undergo medical screening and assessment prior to assignment to bike patrol.
2. A cycling-specific physical fitness test using recovery heart rate, administered by a qualified fitness professional authorized by this department.

C. Training

1. Initial training: Selected officers must attend and pass a nationally recognized and standardized basic police cycling course (minimum 32 hours of training).
2. In-service training:
 - a) Documented, periodic training, refresher to advanced, as determined by the Chief or designee.
 - b) Firearms qualification, in full bicycle patrol uniform, at least once per year.

D. Chief or designee Responsibilities

The Chief or designee shall ensure the following:

1. Prior to riding a bicycle in an official capacity, candidates selected for duty with the bike unit attend the basic course. Reasonable accommodations should be

made where possible when dealing with scheduling conflicts; however, all newly selected police cyclists shall attend the class within six months of selection.

2. All officers who conduct bike patrol attend periodic refresher training class, preferably at the start of the cycling season.
3. All officers who conduct bike patrol qualify with their firearm and attend bicycle-specific firearms training, both in full bicycle gear, at least once per year.
4. Advanced training is authorized on a case-by-case basis.
5. Cyclists ride a minimum of 40 patrol hours each year.
6. Newly selected officers are provided with the uniforms and equipment specified by the department, preferably prior to the start of the basic class.
7. Cyclists wear the proper uniform.
8. Cyclists properly care for their equipment.
9. Sufficient cleaning and maintenance supplies are available.
10. A written inventory of all departmental equipment, including bicycle serial numbers, is maintained.
11. Bicycles are stored properly when not in use.
12. The bicycle storage area is kept orderly and reasonably clean, and all specified tools are kept locked up when not in use.
13. All maintenance and damage reports are assigned to a certified bicycle mechanic within one week of notification, and the bicycles are repaired in a reasonable amount of time.
14. Equipment is properly replaced when it is damaged beyond repair.
15. Disciplinary action is initiated if it is deemed that negligence was involved in damage to equipment.

Keith J. Klafke
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all previous written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 04/07/2025