



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **ATV/UTV OPERATION**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

REFERENCE:

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INDEX AS: ATV/UTV OPERATION

Currently the Portage Police Department does not have ATV or UTV vehicles. In the event the department does acquire an ATV/UTV, or officers utilize a civilian or another agencies ATV/UTV, then this policy would be a guide.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to establish guidelines for the use of the Portage Police Department's All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) or Utility Task Vehicle (UTV).

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. GUIDELINES
- II. RULES OF OPERATION

I. GUIDELINES

- A. Prior to operating the department ATV/UTV, officers must successfully complete any and all training requirements as set forth by the Chief of Police.

These include:

- 1. View the ATV/UTV safe operation video on Deer Creek Training and complete written test.
- 2. Complete an ATV/UTV familiarization hands on training and test drive of the ATV/UTV with designated Supervisor.

3. Designated supervisor will have completed Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources ATV/UTV Safety Certification before instructing familiarization training.
 4. Be approved to utilize an ATV/UTV by the Chief or designee.
- B. Officers will wear the approved department uniform while operating the ATV/ UTV.
1. A helmet will be optional. If worn, the helmet will be DOT approved for safety and approved by the Chief for style and color.
 2. Department radio with shoulder mic.
 3. Other department issued equipment as needed.
- C. Operation of non-licensed utility vehicles on public streets and highways is prohibited by State Law, except as specifically authorized by Wisconsin State Statutes, ss. 23.33 (4)(c).

Operation restrictions on or near highways do not apply to operators of a ATV/UTV owned by a municipality, state agency, or public utility while the operator is engaged in an emergency or in the operation of a ATV/UTV directly related to the functions of the municipality, state agency, or public utility if safety does not require strict adherence to these restrictions.

II. RULES OF OPERATION

- A. Each operator is accountable for ensuring that their own operation of the department ATV/UTV is performed safely and within the rules described within this document. Unsafe operation of the ATV/UTV may result in serious injury and/or death of the operator or other persons.

Reminder: UTV tires are designed for off-road use and are less stable on paved surfaces.

- B. Although the ATV/UTV may be equipped with emergency lights and a siren, the ATV/UTV will not be considered an emergency vehicle for the purposes as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes. The ATV/UTV is not authorized to be involved in pursuits.
- C. The ATV/UTV should not be operated above posted speed limits.
- D. The ATV/UTV will be operated at reduced speeds when pedestrians are present. (Recommended speed is approximately the speed of a brisk walk or less, as dictated by conditions.) The ATV/UTV will be operated in a safe and reasonable manner, and the operator is required to drive at reasonable speeds, depending on the unique conditions faced during the performance of their assigned duties.
- E. Operation of ATV/UTVs on unpaved areas throughout the city can cause

degradation and damage to landscape. Operation on unpaved areas is permissible only when there is no other route to the intended destination or the task requires operation in these areas. Maximum permissible speed on these unpaved areas will be dictated by conditions, and the ATV/UTV will be operated to minimize the damage to the environment. Officers need to use reasonableness when operating the ATV/UTV on the grass around buildings, park areas, and the overall land surface into consideration to preserve the natural landscape.

- F. Operation of the ATV/UTV at night is prohibited, except when the vehicle is equipped with head and tail lights, and such lights are illuminated during operation.
- G. ATV/UTV operators must yield to pedestrians and vehicles at all times.
- H. While operating on roadways, the ATV/UTV operator will use directional signals or hand signals before making a turn.
- I. Any “joyriding”, intentional destruction of property on the ATV/UTV, or reckless behavior will not be tolerated. Any such conduct will be reported immediately to a supervisor. Any hazardous operation of the ATV/UTV is subject to corrective discipline and/or suspension of one’s operating privileges, or further discipline.
- J. Any cargo transported on the ATV/UTV must not protrude from the sides of the machine and must be adequately secured to prevent accidental cargo loss during transit.
- K. Unauthorized operation, and/or operation by persons who have not been authorized by a Portage Police Department supervisor are prohibited. Violations may result in disciplinary action.
- L. At the end of duty, the officer operating the ATV/UTV will report any damage or operational issues to a supervisor immediately. The ATV/UTV will be parked in the police department garage when not in use.
- M. The ATV/UTV supervisor shall maintain a list of all equipment required or needed for all department ATV/UTV vehicles and is responsible for the condition, maintenance, and upkeep of this equipment.

Keith 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