

Bicycle Patrol

426.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department to safely and effectively use bicycle patrol for the purpose of enhancing field patrol efforts in the community. The Department will use manual and electronic bicycles for its bicycle patrol.

426.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department that patrol bicycles may be used for regular patrol duty, traffic enforcement, parking control or special events. The use of the patrol bicycle will emphasize officer mobility and department visibility in the community.

426.3 OPERATIONS

Bicycle patrol has been shown to be an effective way to increase officer visibility in congested areas, and the quiet operation of the patrol bicycle can facilitate a tactical approach to crimes in progress. Patrol bicycles may be deployed to any area, at any hour of the day or night, according to department needs and as staffing levels allow.

Requests for specific deployment of bicycle patrol officers shall be coordinated through the Shift Commander or Shift Supervisor.

426.4 SELECTION

Interested officers who have completed the probationary period shall submit a request through the chain of command to their appropriate Bureau Commanders. A copy will be forwarded to the Bicycle Patrol Coordinator. Included in the request shall be their bicycle riding experience, type and level of current riding and type of bicycle currently used by the member.

Interested officers shall be evaluated by the following criteria:

- (a) Past performance evaluations
- (b) Special skills or training as it pertains to the assignment
- (c) Good physical condition
- (d) Willingness to perform duties using the bicycle as a mode of transportation

426.4.1 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers shall operate the bicycle in compliance with Maryland traffic laws under normal operation, unless their duties require otherwise (Md. Code TR § 21-1202).

Officers may operate the bicycle without lighting equipment during hours of darkness only when it reasonably appears necessary for officer safety or tactical considerations. Officers must use caution and care when operating bicycles without lighting equipment.

Officers are exempt from the rules of the road, while using audible and visual signals, under the following conditions (Md. Code TR § 21-106):

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- (a) In response to an emergency call
- (b) In the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law
- (c) In response to a fire alarm, but not while returning

426.5 BICYCLE PATROL COORDINATOR

The Bicycle Patrol Coordinator shall be appointed by and directly responsible to the Operations Bureau Commander or the authorized designee.

The Coordinator may appoint a senior bicycle patrol officer or other designee to assist in the coordination of bicycle patrol officers and their activities.

The responsibilities of the Coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Organizing bicycle patrol training.
- (b) Inspecting and maintaining an inventory of patrol bicycles and program equipment.
- (c) Inspecting and documenting every month that bicycles that are in active (operational) and not in service (non-operational) condition.
- (d) Scheduling maintenance and repairs.
- (e) Evaluating the performance of bicycle patrol officers.
- (f) Coordinating bicycle activities within the Operations Bureau.
- (g) Other activities as required to maintain the efficient operation of bicycle patrol.

426.6 PATROL BICYCLE

Bicycle patrol officers will be assigned a specially marked and equipped patrol bicycle, attached gear bag, two batteries and a charger.

Patrol bicycles shall be primarily black in color with a "Police" decal affixed to each side of the crossbar or the bicycle's gear bag. Every patrol bicycle shall be equipped with:

- (a) Front and rear reflectors.
- (b) A siren and horn.
- (c) A steady or flashing blue and red warning light that is visible from the front, sides or rear of the bicycle.
- (d) A rear rack and/or gear bag sufficient to carry all necessary equipment to handle routine patrol calls, including report writing, vehicle storage and citations.
- (e) A gear bag that shall include a first-aid kit, tire pump, repair tool, tire tube, security lock, high-visibility vest and equipment information and use manuals. These items are to remain with/on the patrol bicycle at all times.
- (f) Bar ends
- (g) Toe straps
- (h) Mileage counter

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- (i) Dual tires-required for regular road and off road conditions
- (j) U-Lock

Patrol bicycles shall be properly secured when not in the officer's immediate presence.

426.6.1 TRANSPORTING THE PATROL BICYCLE

The patrol bicycle should be transported using a vehicle bicycle rack. Due to possible component damage, transportation of the patrol bicycle in a trunk is discouraged.

426.6.2 PROHIBITIONS

Operational prohibitions include operating in ice, snow, heavy rain, freezing rain or any other weather condition that would unnecessarily compromise the safe operation of bicycles or health of the bicycle operator.

426.6.3 MAINTENANCE

- (a) Bicycle patrol officers shall conduct an inspection of the patrol bicycle and equipment prior to use to ensure proper working order of the equipment. The inspection shall be captured on UMBPD Form 08-019 (Police Bicycle Inspection Form). Any deficiencies shall be immediately reported to the Shift Supervisor.
- (b) Officers are responsible for the routine care and maintenance of their assigned equipment (e.g., tire pressure, chain lubrication, overall cleaning).
 - 1. Each patrol bicycle will have scheduled maintenance at least once a year to be performed by a repair shop or technician approved by the Department.
- (c) Officers shall not modify the patrol bicycle or remove, modify or add components to the patrol bicycle except with the express approval of the Bicycle Patrol Coordinator, or in the event of an emergency.
- (d) If a needed repair is beyond the ability of the bicycle patrol officer, a repair work order will be completed and forwarded to the Coordinator for repair by a technician approved by the Department.
- (e) Patrol bicycle batteries shall be rotated on the assigned charger at the end of each tour of duty.
 - 1. During prolonged periods of non-use, each bicycle patrol officer assigned a patrol bicycle shall periodically rotate the batteries on the respective chargers to increase battery life.
- (f) At the end of a patrol bicycle assignment, the bicycle shall be returned clean and ready for the next tour of duty.

426.7 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Officers shall wear uniforms and safety equipment in accordance with the Uniforms and Civilian Attire Policy 1024.

The uniform consists of the standard short-sleeve uniform shirt or other department-approved shirt, with University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department badge and patches, and

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department-approved bicycle patrol pants or shorts. Optional attire may include, but is not limited to, a jacket in colder weather and turtleneck shirts or sweaters when worn under the uniform shirt.

Bicycle patrol officers shall carry the same equipment on their duty belts as they would on regular patrol assignments. Assignment-specific safety equipment should include, but is not limited to, department-approved helmet, a radio headset and microphone, riding gloves, protective eyewear and approved footwear.

Officers will be responsible for obtaining the necessary forms, citation books and other department equipment needed while on bicycle patrol.

426.8 TRAINING

Officers must complete an initial department-approved bicycle-training course prior to assignment to bicycle patrol. Thereafter, bicycle patrol officers shall receive annual in-service training to improve skills and refresh safety, health and operational procedures. The initial training shall minimally include the following:

- (a) Bicycle patrol strategies
- (b) Bicycle safety and accident prevention
- (c) Operational tactics and techniques using bicycles

Bicycle patrol officers will be required to train and qualify with their duty and secondary firearms while wearing bicycle safety equipment, including the helmet and riding gloves.