

# Bowie Police Department - General Orders



TITLE: BIKE PATROL	NUMBER: 439
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## I. PURPOSE

The Bowie Police Department recognizes the advantages of Police Officers on mountain bikes. Officers are able to patrol parts of the city that are not easily accessible by a motor vehicle. Officers are also more accessible to the public while patrolling shopping centers or other areas during special events.

## II. POLICY

The Bowie Police Department utilizes bicycles to enhance the effectiveness of the Department in providing law enforcement services to the community. Bicycle patrol will be employed for, but may not be limited to, special events within the community; patrolling specific areas to enhance police visibility and, through that visibility, to deter criminal activity; establishing a closer, more personal, contact with the community and strengthening the Department’s community relations efforts; patrolling areas where the terrain is not reasonable suitable for conventional patrol vehicles; patrolling areas in conjunction with an undercover operation to proactively address identified crime patterns and problems; and in any area or under any circumstances in which the Chief of Police reasonably believes that bicycle patrol would be particularly effective. Traffic enforcement may be conducted by bicycle patrol officers; however, such enforcement is not the primary focus of the unit, is not required, and should only be conducted when enforcement would not reasonably jeopardize the safety of the police bicycle operator.

## III. GENERAL

- A. The Department has numerous Officers who have successfully completed a certified “Police Mountain Bike” course. The Chief of Police or his/her designee may assign certified Officers to ride a departmental bike for special events. The Supervisor in charge of the Directed Response Team shall serve as the “Bike Unit” supervisor until the formation of a formal unit.

B. Supervisors may assign a certified Officer under their command to conduct patrol on a bike during the tour of duty. Prior to assigning an Officer to a bike supervisors should consider the following:

- Available personnel resources
- Weather
- Volume of calls for service
- Location to patrol
- Time of day

Supervisors should also consider assigning two Officers to patrol on bikes. This will provide the Officers on bikes with a back-up Officer.

#### **IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CALEA 41.1.3a)**

- A. Bicycles will be operated in compliance with all laws of the State which govern bicycle operation.
- B. Bicycle patrol officers will be available to respond to calls occurring in their geographical area. Officers who have been assigned to patrol on a bike will not be assigned as a primary unit for calls for service; Officers will respond as back up units to calls for service that are within a reasonable proximity and the response does not jeopardize the Officers safety.
- C. Bicycle patrol officers are to advise the on-duty Communications Specialist, on the police radio, each time they begin and end a bicycle patrol and the geographical area they are patrolling.
- D. Bicycle patrol officers are required to provide their location when making field contacts.
- E. Bicycles shall be secured when unattended, circumstances permitting.
- F. Traffic stops/field contacts are permitted on vehicles stopped at the time the Bicycle patrol officer approaches the violator.
- G. Bicycle officers' radio call signs will be assigned by the on duty Supervisor.
- H. Whenever a Bicycle officer receives an injury as a result of riding a bicycle, the Shift Supervisor will be notified immediately and a City Report of Injury Form plus the appropriate Worker's Compensation forms will be completed.

#### **V. UNIFORMS**

- A. Officers who have successfully completed a certified “Police Mountain Bike” course will be issued a Departmental Bike Patrol uniform.
- Shirt yellow/navy
  - Navy riding pants with zip off legs
  - Plain design black helmet, ANSI approved
- B. Bicycle officers shall wear the assigned Bicycle uniform, except when operating in an undercover assignment. Bicycle uniforms will be worn only when the bicycle is to be utilized for patrol. Uniforms will not be worn to court.
- C. Footwear for riding the police bicycle is not provided by the Department; therefore, an Officer may wear tennis shoes, sneakers, or boots that are comfortable, reasonable appropriate for riding a police bicycle on duty, and black in color.
- D. Unless an Officer on bicycle patrol is deployed in an undercover/plainclothes capacity, he/she will wear eye protection at all times when operating the police bicycle. The eye protection may be either shatter resistant personal sunglasses or the clear protective eyewear issued by the Department.

#### **VI. EQUIPMENT (CALEA 41.1.3.d)**

- A. Each police bicycle shall be conspicuously marked with clearly visible stickers that identify it as a police bicycle; however, those stickers may be covered and/or made less visible if the police bicycle is being utilized in an undercover/plainclothes capacity.
- B. Unless being utilized in an undercover/plainclothes capacity, the equipment on each police bicycle shall include, but is not limited to:
1. Headlights, taillight, and reflectors, which may not be removed for any reason;
  2. All-terrain tires;
  3. A saddlebag or storage compartment for citation books and forms;
  4. A battery pack, if the bicycle is being deployed during the hours of darkness;
  5. A rear mounted kick stand
- C. Additional equipment, previously approved by the Officer’s Supervisor, may be carried on the police bicycle by an Officer if it does not reasonable interfere with safe operation of the police bicycle.

It is the responsibility of the Officer assigned to a specific police bicycle for a bicycle patrol shift to ensure that all the required equipment is on the police bicycle and is in a condition that would not interfere with, or jeopardize, the safe operation of the police vehicle.

#### **VII. MAINTENANCE/REPAIRS**

- A. Before beginning a patrol shift on bicycle patrol duties, an Officer shall conduct a general inspection of the condition of his/her assigned police bicycle that shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Required equipment;
  2. The proper function of both front and rear brakes;
  3. The proper inflation of both front and rear tires;
  4. The tightness and presence of all spokes on both front and rear tires;
  5. The presence of all links in the chain; and
  6. Any other equipment on, or mechanical condition of, the police bicycle that would reasonably affect its safe operation.
- B. A bicycle determined to be reasonably unsafe by a bicycle patrol Officer will not be deployed.
- C. Adjustments or repairs, even of a minor nature, shall not be made to the gear cables, brake cables, or gears of a police bicycle by any Officer.
- D. The Officer's Supervisor shall be advised by the end of the Bike Officer's tour, in writing, of any necessary repairs or adjustments discovered by an Officer during the general inspection of the police bicycle. The written notification shall include the nature of the required repair or adjustment and the date and time of its discovery.
- E. If a police bicycle sustains damage more than minor scratches to any equipment, chain, gears, tires (including loose spokes or bent rims, or frame, the Officer assigned to the police bicycle at the time it sustained the damage shall notify the Officer's supervisor in writing via a memorandum sent up to the Operations Division Commander by the end of the Bike Officer's tour.
- F. Operation Services Division shall arrange for any necessary repairs or adjustments to any police bicycle, utilizing a bicycle repair shop authorized by the specific police bicycle manufacturer to service/repair the bicycle.
- G. If a police bicycle must be transported by vehicle, the bicycle rack and bungee cord should normally be used to minimize, or avoid, damage to the police bicycle. Except under emergency conditions, the police bicycle should not be transported in the rear seat or trunk of a vehicle.

### **VIII. DEPLOYMENT OF BICYCLE PATROL**

- A. The Bowie Police Department will attempt, as much as reasonably possible, to maximize the utilization and deployment of bicycle patrol Officers throughout the community, given the effectiveness of the police bicycle patrol in proactive crime prevention and detection, community relations, and crime suppression.
- B. Deployment of a police bicycle patrol Officer will be determined by environmental factors including, but not limited to, humidity, heat, cold, wind chill, rain, and snow, as well as the assigned bicycle patrol officer's physical condition at the time of his/her scheduled deployment. The decision not to deploy a police bicycle patrol, or to terminate a police bicycle patrol already begun, rests with the on duty supervisor. If the police bicycle patrol is not deployed, the Officer scheduled for police bicycle patrol will be deployed in a marked police vehicle for a normal patrol shift.
- C. In the interest of the operator's safety, the police bicycle will not be deployed when ice or snow cover the roadways. The safety of the Bicycle Patrol officers is of paramount importance. The bicycle may

not be deployed during extreme weather conditions. Extreme weather is defined as heavy rain, (downpours), thunderstorms (lightning and winds), snow/ice conditions, or high winds (25+ mph).