

Group Riding Policy
Marietta Georgia Chapter, Inc.
HOG Chapter No. 0822

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Purpose:

This purpose of this policy is to supplement the overall goal of the Chapter, “**To Ride and Have Fun**”. This policy establishes guidelines and procedures to be followed on Chapter sponsored rides that will promote the safety of each participant and the group as a whole.

Each Chapter member is expected to read, understand and apply these guidelines and procedures on each ride using their best judgment.

General Policy:

It is ***Ultimately YOUR Responsibility*** to ensure your safety and the safety of your fellow riders. ***Always*** ride within your capabilities and the capabilities of your machine.

1. It is the policy of this Chapter that ***alcohol shall not be consumed*** before or during a Chapter planned ride. Violation of this policy will immediately terminate the ride with the offending participants asked to leave the group. Road Captains will restart the ride without the offending participants in order that the ride may continue as planned.
2. Participants in Chapter rides are responsible for completing a pre-ride check and fueling their bikes prior to arriving at the ride departure location. This means that your bike should be fully fueled and in proper working order. (i.e. T-CLOCK Check tires, controls, lights, oil, chassis, kickstand) Check the website for a pre-ride checklist.
3. Participants should arrive 15 minutes early in order to sign in and participate in the pre-ride briefing.
4. Only the Lead and Sweep rides should use high beams or passing lamps.

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5. Ride Participants shall not fool around (horse play, rapid acceleration/braking, breaking formation, etc.) when participating in a Chapter planned ride. Any member observing such behavior, when in formation, shall discuss it with the offending rider at the next available opportunity and attempt to remedy the situation. If the behavior continues, then it shall be reported to the lead road captain.

Riding Formation Guidelines:

The lead road captain controls the ride formation. He will use the standard hand signals to communicate his/her intent. You are responsible for knowing these hand signals and responding accordingly. The hand signals are posted in the Chapter room and on the web site.

The minimum time intervals discussed here cover the time required for you to react to an emergency situation; **NOT TO STOP**. Further, this group riding technique requires all participants to constantly **ANTICIPATE and EMERGENCY**.

1. Under normal conditions, the Chapters standard formation is staggered double row in one travel lane. The interval between you and the rider immediately in front of you shall be a **minimum** of 2 SECONDS with the interval to the staggered rider in front of you a minimum of 1 second. These minimums are based on sunny dry conditions and should be increased as road conditions deteriorate. *Keep in mind that at 60 mph you are traveling 88 ft per second; roughly 9 bike lengths a second.*
2. No passing when in formation. Not only is this unsafe, it is against the law to pass another vehicle in the same travel lane you are traveling in.
3. When stopping at stop signs and stop lights, double up (side by side). At stop signs each rider should come to a complete stop with your foot down then proceed with caution. The group does not have the right of way and must follow all traffic laws.
4. Riders with less than one year of riding experience or riders not familiar with group riding will be placed near the front of the group just behind the lead road captain.
5. Each participant shall maintain their starting position in the group until the ride reaches the destination. This allows each rider to become familiar with the riding style and habits of those nearest him.
6. When the lead road captain signals single file riding, each participant shall fall back to a safe following distance (minimum of 2 second separation) and form a single file line.

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Speed and Separation Distance:

The policy of the Chapter is that sponsored and planned rides shall follow all traffic laws including the speed limit. Each ride will be at or below the posted speed limit weather and road conditions permitting.

1. The lead road captain will establish and maintain a uniform speed for the ride that is at or below the posted speed limit and consistent with the surrounding conditions and safe riding practices. It is the responsibility of each rider to maintain this uniform speed.
2. The lead road captain will conduct the ride to the abilities and skill level of the least experienced rider.
3. The minimum following distance shall be 2 seconds (176 feet at 60 mph) between the rider and the next rider directly ahead and 1 second (88 feet at 60 mph) when the next rider is in staggered formation.
4. The lead road captain will establish and maintain a safe distance between the group and the next vehicle ahead of the group. This is defined as a minimum of 3 seconds separation (260 feet at 60 mph).
5. Participants shall avoid leaving large spaces in the group. These spaces invite other vehicles to squeeze into the group.
6. DO NOT try to prevent vehicles from entering the group.
7. DO NOT try to cut off other vehicles. Assume that they do not see you and take appropriate action.

Freeway Lane Changes and Passing:

All passing and lane changes will made considering the safety of the group. Participants shall follow the lead road captain and not make sudden or erratic moves.

1. The lead road captain will signal a lane change and hold his position.
2. All participants holding their position behind the lead road captain will pass the signal to the rear.
3. The ride sweep will make a safe lane change and guard the lane. Once the lead road captain sees that the lane is clear and safe for a lane change, he will then signal the lane change again and complete the maneuver. Participants will make a head check then follow the leader and make the maneuver.

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4. When changing lanes, the group will use the follow the leader approach. The lead will change first followed by the second rider then the third rider and so on.
5. **NO ONE**, except the sweep, is to change lanes before the lead road captain does. **Always** make a head check before lane changes and maintain a safe following distance.

Two Lane Road Passing:

As a general policy, two-lane road passing is not recommended for group riding, especially on the curvy and mountainous back roads that are abundant in this area. However when the situation arises and such a maneuver is required, the following guidelines should be followed.

1. The lead road captain will signal for a single file formation.
2. The lead road captain will then signal a lane change, when safe to do so, and will proceed around the vehicle ahead making sure that the vehicle being passed is aware of the group's presence.
3. Each rider, as an individual, will then follow the lead when safe to do so.
4. Remember that ***You are Responsible*** for your safety and should use safe riding practices and common sense when making a passing maneuver.

Leaving the Group:

While riding in a group is fun, there are times when participants, for whatever reason, will need to leave the group. Once you know that you will be cutting your ride short, please follow these guidelines so that everyone is aware of your intent and you can leave the group safely.

1. Notify the lead road captain and sweep road captain as soon as you know that you will be leaving the group.
2. Notify the riders immediately adjacent to you in the group at the last stop before you leave. This way, they will be anticipating your departure.
3. At the last stop before you leave the group, move to the back of the group and position yourself just in front of the sweep road captain.
4. Leave the group as planned and have a safe ride to your final destination.

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Emergency Stops:

Unfortunately, sometimes “the best laid plans of mice and men go a wry”. As a result, there will be times when the group, or individuals in the group will be required to make emergency stops. Therefore, the Chapter has classified these stops into three categories Low Priority, Moderate Priority and High Priority and established the following guidelines to be followed should such an occasion arise when an unscheduled stop is required.

1. **Low Priority** – These stops include gas, restrooms, rain gear, fatigue, group separation and anything that can lead to confusion within the group or cause an unsafe condition. These stops are controlled by the lead road captain. The rider needing to stop will signal the lead road captain who will then signal the group indicating the stop and lead the group in an organized fashion to the next convenient and safe place to stop.

2. **Moderate Priority** – These stops are for when a rider has to pull over immediately for equipment problems. Problems like a flat tire, open saddle bag, loose parts and running out of gas are examples of moderate Priority stops. During one of these stops, the rider will signal that they are pulling over and the sweep will stop with them. The lead road captain should be informed of the emergency stop and lead the group to a safe place to pull over and stop. Once the situation is diagnosed and a plan to correct the problem formulated, a decision will be made concerning the continuation of the ride.

3. **High Priority** – These stops occur when a rider is in a crash. All riders following behind the affected rider should pull over using safe riding practices and assist with Accident Protocol. The sweep road captain is in charge of this situation until formal assistance arrives. It is recommended that every member of the chapter attend the bystander’s assistance course to learn what to do in the event of a crash to protect the downed rider and prevent additional injury or damage.

Gas Station Procedures:

It may be difficult when riding in a large group to find a gas station that will allow all bikes to be refueled at once. As a courtesy to other riders, once you have refueled your bike, please pull away from the gas pumps so that others may refuel.

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