



# POLICE CYCLIST

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<i>C.A.L.E.A.</i> <b>41.1.3</b>	<i>Reference</i> <b>(see "INDEX AS:")</b>

## **INDEX AS:**

Special Purpose Vehicles  
Police Cyclist  
Body Armor

Vehicle Operations  
Communications

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy to direct bicycle patrol operations. The Iowa City Police Department recognizes that bicycle (bike) patrol facilitates communications between officers and the public. Bike patrol also provides added mobility over automobiles in areas that are not accessible by motorized vehicles or traditionally are not patrolled.

## **II. POLICY**

The Iowa City Police Department recognizes the need for specially equipped bicycles operated by trained cyclists. Iowa City Police Cyclists are expected to abide by state code and city ordinances pertaining to bicycles and "roadway" usage.

### III. DEFINITIONS

Iowa Code section 321.231 states as follows:

Authorized emergency vehicles and police bicycles.

- A. The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected perpetrator of a felony or in response to an incident dangerous to the public or when responding to but not upon returning from a fire alarm, may exercise the privileges set forth in this section.
- B. The driver of any authorized emergency vehicle, may:
  1. Park or stand an authorized emergency vehicle, irrespective of the provisions of this chapter.
  2. Disregard laws or regulations governing direction of movement for the minimum distance necessary before an alternative route that conforms to the traffic laws and regulations is available.
- C. The driver of a fire department vehicle, police vehicle, or ambulance, or a peace officer riding a police bicycle in the line of duty may do any of the following:
  1. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
  2. Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as the driver does not endanger life or property.
- D. The exemptions granted to an authorized emergency vehicle under subsection 2 and for a fire department vehicle, police vehicle, or ambulance as provided in subsection 3 shall apply only when such vehicle is making use of an audible signaling device meeting the requirements of section 321.433 or a visual signaling device, except that use of an audible or visual signaling device shall not be required when exercising the exemption granted under subsection 3, paragraph "b" of this section when the vehicle is operated by a peace officer, pursuing a suspected violator of the speed restrictions imposed by or pursuant to this chapter, for the purpose of determining the speed of travel of such suspected violator.
- E. The foregoing provisions shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle or the rider of a police bicycle from the duty to drive or ride with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver or rider from the consequences of the driver's or rider's reckless disregard for the safety of others.

### IV. PROCEDURES

Officers selected as police cyclists are required to successfully complete a course of instruction as prescribed by the International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) or other police cyclist training/certification as approved by an ICPD Captain and/or the Training/Accreditation Sergeant. A four-year commitment is required of officers who are selected as bike officers. (This does not preclude officers from being promoted, requesting transfer to another division or otherwise being reassigned to positions where they would no longer serve as a bike officer.)

- A. Mandatory Equipment – Police Cyclists shall wear protective helmets as certified by ANSI or Snell Foundations, and as prescribed by OSHA regulations. Police Cyclists shall also protect their eyes with glasses and/or

- shields that guard against dust, exhaust, sunlight, and other hazardous materials. Eyewear shall be worn whenever officers engage in bicycle patrol. Eyewear and helmets shall be approved by the Commander of Administrative Services.
- B. Assignment – Police Cyclists shall be under the command of the on-duty watch commander unless otherwise specified.
1. The watch commander may assign police cyclists to duties at his/her discretion, taking into account staffing, location, time, and weather conditions.
  2. Police Cyclists may be assigned to specific duties, or they may be assigned in a "routine" mode. Police cyclists are expected to interact with the public as part of their assignment.
- C. The cyclist shall perform an inspection of their bicycle prior to their beginning a tour of duty. Any malfunction or equipment maintenance that is needed shall be reported to the Commander of Administrative Services. No police cyclist shall attempt any repair that is beyond his or her training or level of experience. The police cyclist shall report any damage or maintenance needs to the Commander of Administrative Services.
- D. To the extent applicable, police cyclists are governed by departmental policies pertaining to vehicle operations. In addition:
1. Police cyclists shall obey applicable state statutes and city ordinances pertaining to vehicle operations and bicycles.
  2. Officers shall not ride their bikes on prohibited areas unless responding in an emergency, or unless receiving prior approval from the Watch Supervisor.
- E. Communications procedures
1. Prior to the beginning of a tour of duty, the communications section shall be advised of which officer(s) are on bike.
    - a) When dispatching a call to a bike officer, the Emergency Communications Operator (ECO) shall insert the letter B prior to the officer's number. I.e. B-2, 10-25....
    - b) When a bike officer contacts the ECO, he/she shall insert the letter B prior to their number. I.e. City B-2, traffic...
- F. Body Armor – While officers on bike patrol are encouraged to wear their department issued body armor at all times; the department recognizes that at times, weather conditions may place the officer at risk of heat related injury. To this end; while on bike patrol, officers may elect not to wear their body armor when the temperature or heat index are at or above 80° F.
- G. Equipment – Police bicycles shall be equipped with a battery operated headlight and taillight system and a pack in which to carry equipment and supplies. In addition the cyclist shall be supplied with:
1. first aid pouch
  2. required report forms or data collection materials
  3. traffic and parking citations
  4. other equipment as determined by the Commander of Administrative Services.

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Samuel Hargadine, Chief of Police

**WARNING**

This directive is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. The department policy should not be construed as a creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third-party claims. Violations of this directive will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions.