

## Bicycle Patrol Unit

### 426.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Beloit Police Department has established the Bicycle Patrol Unit for the purpose of improving the quality of life in neighborhoods by reducing crime, fear, and disorder through pro-active community engagement and enforcement efforts. Bicycle patrol has been shown to be an effective way to enhance police presence with superior mobility, develop mutual trust and confidence between the residents and officers, and increase visibility in congested areas. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the safe and effective operation of the patrol bicycle and the assigned officers.

### 426.2 POLICY

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's mobility and visibility in the community.

Bicycles may be deployed on a seasonal basis to any area of the city at all hours of the day or night as determined by the Bicycle Patrol Unit Administrator. Shift Commanders may assign bicycle officers to work full or partial shifts on the patrol bicycle, according to department needs and as staffing levels allow.

Requests for specific deployment of bicycle patrol officers shall be coordinated through the Bicycle Patrol Unit Administrator.

### 426.3 SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

When opening(s) occur interested sworn personnel are encouraged to apply for assignment to the Bicycle Patrol Unit. All applications will be forwarded to the Bicycle Patrol Unit Administrator. Qualified applicants will be evaluated for selection and continued assignment by the following criteria:

- (a) Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance
- (b) Special skills or training as they pertain to the assignment
- (c) Good physical condition
- (d) Ability to complete the International Police Mountain Bike Association Police Cyclist Course

Assignment to the Bicycle Patrol Unit and hours of work shall be in conformity with the current collective bargaining agreement between the City of Beloit and the Wisconsin Professional Police Association.

#### 426.3.1 BICYCLE PATROL UNIT ADMINISTRATOR

The Captain of Patrol or designee shall:

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1. Ensure that members who are authorized to operate bicycles are properly trained and equipped.
2. Ensure that regular inspections of the bicycles and equipment are conducted and documented.
3. Select member(s) who shall be authorized to operate a bicycle.
4. Prepare an annual report detailing activities of the Bicycle Patrol Unit to include data on deployments, community engagement and proactive enforcement efforts.

### **426.4 TRAINING**

Participants in the program must complete an initial department-approved bicycle training course after acceptance into the program. Thereafter, bicycle patrol officers should receive yearly in-service training to improve skills and refresh safety, health and operational procedures.

### **426.5 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Bicycle officers shall wear the department-approved uniform and safety equipment while operating the police bicycle. Safety equipment includes department-approved helmet, riding gloves, protective eyewear and approved footwear. When performing street duty in a squad with a patrol bicycle attached, officer's should wear the department-approved bicycle uniform and carry the safety equipment with them to allow for expeditious deployment of the bicycle.
- B. Bicycle officers shall conduct a safety inspection before patrol and perform minor maintenance as needed(tire pressure, chain lubrication, etc.). Members are responsible for maintaining their assigned bicycles in a clean and safe condition.
- C. Bicycle officers, when operating a patrol bicycle or deploying in a squad with a bicycle attached, shall log in with the dispatcher by utilizing the designation "B" (Bravo) after the unit number.
- D. Bicycle officers should carry the same equipment on bicycle duty as they would on a regular patrol assignment.
- E. Bicycle officers shall promptly report to their supervisor any missing, stolen, defective, or damaged equipment.
- F. The bicycle should be secured with a department provided lock when in the public and not in the officer's presence.
- G. The bicycle should be secured in the designated parking rack in the department garage when not in use.
- H. Bicycle officers should carry a first aid kit, rain gear and traffic vest in the gear bag.

### **426.6 SHIFT COMMANDER/SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY**

Shift Commanders and supervisors are responsible to inspect and ensure bicycle officers assigned to their respective shifts are properly equipped for duty and deployed appropriately.

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Upon receiving a report regarding any missing, stolen, defective, or damaged equipment, they shall notify the Captain of Patrol or designee.

### **426.7 CARE AND USE OF PATROL BICYCLES**

- (a) Officers will be assigned a specially marked and equipped patrol bicycle and equipment.
- (b) Each bicycle may be equipped with a steady or flashing blue/red warning light that is visible from the front, sides or rear of the bicycle. This lighting may be used at the officer's discretion.
- (c) If a needed repair is beyond the ability of the officer, a report will be completed and forwarded to the Bicycle Patrol Unit Administrator for repair by an approved technician.
- (d) Each bicycle will have scheduled annual maintenance, to be performed by an approved technician.
- (e) Officers shall not modify the patrol bicycle, remove, modify or add components except with the approval of the Bicycle Patrol Unit Administrator or in the event of an emergency.
- (f) Vehicle bicycle racks are available should the officer need to transport the patrol bicycle. Due to possible component damage, transportation of the bicycle in a trunk or on a patrol car push-bumper is discouraged.

### **426.8 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN OPERATING BICYCLE**

Officers must operate the bicycle in compliance with Wisconsin law under normal operation. Officers may operate the bicycle without lighting equipment during hours of darkness when such operation reasonably appears necessary for officer safety and tactical considerations. Officers must use caution and care when operating the bicycle without lighting equipment. During any operation of a bicycle, the exemptions granted to an officer when operating an authorized emergency vehicle do not provide relief from the duty to drive or ride with due regard for the safety of all persons nor do they provide protection from the consequences of reckless disregard for the safety of others (Wis. Stat. § 346.03(5)).

Officers are exempt from the rules of the road under the following conditions (Wis. Stat. § 346.03(3)):

- (a) In response to an emergency call
- (b) While engaged in rescue operations
- (c) In the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law