

Bicycle Patrol Unit

452.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Fontana Police Department has established the Bicycle Patrol Unit (BPU) for the purpose of enhancing patrol efforts in the community. Bicycle patrol has been shown to be an effective way to increase officer visibility in congested areas and their quiet operation can provide a tactical approach to crimes in progress. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the safe and effective operation of the patrol bicycle.

452.2 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 their mobility and visibility to the community.

Bicycles may be deployed to any area at all hours 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 Bicycle Patrol Unit supervisor or the Watch Commander.

452.3 BICYCLE PATROL UNIT SUPERVISOR

The Bicycle Patrol Unit supervisor shall have responsibility for the following: Organizing bicycle patrol training. Inspecting and maintaining inventory of patrol bicycles and program equipment. Scheduling maintenance and repairs. Evaluating performance of bicycle officers. Coordinating activities with the Field Services Division. Other activities as required to maintain the efficient operation of the Bicycle Patrol Unit.

452.4 TRAINING

All officers assigned to the Bicycle Patrol Unit will, as soon as possible, attend and successfully pass a course of instruction that meets criteria as is outlined by the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training. In addition, field training should be conducted with an experienced Bicycle Patrol Officer for a period of time to be determined by the Multiple Enforcement Team Supervisor.

Thereafter bicycle patrol officers should receive regular in-service training to improve skills and refresh safety, health and operational procedures. The initial training shall minimally include the following:

- Bicycle patrol strategies.
- Bicycle safety and accident prevention.
- Operational tactics using bicycles.

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

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452.5 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Bicycles officers shall wear the departmentally approved uniform and safety equipment while operating the police bicycle. Safety equipment includes departmentally approved helmet (Snell™ or ANSI™ approved), padded riding gloves, protective eyewear and approved footwear. Soft body armor/vest is strongly recommended.

The bicycle uniform will comply with the uniform policy outlined in the general orders.

Bicycle officers shall carry the same equipment on the bicycle patrol duty belt as they would on a regular patrol assignment.

Officers will be responsible for obtaining necessary forms, citation books and other needed equipment to keep available while on bike patrol.

452.6 CARE AND USE OF PATROL BICYCLES

Officers will be assigned a specially marked and equipped patrol bicycle and an attached gear bag.

Bicycles utilized for uniformed bicycle patrol shall be primarily black or white in color with a "POLICE" decal affixed to each side of the crossbar or the bike's saddlebag. Every such bicycle shall be equipped with front and rear reflectors front lights and a siren/horn satisfying the requirements of Vehicle Code §2800.1(b). Police Bicycles shall be given a number for easy identification.

Bicycles utilized for uniformed bicycle patrol shall be equipped with a rear rack and/or saddle bag(s) sufficient to carry all necessary equipment to handle routine patrol calls including report writing, vehicle storage and citations.

Each bike team shall carry between them a first aid kit, tire inflation device, repair tool, and tire tube. These items are to remain with/on the bicycle at all times.

Each bicycle shall be equipped with a steady or flashing blue warning light that is visible from the front, or rear of the bicycle. (Vehicle Code § 21201.3)

Bicycle officers shall conduct an inspection of the bicycle and equipment prior to use to insure proper working order of the equipment. Officers are responsible for the routine care and maintenance of their assigned equipment (e.g., tire pressure, chain lubrication, overall cleaning). All moving parts of each bicycle shall be kept clean and properly lubricated at all times.

An equipment maintenance and repair log shall be kept up to date daily regarding all bicycle patrol equipment.

If a needed repair is beyond the ability of the bicycle officer, officers are authorized to purchase necessary equipment under the purchase order agreement with the appropriate bicycle repair/sales facility. All purchases must be pre-approved by a Multiple Enforcement Team Supervisor or Watch Commander.

Each bicycle will have scheduled maintenance twice yearly to be performed by a department approved repair shop/technician.

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At the end of a bicycle assignment, the bicycle shall be returned clean and ready for the next tour of duty.

Electric patrol bicycle batteries shall be rotated on the assigned charger at the end of each tour of duty. During prolonged periods of non-use, each officer assigned an electric bicycle shall periodically rotate the batteries on the respective charges to increase battery life.

Officers shall not modify the patrol bicycle, remove, modify or add components except with the expressed approval of the bicycle supervisor, or in the event of an emergency.

Vehicle bicycle racks are available should the officer need to transport the patrol bicycle. Due to possible component damage, transportation of the patrol bicycle in a trunk or on a patrol car push-bumper is discouraged.

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

452.7 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

Officers must operate the bicycle in compliance with the Vehicle Code 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.

To the greatest extent possible, officers shall operate their bicycles on the street. Officers may ride their bicycles on sidewalks to accomplish their patrol activities whenever necessary, taking care not to unnecessarily startle, frighten or violate the right-of-way of pedestrians or crossing traffic. Whenever in operation on a sidewalk, officers shall do so at a reduced speed unless a situation exists justifying a greater speed, such as a response to an emergency call.

Bicycle officers will generally ride as a two-officer team unless a situation exists to clearly justify an officer to ride alone.

Bicycle officers shall not hold onto, balance or allow themselves to be towed by a motor vehicle.

Officers not specifically assigned to the Bicycle Patrol Unit may be allowed to operate a Fontana Police bicycle only in the presence of an experienced bicycle officer and only with prior approval from a Multiple Enforcement Team Supervisor.

Officers are exempt from the rules of the road under the following conditions (Vehicle Code § 21200(b)(1)):

- (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.