


Bicycle Patrol

426.1 POLICY HEADER

Original Effective Date:	Revised Date:
September 1, 2021	January 4, 2023
Authorization:  Jason Haberman Chief of Police	

426.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the Mt. Lebanon Police Department to safely and effectively use bicycle patrol for the purpose of enhancing field patrol efforts in the community.

426.3 POLICY

It is the policy of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department that 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 mobility and department visibility in the community.

426.4 OPERATIONS

Bicycle patrol has been shown to be an effective way to increase officer visibility in congested areas, and the quiet operation of the patrol bicycle can facilitate a tactical approach to crimes in progress. Patrol bicycles may be deployed to any area, at any hour 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 coordinator or the Watch Commander.

426.5 SELECTION

Interested officers who are off probation shall submit a request via the annual wishlist. Requests will be forwarded to the bicycle patrol coordinator who will review the applicants and select candidates in consultation with the Operations Deputy Chief of Police.

Interested officers shall be evaluated by the following criteria:

- (a) Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance
- (b) Special skills or training as it pertains to the assignment

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- (c) Good physical condition
- (d) Willingness to perform duties using the bicycle as a mode of transportation
- (e) 4 year minimum commitment
- (f) Must be willing to ride a minimum amount of time set by the bicycle coordinator per calendar year.

426.5.1 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers should operate the bicycle in compliance with the vehicle code under normal operation, unless their duties require otherwise (75 Pa.C.S. § 102; 75 Pa.C.S. § 3105).

Officers may operate the bicycle without lighting equipment during hours of darkness only when it reasonably appears necessary for officer safety or tactical considerations. Officers must use caution and care when operating bicycles without lighting equipment or when they are operating in violation of the rules of the road.

Officers are exempt from the rules of the road under the following conditions (75 Pa.C.S. § 3105):

- (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

426.6 BICYCLE PATROL COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police shall delegate certain responsibilities to a bicycle patrol coordinator. The coordinator shall be appointed by and directly responsible to the Operations Deputy Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

The coordinator may appoint a senior bicycle patrol officer or other designee to assist in the coordination of bicycle patrol officers and their activities.

The responsibilities of the coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Organizing bicycle patrol training.
- (b) Inspecting and maintaining an inventory of patrol bicycles and program equipment.
- (c) Scheduling maintenance and repairs.
- (d) Evaluating the performance of bicycle patrol officers.
- (e) Coordinating activities with the Operations Division.
- (f) Other activities as required to maintain the efficient operation of bicycle patrol.

426.7 PATROL BICYCLE

Bicycle patrol officers will be assigned a specially marked and equipped patrol bicycle, attached gear bag and helmet.

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Patrol bicycles shall be primarily black or white in color with a “Police” decal affixed to each side of the crossbar or the bicycle’s gear bag. Every patrol bicycle shall be equipped with:

- (a) Front and rear reflectors.
- (b) A siren and horn.
- (c) A steady or flashing blue and red warning light that is visible from the front, sides and rear of the bicycle.
- (d) A rear rack and/or gear bag sufficient to carry all necessary equipment to handle routine patrol calls, including report writing, vehicle storage and citations.
- (e) A gear bag that may include a first-aid kit, tire pump, repair tool, tire tube, security lock, high-visibility vest and equipment information and use manuals. These items are to remain with/on the patrol bicycle at all times.

Patrol bicycles shall be properly secured when not in the officer’s immediate presence.

426.7.1 TRANSPORTING THE PATROL BICYCLE

The patrol bicycle should be transported using a vehicle bicycle rack. Due to possible component damage, transportation of the patrol bicycle in a trunk or on a law enforcement vehicle push-bumper is discouraged. The hitch shall be properly secured to patrol vehicle via hitch pin and locked to prevent unauthorized removal.

426.7.2 MAINTENANCE

- (a) Bicycle patrol officers shall conduct an inspection of the patrol bicycle and equipment prior to use to ensure proper working order of the equipment. Any damage or repairs needed shall be promptly reported to the bicycle coordinator.
- (b) Officers are responsible for the routine care and maintenance of their assigned equipment (e.g., tire pressure, chain lubrication, overall cleaning).
 - 1. Each patrol bicycle will have scheduled maintenance annually to be performed by a repair shop or technician approved by the Department.
- (c) Officers shall not modify the patrol bicycle or remove, modify or add components to the patrol bicycle except with the express approval of the bicycle patrol coordinator, or in the event of an emergency.
- (d) If a needed repair is beyond the ability of the bicycle patrol officer, a request will be forwarded to the coordinator for repair by a technician approved by the Department.
- (e) Patrol bicycle batteries shall only be charged for a maximum of 4 hours and only placed on charger when the battery is below 2 bars of battery life remaining.
- (f) At the end of a patrol bicycle assignment, the bicycle shall be returned clean and ready for the next tour of duty.

426.8 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Officers shall wear uniforms and safety equipment in accordance with the Uniforms and Civilian Attire Policy.

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The uniform consists of the standard short-sleeve uniform shirt or other department-approved shirt, with Mt. Lebanon Police Department badge and patches, and department-approved bicycle patrol pants or shorts and solid black sneakers. Optional attire may include, but is not limited to, a jacket in colder weather and turtleneck shirts or sweaters when worn under the uniform shirt.

Bicycle patrol officers should carry the same equipment on their duty belts or external vest carrier as they would on regular patrol assignments. Assignment-specific safety equipment should include, but is not limited to, department-approved helmet, a radio headset and microphone, riding gloves, protective eyewear and approved footwear.

Officers will be responsible for obtaining the necessary forms, citation books and other department equipment needed while on bicycle patrol.

426.9 TRAINING

Officers must complete an initial department-approved bicycle-training course prior to assignment to bicycle patrol. The initial training shall minimally include:

- (a) Bicycle patrol strategies.
- (b) Bicycle safety and accident prevention.
- (c) Operational tactics and techniques using bicycles.

Bicycle patrol officers may be required to train and qualify with their duty and secondary firearms while wearing bicycle safety equipment, including the helmet and riding gloves. In-service training for officers assigned to the bicycle patrol may be scheduled periodically at the discretion of the Bicycle Patrol Coordinator but shall occur no less than once every three years.