

Ride with Pride



BLUE KNIGHTS BCV

RIDERS HANDBOOK

**THIS RIDERS HANDBOOK HAS BEEN CREATED TO PROMOTE SAFE,
CONSISTENT RIDING PRACTICES FOR ALL RIDERS
PARTICIPATING IN SANCTIONED B.C.V RIDES**

The Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club is a motorcycle organization comprised of people who share two common interests - a law enforcement background and a love of motorcycle riding. Accordingly, the riding habits of its members, both individually and collectively, should reflect safe riding techniques.

Whether you ride as an individual or in a group, in order to survive on the open road, your motorcycle riding habits and techniques must be constantly thought of as defensive. However, it is important to also recognize and remember that group riding is a team effort. In order to ride safely, you must rely on the cooperation of all riders in the group.

The standard ride formation for Blue Knights B.C. V includes Group Leader, Riders, and Sweep (Tail End Charlie). This handbook has been divided into each of these 3 participant sections. It is strongly advised that everyone read each section regardless of what position you may normally assume during a ride so that you are aware what to expect from each position. You may find yourself from time to time asked to fill a role you normally don't, as it will help you to participate more effectively when called upon.

RIDERS:

Safety:

Safety is first and foremost at all times during rides. It is the responsibility of each rider to not only ride safely themselves but to speak up immediately if they see or feel they observe unsafe practices or maneuvers made by any other riders within the group.

Motorcycle Preparedness:

Check your motorcycle carefully beforehand. Proper maintenance is a pre-requisite for a safe day of riding. Fluid levels, tire pressure, secured loads and properly functioning lights are just a few of the things that should be checked before setting out for a ride.

Rider Readiness:

Come prepared. A full gas tank and an empty bladder is a good start. Bring the appropriate amount of fluids to ensure you don't become dehydrated, and a light snack is always a good idea as you never know how long till the next stop, or sometimes unscheduled long delays can occur. Show up early to ensure you catch the pre-ride briefing for critical information. Be well rested, this can be critical to the safety of all on the ride. A moments inattention can be catastrophic.

Pre Ride Briefing:

This is an important feature of all Blue Knights sanctioned rides. The Ride Director or a Ride Captain will give relevant information at the start of each ride including destination, scheduled stops along the way, points of interest, any known hazards along the way, etc. There is also a safety component to these briefings, and it is critical to pay attention to these for the benefit of yourself, and everyone riding with you that day.

Group Readiness:

Before the group leaves, the Group Leader will poll their group checking with each individual rider that they are ready to ride. Each rider will indicate their preparedness by either putting their hand on their windshield or raising their hand. Once all riders have indicated readiness the Group Leader will begin to move the group out.

Formation:

The standard ride formation is the staggered formation. Spacing will vary according to speed and at times will vary according to specific maneuvers. When making any changes in the formation (such as lane changes) it is critical not to move your position until the motorcycle in front of you has completed their maneuver. This ensures everyone knows where everyone else is during the entire process.

EMERGENCY STOPPING

If any riders need to immediately stop for any reason they should indicate with their motorcycle signal and hand signal that they need to pull over at the first safe location possible. Any riders who observe this and who can also pull over safely should do so in order to possibly render assistance to the rider with the issue. If it is something that cannot be resolved and further assistance is required, it should be decided who should remain with the disabled rider for safety and security reasons and the rest of the riders should proceed to the next stop to advise the rest of the group of the issue at hand. At no point should any riders do a "u turn" to turn back and find the rest of the group. This can prove dangerous and confusing when multiple riders are trying to catch each other in these maneuvers. If a group notices missing riders they should slow down if safe, and if no sign of the missing riders is seen, proceed to the next scheduled stop location and wait for someone from the disabled group to arrive with information.

If no one shows up, the group should proceed along the route stopping as scheduled and trying to make contact at each stop. If no contact is made before the destination is reached, a decision must be made as to what course of action be taken once the group arrives at the final destination. This underlines the importance of frequent rear view mirror checks by all riders. It only takes a few seconds for a motorcycle to disappear from sight, and checking often greatly improves safety and can prevent difficult situations like this from happening.

Hand Signals:

Hand signals are used by each group to indicate hazards or maneuvers. It is critical you learn these signals before joining in on any rides.

These signals include, passing maneuvers, change to single lane formation, change back to staggered formation, hazard location, rider readiness etc. Each rider should mimic the signal down the formation in order to be sure everyone is aware, as not everyone can physically see the Ride Leader.

Passing signal: One finger held over the head and moved in a circular motion. This signal is given to indicate that the group will be passing another vehicle at the next safe opportunity. Riders should close up the formation at this point to make a quicker and safer passing maneuver.

Single Lane: One finger held over the head with no movement indicates a hazard such as pedestrian, bicyclist, wide load etc. Riders will move into this formation taking the lead from the motorcycle in front of them. Note that depending on the location of the obstacle, it may mean moving into either of the two columns.

When the hazard has been passed, two fingers will be raised above the head to indicate moving back to the staggered formation again. Again it is important not to move back into position until the motorcycle in front of you has completed the maneuver

LANE CHANGE:

When changing lanes, the Group Leader will tell the Sweep Rider to move to the other lane in order to claim the lane for the rest of the group. This allows the rest of the group to safely change lanes as no other vehicles are able to merge into the group. Once the Sweep has established themselves in the new lane the Group Leader will be the next to move to the new lane. Starting with the rider riding beside the Group Leader each rider moving back one at a time will change to the new lane. It is critical not to move over before the rider in front of you has moved. This will ensure you know where everyone is located in relation to your position.

MERGING LANES:

When merging because of a lane ending the process is similar to a lane change but with a few added maneuvers.

The Group Leader will tell the Sweep to move into the new lane in order to claim the lane for the rest of the group (this allows the rest of the group to safely change lanes) once the Sweep is established their position, the Group Leader will move to the left side of the new lane. Once the Group Leader is in position the rider next to the Group Leader will move from the right side of the slow lane to the left side of the slow lane. each rider in sequence will either move to the left side of the new lane or the left side of the slow lane depending on their position. The riders on the left side of the slow lane will be in position to be in the right side of the new lane as the slow lane ends.

The reason for keeping riders in both lanes is that it prevents anyone from trying to pass the group on the right hand side as the lane ends. This is a very critical safety feature.

GROUP LEADERS:

The primary responsibility of the Group Leaders is the safety and organization of their team. They make decisions that are critical to everyone riding in their group. They must be aware of the ride capabilities of each Member and must take this into consideration whenever making maneuvers during a ride.

1. Before starting out ensure that everyone in the group is aware of destination, and any scheduled stops along the route. This is in case anyone gets separated that they know where either the next stop is or at least where the final destination is so they are able to meet up with the group again at some point.
2. Before starting out the Group Leader will check with each rider to ensure they are ready to leave. This is done either by riders putting hand on windshield or holding a hand in the air. Once all riders indicate readiness, the Leader will mount his motorcycle and start the ride for their group.
3. When starting out the Leader will accelerate slowly until all motorcycles are in motion so as not to create a "slingshot effect" for the riders near the end.
4. Hand signals are critical for the safety of the group and should be used as much in advance as possible to allow the entire group to see and react in time.
5. When stopping, wait until the Sweep Rider has come to a complete stop and put their foot down (or indicated by coms that they are stopped) before starting again. This allows the entire group time to assess the intersection and make decisions as to when it is safe to proceed through the intersection.
6. Watch for roadside or oncoming hazards and signal group to inform them of hazards or to form single lane in safest column using hand signals.
7. Give as much advance warning as possible of any maneuvers that are required to allow everyone to be well prepared for the move.

SWEEP OR TAIL END CHARLIE:

The primary responsibility of a Sweep or Tail end Charlie is to work closely with the Group Leader to ensure the safety and organization of the group.

1. Ideally the Sweep will have radio communication with the Group Leader, but if this is not possible the Sweep and Group Leader should meet before the ride and discuss what types of hand signals will be used in order to carry out required maneuvers safely.
2. Communication between these two people should be kept to a minimum in order to keep lines of communication open in case of an imminent emergency.
3. The Tail end Charlie will call out to or signal Lead Rider when the group stops to advise that they have come to a complete stop and that the Lead Rider is free to start again whenever it is safe to do so.
4. Watch for issues within the group that might need to be addressed at the next scheduled stop, such as riders making dangerous moves, or not completing maneuvers as per B.C V Riders Handbook. These issues should be addressed at the next scheduled stop.
5. Watch for traffic coming from behind and advise group Leader when a vehicle is going to pass the group whether on a single or double lane.
6. Watch for any vehicles approaching the group from behind that may prove to be a hazard to the group and pass along to the Lead Rider. This includes vehicles closing at a high rate of speed or those driving aggressively or erratically.
7. When the group is leaving a stop location that has a hazardous entrance to the road due to limited visibility or a difficult grade, the Sweep will be responsible to ensure the rest of the group can safely enter the intersection. This will be accomplished by the sweep riding to the intersection first, parking their motorcycle in a safe location clear of oncoming traffic, then by means of hand signals indicate to each rider as they approach whether or not it is safe to enter the road. Once the last rider has safely entered the road the Sweep will mount his motorcycle again and when safe to do so, enter the road themselves and take up their normal position.