

Walking Patrol Unit

426.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Olympia Police Department has established the Walking Patrol Unit for the purpose of enhancing patrol efforts in the community. On foot and bicycle patrol has been shown to be an effective way to increase member 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 Unit.

426.2 POLICY

Patrol bicycles may be used for regular patrol duty, traffic enforcement, parking control, or special events by officers trained in the use of the patrol bicycle. 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 trained officers shall be coordinated through the Walking Patrol Unit supervisor or the Shift Sergeant.

426.3 WALKING PATROL UNIT SUPERVISOR

The Walking Patrol Unit supervisor will be selected from the rank of sergeant by the Operations Division Chief or their designee.

The Walking Patrol Unit supervisor or their designee shall have responsibility for the following:

- (a) Organizing periodic bicycle patrol training.
- (b) Inspecting and maintaining inventory of patrol bicycles and program equipment.
- (c) Scheduling maintenance and repairs.
- (d) Evaluating performance of unit officers.
- (e) Other activities required to maintain the efficient operations of the Walking Patrol Unit.

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 periodic 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.

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426.5 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Officers shall wear the department-approved uniform while operating the department bicycle.

The walking patrol unit uniform consists of the standard short-sleeve uniform shirt or other department-approved shirt with department badge and patches and department-approved bicycle patrol pants or shorts.

Walking patrol officers shall carry the same equipment on the walking patrol uniform as they would on a regular patrol assignment.

426.6 CARE AND USE OF PATROL BICYCLES

Bicycles are considered vehicles and are subject to laws, regulations, and privileges applicable to the operation of vehicles upon the highway (RCW 46.04.670).

Bicycles utilized for uniformed bicycle patrol shall be primarily black or white with a police decal affixed to each side of the crossbar or the bike's saddlebag. Every such bicycle shall be equipped with front lights and rear reflectors or lights, and brakes satisfying the requirements of RCW 46.61.780.

Bicycles utilized for uniformed bicycle patrol shall be equipped with a rear rack and/or saddle bags sufficient to carry all necessary equipment to handle routine patrol calls.

Walking patrol officers shall conduct an inspection of the bicycle and equipment prior to use during the shift 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).

If a needed repair is beyond the ability of the walking patrol officer, the bicycle should be marked out of service and transported to an approved technician for repair.

Each bicycle should have scheduled maintenance once yearly to be performed by a department-approved repair shop/technician.

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

Officers shall not modify the patrol bicycle, remove, modify, or add components except with the expressed approval of the walking patrol 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 should be properly secured when not in the officer's immediate presence.

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426.7 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

Officers must operate the bicycle in compliance with applicable laws 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/or tactical considerations. Officers must use caution and care when operating the bicycle without lighting equipment.

It shall be the policy of this department that all other bicycle operation shall be in compliance with the rules of the road except when responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator.