



Pueblo County Sheriff's Office <b>General Order</b> Policies and Procedures Manual	
Pueblo County Sheriff's Office <b>Section 8</b>	
Part 1a	Subject: Mounted Patrol Unit
Related CALEA Standards: 41.1.4	

### **Authority**

This policy is issued pursuant to Sheriff David J. Lucero's in which authority to manage and direct all activities connected with the Mounted Patrol Unit program is delegated to the appointed mounted patrol supervisor.

### **PURPOSE**

To provide policy and guidelines for the use and deployment of the Mounted Patrol Police Horse Unit.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

#### **APPREHENSION**

Any occasion in which the use of a Mounted Police Horse results in the apprehension of a suspect/individual. Apprehension is further manifested by the following sub categories:

#### **Announcement only**

Verbal warning by law enforcement personnel advising the suspect(s) of the intended deployment of an equine, thereby stopping the suspect's actions or flight.

#### **Resulting in injury**

As with any physical force used to apprehend or detain a suspect, potential for injury is possible.

#### **FLEEING SUSPECTS**

When used to overtake a fleeing suspect, or suspect who attempts to flee.

#### **CROWDS**

To open or move a hostile or passive-resistive crowd.

#### **APPREHEND OR ARREST**

By directing physical commands from the Mounted Patrol Unit Deputy for the Mounted Police Horse to press against a subject in order to hold the suspect/individual in place. This may be done by utilizing a stationary object such as a fence or wall, or with the assistance of another Mounted Police Horse.

#### **AUXILIARY MOUNTED PATROL UNIT DEPUTY**

A deputy is assigned to the Mounted Patrol Unit as a secondary duty.

#### **DEPLOYMENT**

Any situation where the Mounted Patrol Unit Deputy uses his/her Mounted Police Horse to aid in the resolution of any law enforcement incident, directed patrol of any given area, special event coverage, public presentation or general patrol practices. The specific job may be considered a deployment even if it does not subsequently end with the apprehension of a suspect/individual or retrieval of evidence.

#### **FULL-TIME MOUNTED PATROL UNIT DEPUTY**

Deputies who are assigned to the Mounted Patrol Unit as a primary duty.

#### **MOUNTED PATROL UNIT DEPUTY**

A trained deputy assigned to the Mounted Patrol Unit in a full time capacity.

## **MOUNTED POLICE HORSE**

Equines (horses) used by the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office.

## **MOUNTED PATROL UNIT SUPERVISOR:**

The Supervisor assigned to supervising the deputies; as well as the functions of the Mounted Patrol Unit.

## **MOUNTED POSSE MEMBER**

A citizen who volunteers their self and horse to participate in the PCSO Mounted Unit functions such as parades, demonstrations, search and rescue, etc. A Mounted Posse member also attends required training with their horse, same as deputies, provided by the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office and other agencies to enhance and prove their riding skills and train their horse in different techniques.

## **POLICY**

It is the policy of the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office to operate a Mounted Patrol Unit utilizing nationally recognized standards of training and established operational procedures.

## **PROCEDURES:**

Operational Procedures <41.1.4 a>

Mounted Patrol Unit deputy's deployment of their Mounted Police Horse shall be objectively reasonable under the facts and circumstances confronting him/her.

The Mounted Patrol Unit deputy must evaluate the following factors, taking into consideration the safety of deputies, citizens, and the suspect/individual, prior to deployment of the Mounted Police Horse.

- The severity of the crime(s)
- Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the deputies or others
- Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight
- Based upon the totality of the circumstances, the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy will have the discretion of deploying the Mounted Police Horse.

Operational Control / Conflict of Orders – If present, the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will assume operational control of any situation requiring the deployment of Mounted Police horses.

If the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor is not present and a Mounted Patrol Unit deputy is requested by another supervisor to deploy his/her Mounted Police Horse in a manner that the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy feels is inappropriate, the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy will inform the supervisor of this and state the reason for his/her concern.

If the supervisor allows the order to stand, the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy will do his/her best to comply with the order. The supervisor issuing the order will assume complete responsibility for the decision. Under no circumstance will a Mounted Patrol Unit deputy comply with an order that he/she knows to be illegal or violates the civil rights of any individual, specifically prohibitions against excessive force.

## **Mounted police horse, mounted patrol unit deputy and Deputy/citizen safety**

Mounted Police Horses are trained to disregard normal noises, activities, and contact. However, the Mounted Police Horse cannot always distinguish between a real or perceived threat. If a threat is perceived by a Mounted Police Horse, they may instinctively strike or kick out but will generally engage their "flight" response.

Mounted Patrol Unit deputies must instruct other law enforcement officers and citizens in general, to refrain from making any aggressive or predatory type movements around the Mounted Police Horse.

The Mounted Patrol Unit deputy has the ability to direct a Mounted Police Horse to defend or protect any other person that the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy determines is in need of protection.

## **Crowd control**

It must be shown that the use of uniformed deputies would likely either escalate a crowd's negative actions or increase the risk of hazard to the deputies and the crowd. Prior to deploying the Mounted Police Horse, it should be determined that conventional methods would not produce the desired effect.

1. In all crowd control situations, uniformed deputies will “stack and follow” at a reasonable distance behind the Mounted Police Horse teams. This will be done to help protect the Mounted Unit and/or deputies from any person(s) who slip past them.
2. Mounted Patrol Unit deputies, at a minimum, should work in teams of two (2), and clear one (1) area at a time.
3. Uniformed deputies will stay behind a line formed by the Mounted Patrol Unit.
4. Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will continue to verbally warn the crowd participants to leave as the Mounted Police horses continue to advance.
5. The crowd must always be given an escape route and Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will move the crowd in that direction. If no exit exists or the route becomes closed, the Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will stop advancing.
6. Mounted Police Horses will work in conjunction with the Canine Unit and the SWAT/STAT teams for crowd control.
7. If there is immediate danger to citizens or deputies, the Mounted Police horses may be used as a defensive tool to protect citizens or deputies.

### **Equipment**

Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will maintain all equipment issued by the Mounted Patrol Unit. Any equipment that needs to be repaired will be reported to the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor.

Certain equipment that is used by the Mounted Patrol Unit in order to assist the deputies in their mission, or to protect them and the Mounted Police Horse, and is not considered a standard duty uniform. These items /uniforms will be provided by the Sheriff's Office. The special equipment items include, but are not limited to, the following: <41.1.4 d>

- Saddle pad and cover
- Saddle bags
- Headstall, reins, and breast collar
- Spurs
- Saddle length rain slicker
- Potable water canteen
- Reflective leg wraps
- Fencing tool, Multi tool pliers
- GPS hand held system
- Entrenching tool
- Rifle scabbard
- Whistle

### **Training <41.1.4 b>**

All training will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines, training practices and measures of the Mounted Patrol Unit trainer.

The Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will be responsible for seeing that proper training is given to each Mounted Patrol Unit deputy and Mounted Police Horse and that the training is properly documented.

Each Mounted Patrol Unit deputy must successfully complete a minimum 40 hour mounted training course. <41.1.4 b>

By the end of each year, monthly training sessions for the following year will be scheduled into the Mounted Patrol Unit calendar. Each Mounted Patrol Unit deputy shall be required to attend a minimum of eight (8) monthly training sessions. Failure to do so may result in loss of privileges until the appropriate amount of training time has been completed. This may be augmented with patrol shifts or specialized events alongside the Mounted Patrol Unit trainer, at the discretion of the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor. Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will follow the training directives of the Mounted Patrol Unit trainer and Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the Mounted Patrol Unit trainer to ensure each Mounted Police Horse meets the standards of training that are set forth. A deployment may be considered as training. Each training exercise, whether conducted in a sterile environment or in the field, shall be documented in a log individualized for each Mounted Police Horse. Each Mounted Patrol Unit deputy is responsible for completing the appropriate documentation and providing the documentation to the Mounted Patrol Unit trainer following each deployment or training.

Mounted Police horses will be consistently tested and monitored for any problem or activity, which becomes uniform in the behavior of the Mounted Police Horse. When issues are noted, particularly those which are contrary to the safe use of that animal, the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor, in concurrence with the Mounted Patrol Unit trainer, will evaluate the deficiency and determine if the Mounted Police Horse should remain in service until the problem is corrected.

The Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor and trainer will have the responsibility and authority to remove the animal from service until such time as the deficiency is corrected, if deemed necessary. If an animal is removed from service for any reason, the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will complete a memorandum detailing the reason(s) and forward a copy to the Sheriff. A copy will also be placed in the affected animal's file.

### **Records**

Mounted Patrol Unit deputies are required to complete forms on expected tasks and accurately evaluate the animal's performance based on a predetermined standard.

#### **Monthly Training:**

General monthly training may include, but not limited to the following:

- a) Desensitization training
- b) Standard gaits
- c) Side-pass, backing and flexion
- d) Retention
- e) Crowd control

Individual Mounted Police Horse documentation shall be kept in the Training Division. The documentation will contain the animal's official papers, training records, medical records, and copies of offense/incident reports and supplements recording apprehensions and other pertinent information. The Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will be responsible for maintaining statistics related to the Mounted Patrol Unit's performance.

### **Working Hours**

Working hours will normally be an eight (8) hour shift. The Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will determine hours and regular days off. The Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will adjust their schedules as necessary to accomplish a planned operation. Mounted Patrol Unit deputies may be subject to call out for searches, crowd issues or surveillance purposes. For Mounted Patrol Unit deputies, prior notification to the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor shall be made prior to being unavailable for assignment. The needs of the Sheriff's Office will dictate the need for shift times and will have priority over days off and vacation/holiday leave.

### **Call Outs**

Mounted Unit Patrol deputies may be subject to call out on a 24 hour, 365 days per year basis. Only by notifying the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor will the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy be allowed to deviate from this plan.

### **SWAT and STAT Team Assistance**

Deputies assigned to the Mounted Patrol Unit may augment SWAT and STAT deputies as needed. As such, they will adhere to the SWAT and STAT team operations plans.

### **Search and Rescue Assistance**

Deputies assigned to the Mounted Patrol Unit may supplement patrol deputies and the ESB Search and Rescue Team to assist in locating a missing person. The mounted unit can be effective in locating persons and are a resource depending on the terrain to be covered.

Mounted Patrol may be activated through the communications center by contacting the unit supervisor.

### **General Rules of the Mounted Unit**

- Mounted Patrol Unit deputies are accountable for the actions of their Mounted Police Horse.
- Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will not discipline their Mounted Police Horse in public view.

- The integrity and reputation of the Sheriff's Office and Mounted Patrol Unit is imperative. A police horse is a high visibility tool and attracts many civilians. Mounted Patrol Unit deputies need to keep this in mind and use care to act accordingly when in public view.
- Any injuries caused by a Mounted Police Horse will be reported to the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor without delay, and the Supervisor will investigate each incident.
- When a Mounted Patrol Unit deputy is away from the horse trailer and the Mounted Police Horse is loaded, he/she will ensure the Mounted Police Horse has proper ventilation for the given weather conditions, and that the horse trailer is properly secured.
- Requests for Mounted Police Horse demonstrations or special appearances will be coordinated through the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor.
- If the Mounted Police Horse is hobbled or tied, the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy will stay close enough to intervene if the Mounted Police Horse becomes entangled, harassed by other animals or approached by citizens.
- The uniform worn by the Mounted Patrol Unit deputy will be in accordance with Sheriff's Office policy. All Mounted Patrol Unit deputies will wear a Sheriff's Office approved uniform as their normal duty uniform. Special details or weather conditions may dictate the wearing of "soft" attire or special warm weather clothing as approved by the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor. When in training or when cleaning the barn or trailer, the Mounted Unit Patrol deputies may wear appropriate civilian attire.

### **Special Details**

It is common for Mounted Patrol Unit deputy to be assigned special details or presentations. In order to maintain unit coordination and scheduling integrity, all requests will be forwarded to the Mounted Patrol Unit Supervisor or Sheriff.

### **Horse/Equine Care**

Each deputy / posse member of the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office Mounted Patrol Unit owns their own horse and is responsible for the care, such as feed, veterinarian bills, etc. <41.1.4 c> The deputy / posse member will maintain their horse in a manner which brings credit and reflects in a positive manner on the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office.



By Order Of the Sheriff