



Chapter #4029

**Road Captains
Manual**



CONGRATULATIONS ROAD CAPTAINS!

You have just volunteered for the most important, challenging and rewarding positions within the Chapter. Once you have been appointed or elected as a Road Captain, you will have joined a very special team that will help plan, organize, and execute chapter rides. The following guidelines have been developed to give you a basic understanding of the responsibilities and recommended qualifications expected of Road Captains, and the methods employed to help ensure everyone's safe return home after an enjoyable ride

RIDING, IT'S WHAT WE DO!



Road Captain's Manual

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Section 1	Objectives
Section 2	Qualifications
Section 3	Road Captain Responsibilities
	3.1	Road Captain
	3.2	Sweep
Section 4	.....	Road Captain Safety Equipment
	4.1	First Aid Kit
	4.2	Communication Kit
Section 5	.....	Meeting Place and Time
Section 6	.....	Riding Formations
Section 7	.....	Hand Signals
Section 8	.....	Pre-Ride Briefing
Section 9	.....	Emergencies
Section 10	.....	Accidents
Section 11	.....	Lead and Sweep Road Captains
Attachment	.....	Chapter Ride Guide

1. Objectives

The Mission of our Chapter is to Ride & Have Fun. The Road Captain plays a critical role in accomplishing this mission by making every effort to assist with the safety of our members and guests on Chapter rides.

As Road Captain, you have three basic objectives:

1. Assist with the safety and welfare of all individuals within the group, and any surrounding motorists or pedestrians.
2. Lead the group to its destination in a well-organized, disciplined, and safe manner.
3. Avoid hazardous situations.

2. Qualifications

1. Maintain a current and valid driver's license with an "M" endorsement.
2. Maintain current and valid motorcycle insurance.
3. Attend Group Rider Orientation and Road Captain Training administered by the Head Road Captain and/or Safety Officer.
4. Recommend completing a safety class such as: MSF Advanced, OHP Safe Rider, or Edmond's Motorcycle Survival School.
5. Tact and understanding of people should be a high priority. Remember, you were once a new rider. Deal with problems and issues as you would want to be treated.

3. Road Captain Responsibilities

The Head Road Captain will maintain a roster of Qualified and Proficient Road Captains and will designate mentors to aid in training and recruiting new Road Captain Candidates. The Road Captains will meet as early as possible to plan the ride calendar for the upcoming riding season. Additionally, Road Captains will usually meet semi-annually with the Head Road Captain to discuss any necessary ride calendar adjustments and general Chapter related business. It is expressly noted that Road Captains share no responsibility or liability for actions of others that may be deemed irresponsible or occur due to inadequate rider skills.

3.1. Road Captain

A Road Captain must be Qualified and Proficient to lead a Chapter ride and:

1. Is responsible for planning the ride including, pre-riding the route, destination, and other pertinent information.
2. Is responsible for ensuring that all release forms are completed and signed for the ride.
3. Is expected to lead a group of riders in a safe manner until the final destination has been reached.
4. Will make sure a Sweep is assigned. If no other Road Captains are available, the sweep shall be selected at the discretion of the Road Captain.

5. At the discretion of the Road Captain, he or she may designate and assign additional Road Captains and Sweeps for the ride.
6. Will conduct the pre-ride briefing for all riders.
7. May change the route as actual road and/or weather conditions dictate, or may cancel the ride when necessary.
8. Will instruct any rider to ride in a specific position within the group, or to leave the group entirely for reasons of misconduct, disorderly or unsafe riding, or for faulty and unsafe equipment, or any reason deemed necessary by Road Captain.
9. Drinking and Driving Never Mix. This is especially true when participating in a group ride. Don't allow an intoxicated person to join a group ride.
10. Should bring a list of Road Captains numbers and a cell phone to stay in touch with the other Road Captains or to call 911.
11. Will lead at a pace that is appropriate for the riding abilities of the group, obeying all traffic laws.
12. Must help Plan, Brief, Lead or Sweep a minimum of two (2) rides within a riding season, and attend a minimum of one (1) Road Captain meetings/training sessions during the year to maintain their proficiency as Road Captain. Extenuating circumstances may grant exceptions to this rule.
13. As soon as practical, following an accident/incident, the Road Captain shall notify the Head Road Captain(s), Director, and Assistant Director(s) of the circumstances of the event.

3.2. Sweep

1. Will be observant of any hazardous conditions or conduct, take immediate corrective action as appropriate, and inform the Road Captain at the earliest safe opportunity.
2. In the event the group becomes split and in the absence of a Road Captain, the Sweep will use his or her best judgment to determine in which position (Lead or Sweep) to ride. Consideration will be given to the experience of the group:
 - a. is someone else available that can assume either position,
 - b. how safely the Sweep could move into the Lead position,
 - c. how far apart the two groups are, and
 - d. how long it would be before they could rejoin.
3. Suggested to carry a basic first aid kit to the ride.
4. Suggested to carry a basic tool kit to the ride.
5. Will carry a cell phone in order to stay in touch with the other Road Captains or to call 911.

4. Road Captain Safety Equipment

4.1. First Aid Kit

It is suggested all Road Captains carry a basic first aid kit to the ride.

4.2. Communication Kit

Clear and precise communication is critical during the pre-ride briefing as well during any critical incident. The communication kit shall contain, but is not limited to, the following information and documents.

1. The Pre-Ride checklist.
2. Accident report forms.
3. Camera.
4. List of Road Captains cellular telephone numbers.
5. The HOG Road-Side Assistance Number (888-443-5896).

5. Meeting Place and Time

The Road Captain will determine the meeting place and time for each ride. Local rides will normally meet and depart from Harley Davidson World or Iron Nation Harley Davidson. All of the Road Captains for each ride will meet at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the ride to discuss ride specifics. Any Chapter member(s) can request rides; however, it is the responsibility of a Road Captain to facilitate and coordinate all aspects of rides.

Local rides with multiple groups going to the same location should use the same route used by the planning Road Captain. The planning Road Captain will establish the appropriate departure times for each group to assure the integrity of the smaller group concept.

Out of town overnight trips can have more than one ride plan, which may involve multiple Road Captains going to the same final destination. Overnight ride meeting locations will be pre-determined by the Road Captain planning the ride. Each Road Captain will lead their group as one ride and will play an integral role with the ride planning and related pertinent information for their ride.

6. Riding Formations

The basic formation for Chapter rides is normally the staggered formation. Environmental conditions will dictate when the Road Captain places the group in a single file formation. Environmental considerations may include, but are not limited to:

1. Road width.
2. Presence of frequent or tight curves.
3. Road conditions (construction, sand or gravel, potholes, etc.).
4. Weather.

7. Hand Signals

Hand signals will be used to maneuver the group, change formation or point out hazards.

Hand signals should be given in a timely manner. Not so early that they are meaningless, and not so late that they become unnecessary.

Normally, the Road Captain will initiate all hand signals with the exception of pointing out hazards. Any rider in the group, in any position, upon becoming aware of a hazard, should point out the hazard to all riders that follow.

When the Road Captain issues a hand signal, he or she shall hold the hand signal for sufficient time to alert the riders behind the Road Captain of an important instruction/notification. Each subsequent rider will maintain the hand signal until the rider behind acknowledges receipt by also performing the hand signal. The Sweep will perform the hand signal to acknowledge receipt to the rider in front of the Sweep.

CAUTION: DO NOT MAINTAIN OR PERFORM ANY HAND SIGNAL IF SAFETY REQUIRES TWO HANDS ON YOUR HANDLEBARS

8. Pre-ride Briefing

Approximately ten (10) minutes prior to ride departure time, the Road Captain will conduct a briefing for the entire group. During this briefing the Road Captain will review the route to the final destination, planned stops as applicable, procedure for return ride (i.e. on your own, organized groups, and routes home if needed) and if necessary, break the riders into groups for safety. The Road Captain shall conduct the pre-ride brief utilizing the checklist. The briefing should be done as expeditiously as possible. The following talking points should be covered prior to every ride.

1. Introduce yourself and Sweep. Encourage participants to give feedback at end of ride.
2. Determine if there are any first time group riders and encourage them to ride at the rear of the group.
3. Hand signals - Hand signals will be used to maneuver the group, change formation or point out hazards. (See Chapter Hand Signals Attachment).
4. Staggered Riding
 - a. One (1) second interval minimum between you and the rider in the alternate left or right position in front of you.
 - b. Two (2) second interval minimum between you and the rider directly in front of you.
 - c. Trikes should keep a minimum of two (2) seconds between them and the closest bike in front of them.
 - d. No crossover to fill the gap of alternating lane positions.
 - e. At stops, double up, and then return to normal staggered formation.
 - f. For lane changes, pass hand signal back and wait for Road Captain to enter another lane, each rider is ultimately responsible for their own safety. If possible, on multiple lane highways, the Sweep should secure the lane. **NO RIGHT TURN ON RED** during formation riding.

- g. Passing traffic on two-lane should be done single-file, use your own judgment. The Road Captain in the passing lane indicates no oncoming traffic. Return to your own lane and proper formation as soon as possible. **Warning;** Passing may only be done where legal to do so!
5. Brief the route, planned stops, and approximate distance.
6. Does anyone have any medical condition(s) the Road Captains should be aware of?
7. Does everyone have fuel?
8. Leave on time! Some participants may have come to the ride having a deadline to make later in the day and have planned for it based on starting the ride on time.

9. Emergencies

In the event of an emergency requiring a stop, observe the following procedures so that the emergency may be resolved in the safest manner possible. **We do not want a group of motorcycles on the side of the road in an unsafe manner under any circumstance.**

1. **Problem bike stops. All others continue.** If a bike or rider problem requires a stop, the rider should signal and stop in as safe a place as possible, preferably well off the road. All other bikes are to continue with the Lead Road Captain to avoid having a group of bikes on the side of the road.
2. **Only the Sweep Road Captain stops to help.** It is the Sweep Road Captains responsibility to stop and render assistance to the problem bike.
3. **Lead Road Captain leads the group to a safe location.** If the Lead Road Captain deems it necessary to check on the problem, he will stop the group at a safe place and call the Sweep Road Captain to determine what action needs to be taken or send someone back to check out the problem.

10. Accidents

In the event of an accident, the Road Captains will work together to accomplish the following:

The Sweep

1. Will stop to assess the situation and/or:
2. Ensure all other riders continue with the planned route or stops in a safe location clearing the area for EMS and investigating officials. If injury is involved, immediately contact 911 for an Ambulance.
3. Direct traffic away from incident/accident and administer first aid to any injured parties, Remember, DO NOT MOVE an injured person or remove their helmet, this should be done by trained emergency response personnel. Wait for emergency personnel to move the injured person(s) and determine if removal of helmet is necessary.
4. Interview witnesses and write down their information i.e. name, address, telephone number and what they witnessed. Take photographs to accurately document the

scene. Obtain a collision report case number from investigating official and their name.

5. After the scene is secured, notify the HOG Director at the first opportunity with details. Should the Director be unavailable, contact the Assistant Director(s). Notification will be made by telephone voice contact.
6. Remain with the disabled vehicle to provide needed assistance as long as necessary, and you may be asked to coordinate the transport of the vehicle to a repair facility and assist the rider with transportation if needed.

Forward the completed report to our Secretary as soon as possible.

The Road Captain

1. Will continue to either the next planned stop, or to a safe location that will accommodate the remainder of the group.
2. Contact the Sweep and obtain the information regarding the accident/breakdown.
3. Determine what action to take after discussing the situation with the Sweep.

11. Lead and Sweep Road Captains

While a motorcycle group is highly dependent upon the skills and judgment of the Lead, in many ways they are more dependent on the Sweep for successfully arriving at their destination. Let's discuss the Sweep's obvious role during group lane changing maneuvers. Almost always, the Lead initiates a lane change, but there are times when the Sweep should do so. For example, if the group is traveling on a freeway and the Sweep observes that an 18-wheeler is harassing the group (tailgating or honking its horn), the proper response of the Sweep is to increase the distance between himself and the next bike in front of him and to radio ahead to the Lead recommending an immediate lane change to the right, if possible, and why.

If the Lead requests a lane change, the Sweep must first determine that it is safe to do so. If it is not, he must tell the Lead why he is unwilling or cannot do so at this time. That is, the Sweep determines if and when a lane change that is requested by the Lead is to happen. **Important!** The proper response from the Sweep to a request to obtain a new lane for the group should ALWAYS be: "Stand By". To say something like "OK" can be confused by some to mean the lane has been obtained and it is time to move over. It is NOT safe to change lanes until the Sweep subsequently says "The lane has been secured - following the red car", or something to that effect. If the Sweep denies the request for a lane change he has already told the Lead (and all listeners) to "Stand By" and so merely then updates that advisory with why the request is denied.

Assuming it is safe to change lanes, the Sweep moves into the requested lane and signals the Lead that it has been obtained. He must also advise as to the traffic situation as it relates to the lane change.

Additional responsibilities of the Sweep: checking that all bikes have raised their side stands when the group begins its ride; assisting any member that is forced to leave the group for mechanical, medical, or personal reasons (lost confidence, for example); observing the riding performance of all of the other bikes to determine if there might be a particular rider who is mismatched in terms of riding skills compared to the group; watching for any unsafe driving habits of individual riders or the group at large; "closing the door" in situations where a lane is about to be lost; and to watch and report any lighting, tire or luggage problems with any of the bikes in the group.

Being at the back of the group, the Sweep is in the ideal position to perform these responsibilities and having these responsibilities requires that the Sweep is best prepared to honor them. The Sweep should have a first aid kit, the ability to turn on warning lights, and reliable communications.

If a member has failed to raise his kickstand, a quick radio broadcast by the Sweep gets that problem fixed before the group moves at all.

When the group makes a stop, the Sweep sees all the stop lights and will report any that are failing. He does the same if he sees failing turn indicators (or those that are left on). Luggage that has slipped, trunk or bags that are left open or have their latches spring open, will be observed and reported by an alert Sweep. (These are things that each member of the group should watch for on behalf of all the bikes ahead of them).

If a bike must leave the group for any reason, it's the Sweep that must determine if assistance is required and to provide it, if necessary. If a member of the group must stop at the side of the road, the Sweep will stop with them, communicating the situation to the Lead (so that a new Sweep can be designated and the group can find a safe place to pull over). If a major problem exists the Sweep radios or calls ahead and asks the Lead to furnish whatever additional assistance is required.

The Lead and Sweep are a team designated by the group to conduct them safely to their destination. These are not symbolic positions. They require maturity, experience, training, cooperation, good communications, and good judgment. Just remember:

- All traffic laws will be obeyed at all times.
- We ride in staggered formation whenever possible.
- YOU are responsible for your own safety.
- Road Captains will make all decisions concerning the route, speed, and lane of travel.
- Be attentive to the group and encourage them to let you know if they have any needs or concerns.

The Primary Goal of our Chapter is to Ride Safe and Have Fun!