



# CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



## Police Motorcycles

Eff. Date 02/03/2025

### Purpose

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to establish guidelines for the use of the motorcycle and related equipment, including its use as an emergency vehicle in accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 346.03, and to promote the safety of officers and the public.

### Procedure

#### AUTHORIZATION

Members of the Madison Police Department (MPD) are authorized to operate an MPD motorcycle for enforcement purposes if they possess a valid driver's license endorsed for motorcycle operation and after they have successfully completed an authorized police motorcycle operators training course. Motorcycle operators must attend and successfully complete annual motorcycle in-service training to maintain certification.

#### USE OF MOTORCYCLES

Police motorcycles are fully marked Authorized Emergency Vehicles (AEV). They are assigned to the Traffic Enforcement Safety Team (TEST), used primarily for traffic enforcement, community outreach and education, and special events. Motor officers may assist with patrol calls or as back-up to other officers; should not be used for general patrol duties unless in response to a true emergency. This does not preclude the use of a motorcycle in special assignments when approved by a supervisor. The officer assigned to a motorcycle shall use due regard when making a decision to respond to emergency calls for service in consideration of the unique characteristics of the motorcycle.

#### EMERGENCY OPERATION OF POLICE MOTORCYCLE

Police motorcycle operators shall operate the motorcycle in accordance with the provisions of Wisconsin State Statute 346.03, as well as the MPD Emergency Vehicle Operation Guidelines SOP.

In all cases, when an officer elects to exercise the exemptions provided to police vehicles under Wisconsin State Statute operators must exercise due regard.

#### VEHICLE PURSUITS

Motorcycles are not intended to be, nor should they be considered, pursuit vehicles. MPD Police motorcycles are authorized to be involved in pursuits subject to the following restrictions:

- Motor Officers shall only engage in a vehicle pursuit when the officer has probable cause to believe that any person in the vehicle has committed (or attempted to commit) a felony involving the use (or threatened use) of force and a high probability exists that the suspect, if not immediately apprehended, may cause death or great bodily harm to another. Officers may terminate and discontinue a pursuit when the act of pursuit, in and of itself, creates an unreasonable danger of death or great bodily harm to the public, officers, or the suspect.
- Motorcycles engaged in a pursuit shall drive with due regard and follow the MPD Emergency Vehicle Operation Guidelines SOP.
- Due to the increased vulnerability to the operator of a police motorcycle, any pursuit initiated by the motorcycle operator shall be taken over by a marked squad as soon as possible.

- A motorcycle officer who has turned over the primary pursuit to a marked squad shall not continue to be involved in the pursuit unless otherwise directed by the supervisor monitoring the pursuit.

## MOTORCYCLE INSPECTION

At the start of their tour of duty, motorcycle operators shall inspect the motorcycle for cleanliness and proper operation. Any deficiencies should be corrected prior to operation.

## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

All operators of police motorcycles shall use the following safety equipment:

1. Department of Transportation (DOT) and MPD approved safety helmet
2. Eye protection
3. Approved boots
4. Motor-issued body worn camera (BWC)

## MOTOR-ISSUED BODY WORN CAMERAS

A BWC will be assigned to each Motor Officer. Motor Officers will utilize the BWC assigned to the respective motor that is assigned to them, or that they might be operating on a temporary basis.

BWCs are to be used when the Motor Officer is utilizing an MPD motorcycle as the Motor Officer's assigned vehicle for the shift or assignment, or as directed by a supervisor.

At the beginning of each shift or assignment, Motor Officers utilizing a BWC for their shift will ensure the BWC equipment is functioning properly by completing the follow procedures:

- Verifying the unit has uploaded prior shift/assignment files and that the unit is charged for the upcoming shift
- Mounting the BWC in a position where it can effectively record video and audio when activated throughout an officer's shift

At the conclusion of each shift or assignment, Motor Officers utilizing a BWC for their shift will upload any/all video captured during the previous shift by completing the follow procedures:

- Docking the BWC in a bank or individual upload/charging cradle.
- Officers shall ensure that the "Classify Tag" and "Case File Number" fields of the recording window are filled out properly for each recording, within 48 hours of the file upload or as soon as practicable. If there is no case number associated with the recording, officer shall type their respective pd+initials in the Case File Field. Officers should enter any additional information (e.g., license plate, name, suspect information, etc.) deemed pertinent to the investigation in the "Note" field. The classification tag, case file number, and additional information entered by the officer will serve as the initial selection for the duration of the video retention of each video recording.

Motor Officers may operate motorcycles when their assigned BWC is not functioning or not available.

- If problems with the BWC system are identified, motor officers are required to report the issue to Information Management and Technology (IMAT) by calling the IMAT support line Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm at 608-261-9655 or by sending an email containing the BWC number and description of the problem to the IMAT support email address, [imat@cityofmadison.com](mailto:imat@cityofmadison.com).

Motor Officers are not required to operate BWC during specialty assignments such as escorts.

## OPERATION OF MOTOR-ASSIGNED BWCs

- 1) Motor Officers should activate and record (which includes a 30-second pre-event) the following:

- a. All traffic stops
  - b. All interviews as required by Wisconsin State Statutes when other established recording facilities are not available, practical, or preferred
  - c. When an officer attempts to place an individual into physical custody (either criminal or protective) when safe to do so
  - d. When approaching an individual the officer reasonably anticipates may be taken into custody when safe to do so
- 2) BWCs may also be utilized to record any other official police contacts or actions beyond those listed in point #1 above.
  - 3) Officers should make reasonable efforts to position the BWC to accurately capture events.
  - 4) Once initiated, video and audio recordings should remain activated until the incident or event has concluded or until deactivation is permissible. The conclusion of an incident or event has occurred when any arrest(s) related to the incident have been made and arrestee(s) have been transported, after a stopped motor vehicle driver is released from a traffic stop, or when no further law enforcement action is likely to occur related to the incident or event. Deactivation of video and audio recordings prior to the conclusion of the incident or event is permissible:
    - a. When an officer is not directly involved in activity related to the incident or event (i.e., blocking traffic at a position not near the scene of an incident); officers not directly involved in the incident or event do not need to complete a report if the purpose is to just document the cessation of their recording;
    - b. When an officer reasonably believes there is no evidentiary value in collecting further video and audio; for transparency reasons, officers shall document in a report or in call notes the assessment for the cessation of any recording, or
    - c. When the incident or event is of such duration that recording needs to be deactivated to conserve power or storage capacity of the BWC and the officer is not directly involved in activity relating to the incident or event (i.e., blocking traffic at a position not near the scene of an incident).
  - 5) Officers may temporarily mute audio recording of conversations between police personnel for administrative reasons including, but not limited to, the following:
    - a. Employee to employee training (e.g., during Field Training, incident debriefings, etc.);
    - b. Officer to supervisor discussions about incident dispositions and/or charging decisions;
    - c. Employee to employee discussions involving response strategy or tactics; or
    - d. Personal conversations unrelated to the incident or event being investigated.
  - 6) Reasons for any intentional interruptions/microphone muting during video recordings shall be audibly noted prior to the muting and documented within official reports, narrative sections of citations, or in call notes. After the purpose of a temporary mute of an audio recording has concluded, officers shall reactivate the audio recording.

## VIDEO TRANSFER AND DOCUMENTATION

Video recording(s) shall be transferred at least once during the course of each work shift or assignment during which the officer wore a BWC. Exceptions to this must be approved by the Officer in Charge (OIC) or other supervisor. Transfer of video from BWC units shall be accomplished by USB wired transfer at workstations at the designated motor officer assignment locations (East, Midtown, and South Police District stations) or via bank or individual cradle.

Officers should make every attempt to transfer video recording(s) deemed to be evidence prior to the end of their shift. If the video transfer process requires the employee to be on overtime, the officer shall obtain prior approval for the overtime from a supervisor or from the OIC.

If the video does not transfer or other BWC device issues occur, contact Information Management and Technology (IMAT) through the support line Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm at 608-261-9655 or send an email containing the BWC unit number and description of the problem to the IMAT support email address, [imat@cityofmadison.com](mailto:imat@cityofmadison.com) prior to the end of the employee's shift.

### **MOTOR-ASSIGNED BWC VIDEO MANAGEMENT**

This section will follow the "In-Car Video Management" section as outlined in the MPD "In-Car Video System" SOP.

All Motor-Assigned BWC video system recordings are official police records which are subject to Wisconsin Open Records Law.

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