



*Folsom, CA*  
*Harley Owners Group*  
*Chapter 1787*

*Rider's Guide*

The purpose of the Rider's Guide is for your safety. Procedures and customs in it are based upon the experience of generations of riders who have gone before us. The rules it contains have proven over the years to be effective in maximizing communications between members of the group, assuring that the group member who is having trouble does not get left behind, while still allowing us to have a great time riding our motorcycles.

While the guide may appear to limit individual freedom, you may rest assured that is not its intention. Our sport is risky by its very nature, we understand that and find that risk worth taking. However, no one can enjoy motorcycling if they are injured. We regard each member as a brother or sister, and, like family, we care a great deal about your welfare as well as the welfare of others. There is a mutual sense of responsibility among us, which is expressed in our concern for your well being. Therefore, please study the Rider's Guide and support its application by our Safety Officer and Road Captains. We will all be safer for it.

# *Folsom H.O.G. Chapter # 1787*

## *Riders Guide*

This guide is intended to promote safe riding skill and give general information to riders that are new to group riding. For more detailed information and training, we suggest the MSF Safe Rider course and/or DMV m/c handbook. We also encourage passengers to review this guide and the DMV handbook to increase their riding pleasure.

An important point to remember: **Chapter Rides Are Not Races.** We are not under a deadline to get to our destination. Keep your speed to the posted limits or no faster than the flow of traffic.

### **1. Pre Ride Preparation**

- ❑ Be sure you have a full tank of gas and have checked your oil, tires, lights and chain/belt.
- ❑ All Road captains and the ride leader will have a pre-ride meeting to discuss the route, riding positions, gas, rest, and regrouping stops.
- ❑ The **Safety Officer or Road Captain(s)** may prohibit a rider(s) from riding with the group, or move the rider(s) to the rear of the group, if the rider(s) motorcycle is thought to be unsafe or the rider(s) is/are riding in an unsafe manner.

### **2. Basic Formation**

- ❑ Ride in a safe and close staggered formation, with the lead road captain in the front left side position of the lane. A minimum interval of 2-3 seconds or 2-3 bike lengths should be maintained between you and the motorcycle directly in front of you. (See diagram) Riders that are not comfortable with this interval are encouraged to ride in the rear of the formation. Always ride in single file formation on narrow or winding roads.
- ❑ New or less experienced group riders and slower riders are encouraged to ride at the rear of the formation. This will decrease the pressure to maintain a too-fast pace and will increase their riding pleasure. At least one experienced rider should be with the less experienced riders to observe and ensure they become more confident in their abilities to ride and avoiding any discouragement.
- ❑ We will follow the suggestion of the HOG Road Captain handbook about using the Buddy System. In addition, this chapter will use an odd/even position indicator for riders. The left column of riders will be odd and the right column will be even.
- ❑ If a hole opens in the formation, **DO NOT FILL IT BY CROSSING OVER THE CENTER OF THE LANE IN A STAGGERD FORMATION. EVENS FILL EVEN HOLES, ODDS FILL ODD HOLES.** Riders are encouraged to signal other riders to move ahead to fill a hole, (use the Move Beside Me Hand Signal). The ONLY exception is the rear road captain, who may have to switch from odd to even or vice-versa to maintain a balanced formation.
- ❑ If a rider wishes to leave the ride before it is complete, they must notify the road captain(s).

#### **A. Highway**

- Use a staggered formation with a 2 second interval between riders at speeds up to 50 MPH. Increase the interval to 3 seconds at speeds greater than 50 MPH.
- If there are a large number of riders, break the formation into smaller groups. Each group should have a lead rider (preferably a road captain), appointed before the ride begins.

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### **A. Highway (continued)**

- When vehicle(s) wish to enter or exit the highway in mid-formation, riders should slow and provide an opening to allow the vehicle(s) to safely enter or exit. After the vehicle(s) is through, close the formation.

### **B. City**

- Identify locations that the formation may use to regroup if separations occur while riding through the city.
- **Curb or parking lanes** – Use staggered formation to allow rapid direction changes if other traffic moves away from the curb.
- **Center lanes** – A staggered formation is preferred, but lane sharing may be permitted to decrease the impact on other traffic. Lane sharing should be discussed before the ride begins. If you are not comfortable with lane sharing, you are encouraged to ride in the rear and maintain a staggered formation.

### **C. Stop Signs and Signal Lights**

- Approach all stops in pairs and **make a complete stop**. Then proceed through the intersection when safe. **DO NOT BLOCK AN INTERSECTION** to allow a full group to pass through without stopping.

## **3. Hand Signals**

- ❑ For safety we will use clear and deliberate left hand/arm motions as signals to communicate while riding. We will use the standard hand signals (as defined in the DMV M/C Drivers Handbook) for left, right turns and for slowing/stop. The Rider Ready, used by the MSF, and Move Beside Me signals will be the only right hand/arm signals recognized by this chapter. Signals are defined as follows:
  - Rider Ready – RIGHT arm extended straight up with open palm forward. This signal will be used ONLY when leaving from the beginning of a ride or group stops. (No illustration shown)
  - Close Up The Group – LEFT arm extended straight up with the fist closed. Used to decrease the distance between rider when the formation is spread too long.
  - Form Single File – LEFT arm extended straight up, closed fist with the 1<sup>st</sup> finger extended up.
  - Form Double File (Lane Share) – Left arm extended straight up, closed fist with 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> finger extended.
  - Form Double File (Staggered) – Left arm extended straight up, closed fist with 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> finger extended moving arm left and right.
  - Increase Speed – LEFT arm extended away from the shoulder with forearm pointed up and fist closed. Pump arm in short up-down motion.
  - Move Beside Me – LEFT or RIGHT arm extended down at 45 degree angle, open hand with palm forward, moving rear to front.

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### **Hand Signals (continued)**

- Rest Stop – LEFT arm bent at elbow with open hand placed on back of helmet.
- Pull Off and Regroup – LEFT arm positioned as for a right turn, bend elbow and tap left shoulder.
- Problem with Bike – LEFT arm extended straight up, open hand with palm forward.
- Need Gas – Point to gas tank with LEFT hand, keeping arm extended enough to be visible.

### **4. Drop-off Riders**

- ❑ When there is a chance of riders becoming separated from the main group due to traffic or problems, the use of a drop-off rider as a route guide is recommended.
- ❑ The drop-off rider is the last rider in front and to the right of the rear road captain.
- ❑ If the lead road captain signals for a drop-off rider, the drop-off rider leaves the formation to act as a road guide. Road captains remain in position.
- ❑ The drop-off rider should rejoin the group at the rear of the formation ahead of the rear road captain. When the group stops the drop-off rider may resume their original position in the formation.

### **5. Problems During the Ride**

- ❑ If a rider develops a problem, the rider should signal and move to the right hand side of the road. Following riders should open a space in the formation to allow the disabled rider and buddy rider to exit the group.
- ❑ The rear road captain should assist the disabled rider. After looking at the problem, the buddy rider or rear road captain should ride ahead to signal the lead road captain a problem exists and the group should stop at the next safe parking area. At least one rider should remain with the disabled rider.
- ❑ After correcting the problem, the riders should rejoin the formation at the rear. They may move to their original position at the next planned stop.

### **6. Accidents**

- ❑ Suspend the ride and render aid or assistance. Usually, there is not enough area for all riders to safely stop in one spot. The lead road captain should move all unnecessary riders ahead to a safe parking area and wait for the rear road captain.
- ❑ If the lead riders are unaware of the accident, the buddy rider should ride ahead and signal the lead road captain to pull off and regroup. The safety officer or rear road captain should record and report events at the next officers meeting.
- ❑ After regrouping, determine if riders want to continue the route or reschedule the ride.
- ❑ All road captains should carry a small first-aid kit and water. We recommend that everyone carry a first-aid kit if you have room.