



*Rock N Roll City Cleveland HOG Chapter #5293*

*Group Riding Manual - 2026 Riding Season*

Welcome to the Rock-N-Roll City Cleveland Harley Owners Group! The intent of this group riding manual is to provide the road captains, as well as all those who ride with us, information helpful in promoting a safe group riding environment

Please keep in mind that these guidelines are not intended to restrict your freedom, but rather, to help ensure that we all enjoy the experience and return home safely

This manual cannot encompass every possible set of circumstances and is intended to serve as a basic set of guidelines for **most** situations. We ask each road captain to read and apply these guidelines, using their best judgment. We also ask the road captains to always keep in mind the “**Ride & Have Fun**” philosophy

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## GROUP RIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Maintain your motorcycle and riding equipment to be safe and functional. Follow TCLOCK inspection checklist available at

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YrCKs6w7GIND3RlgoI8TJEYJnmQ5HjMO/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YrCKs6w7GIND3RlgoI8TJEYJnmQ5HjMO/view?usp=share_link)

Start the ride with proper gear, including but not limited to: helmets, gloves, rain gear, sunscreen and sunglasses

**Ride your own ride** and ride with a **safety-first** attitude. The safety of all individuals, whether they are part of the group or not, is of paramount importance to those leading the ride

***Please remember that YOU have the ultimate responsibility for your own personal safety. Always ride within your abilities and that of your machine. Some rides will be more challenging than others and not all are suited for every rider. If you have questions or concerns, please discuss with the road captain prior to the start of the ride***

## ROAD CAPTAIN CHECKLIST

We ask the road captain to be responsible for bringing the following to the ride

- Route map available for all riders (printed and/or digital copy)
- Charged mobile phone
- Road Captain folder which includes additional
  - Liability Waivers: **All non-members**, including a member's spouse, guests, and minors, must complete a liability waiver prior to the start of every chapter ride
  - Chapter Incident Report
  - Emergency Information Form
  - Ride sign-in sheet

## *PLANNING & EXECUTING THE GROUP RIDE*

**All riders in the group** should be provided a copy of the route with noted stops along the way. If some bikes become separated from the group, they can rejoin at the next stop

Pre-riding the route is suggested to avoid day of ride surprises

If you're not out for a scenic ride, plan the most direct route to an event or activity. Interstate highways offer the following advantages:

- All traffic is moving in one direction
- No cross-traffic or traffic lights to split up your group
- When there are three lanes, it is wise to travel in the middle lane. This allows faster traffic to pass and will also allow vehicles to enter/exit the highway more easily

Plan stops to avoid gravel lots and left-hand turns. No one likes gravel, and in a group, it's even less fun. Right-hand turns in and out of stops will help the group stay together

Plan fuel and rest stops at least every 100 miles, or every 1.5 to 2 hours, depending on the ride, so those with smaller tanks and bladders can stay with the group

If you have a large group stopping at a restaurant, call the restaurant far enough in advance to allow them to prepare for a large group

If you expect a particularly large group and it's possible to get a police escort or traffic control at the start/end of a ride or along the route, great! Otherwise, it is a good idea to at least inform the police department of your plans and perhaps drop off a map

## *MEETING PLACE AND DEPARTURE TIME*

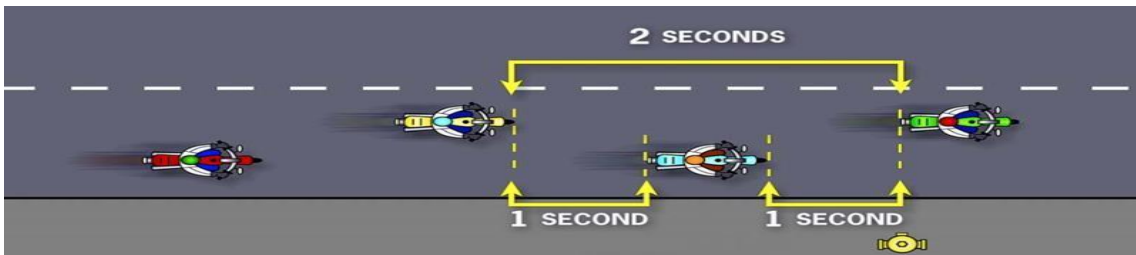
The ride schedule released in March of each riding season will have all the information regarding destination, ride starting points, approximate ride distance, and time of departure for all scheduled rides

Any changes or cancellations of rides will be posted on the chapter Facebook group page and through text messages. We ask that you arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the departure time to attend the rider briefing and with a full tank of gas

Rider briefing will be held just prior to departure to provide details regarding scheduled gas and rest stops, inform the group of the intended route, provide other important information, and review the group riding guidelines; including formations and rules to follow

## RIDING FORMATION, INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS, AND RULES TO FOLLOW

The preferred formation, under good conditions of road, traffic, and weather, will be a double row, staggered, in one traffic lane. The interval should be no less than one second between staggered riders



The front road captain will lead the group, and typically rides just to the left of the center of the lane. Other road captains may be assigned positions within the group, depending on the size of the group, followed by the rear road captain or “sweep”

New members, guests, and any riders with little experience in group riding are asked to position themselves towards the front of the group, just behind the front road captain. Riding near the front is much easier for the new rider as it lessens the impact of the “rubber band” effect

We ask the riders on trikes line up on the right side of the formation. This allows the road captain to see down the row of riders and account for all riders being present

Under certain conditions, the front road captain will signal the group to form a single file formation when passing a pedestrian, bicyclist, or other obstruction in the lane. When this signal is given, drop back into single file, allowing yourself more lane space, and increase the distance between yourself and the rider in front of you

Safety may dictate that we form smaller groups due to the large number of riders, surrounding conditions, or local ordinances. If this is the case, each group should be led by a road captain. If one is not available, an experienced group rider will be asked to take the responsibilities of the road captain

***Under no circumstance*** on chapter rides do we allow riders to block the flow of traffic to allow the group to stay together. It’s against the law and a serious safety concern for the group

We also ask that no right turns are made on a red light. This causes the group to be split up and can also be a serious safety concern for the group

If the group becomes split up and a turn is made, we ask the last rider that made the turn to slow down or stop to allow the split group to know the direction of the turn. This is known as a “Popcorn drop”. If the group becomes split up for an extended period, we ask the road captain running the mid or the sweep position to take the lead of the group. Once the entire group is back together, the road captain will fall back into their starting position

## *SPEED, INTERVALS, AND DISTANCES*

The front road captain will attempt to establish and maintain a uniform, safe speed, consistent with the ability of the least experienced rider, road and weather conditions, and safe riding practices, based on his or her judgment

All riders are asked to try to maintain the same speed to minimize the effect of irregular speeds on riders at the rear of the group

All riders are asked to maintain a safe distance and lane position between themselves and the rider directly ahead to be consistent with existing road, traffic, and weather conditions

In group riding, a two second interval between staggered riders is a guideline consistent with the recommendations of most traffic and safety agencies. Staggered motorcycles are in a "virtual" lane of their own, where there is two second intervals between motorcycles in a direct line. We urge all participants to constantly anticipate an emergency

A safe lane position is generally accepted as riding immediately to the right or left of lane center. This will keep the riders off the center oil stain while maintaining the staggered formation, distance between riders and other obstacles, and providing necessary lane protection

Minimum Safe Following Distances:

- Within the group, a safe distance is generally accepted as a minimum two second delay between the rider and the rider directly ahead. This means that there is a minimum of a one-second delay between staggered riders. Whenever a single-file formation is employed, a minimum two second delay between the rider and the rider directly ahead is generally considered a safe following distance
- With respect to vehicles ahead of the group, a generally accepted safe distance is defined as a minimum of three seconds between the front road captain and any motor vehicle in front of him or her

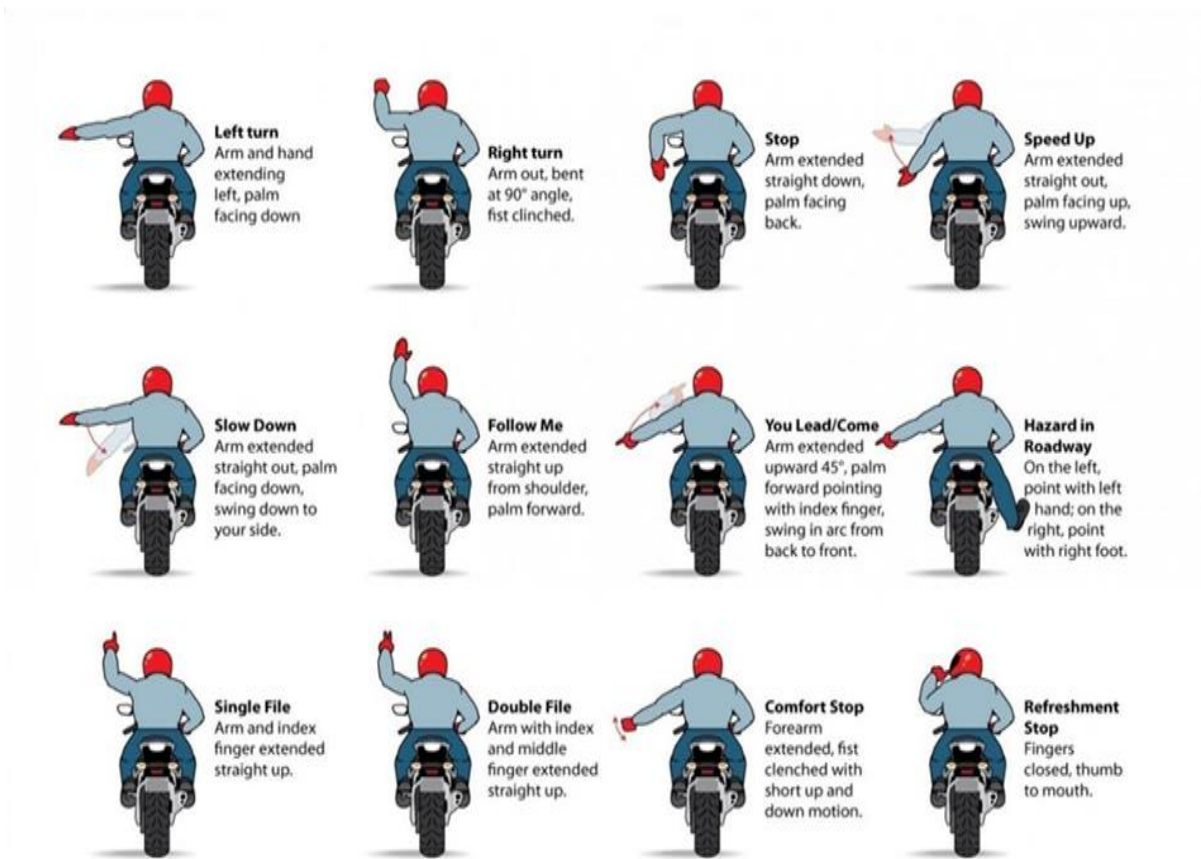
**NOTE:** *It is important to keep in mind that the recommended two-second interval is the minimum safe requirement to react in the event of a potentially hazardous condition, not to stop!*

## HAND SIGNALS

At all times, we urge that standard signals be used for changing the formation to a single row and back to double staggered, as well as lane changes, slowing, and stopping. Turn signals should be always used

We ask that all signals be relayed to the rear of the group to allow all riders to take appropriate precautionary measures, and be aware of changes in speed and direction

While some motorcyclists believe it is best to point to a hazard in the roadway, regardless of which side of the bike it's on, the graphic below shows that the right leg/foot is used to point to a hazard to the right of the motorcycle's path. This is because when in a group, you don't want to take your hand off the throttle to point to something and cause sudden deceleration of the bike. This creates the risk of getting hit by the motorcycle behind you, who may not be expecting the unexpected decrease in speed without use of the brake



## LANE CHANGES AND PASSING

On most roads traveled, the double row staggered formation will generally be maintained; unless road conditions require single row and more space between the riders

The front road captain will hold his or her position and signal for a lane change

All riders should hold their positions and pass the signal to the rear

The rear road captain (sweep) will change lanes when he or she believes it is safe to do so, protecting the lane for the group, and allowing the front road captain to see that the lane is clear and protected

We then change lanes using the "following the leader" approach. The front road captain will change lanes first followed by all other riders moving from front to the rear of the group

We ask that **NOBODY**, except the Sweep, change lanes before the front road captain. To do so may give the front road captain the false signal that the lane has safely cleared. ALWAYS make a HEAD CHECK before you begin the lane change and maintain a safe distance

There are times it will not be possible for the entire group to change lanes as above. The road captain will change lanes when they believe it is safe to do so. Everyone signals, head checks, and changes lanes front to the back, as individuals, when they believe it is safe to do so. Should the group become separated, regroup when the opportunity permits

On a two-lane road with two-way traffic (one lane each way), a single file formation should be used when passing other vehicles. When he or she believes it to be safe to do so, the front road captain may continue in the passing lane allowing other riders to see that the way is clear for them to continue the group passing maneuver

If, for any reason, the group becomes separated, we ask you to merge safely back to the pack, returning to your original position, using known good safety practices. Please don't exceed posted speed limits in order to catch up. The front road captain should be aware of the separation and adjust accordingly

**NOTE:** *Be certain the road is clear; always make a HEAD CHECK immediately prior to initiating any maneuver which may cause you to cross other traffic paths. The Road Captain, your mirror, or what you saw just a second ago, is no substitute for your own eyes and judgment! PLEASE remember that YOU, and ONLY YOU, are RESPONSIBLE for YOUR SAFETY! Ride your own ride!*

## TRAFFIC LANES

The front road captain will attempt to guide the group in a single lane where the traffic flow appears to be most consistent with the speed of the group, using lane changes, only, when necessary, to avoid a hazardous condition and avoid blocking faster surrounding traffic

On highways with two lanes in each direction, the group will generally travel in the number-two lane (also known as the "slow" lane), allowing faster traffic to pass on the left

On highways with three or more lanes in each direction, the group will normally travel in the number-two lane, or center lane, keeping the right lane open for vehicles entering and exiting the highway, and the left lane(s) for faster traffic to pass

**NOTE:** *Lanes are counted from left to right. The left lane is often referred to as the "fast", or "passing" lane, and is counted as lane number one. Remaining traffic lanes are then counted upward until the right most, or "Slow" lane is counted*

## GAS, FOOD, REST STOPS, AND TOLL ROADS

Due to the length of most rides, gas, food, and rest stops are taken. They are discussed and scheduled prior to departure. We try to adhere to those scheduled stops as much as possible, depending on conditions as the trip progresses

Deviation from the scheduled stops may be required due to varying weather, traffic, and bladder conditions, as well as availability of fuel, rider fatigue, and other unforeseen circumstances; all at the discretion of the road captain leading the ride

Gas and rest stops are generally limited to no more than ten or fifteen minutes, depending upon the size of the group. Remember, the last rider in the group waits the longest; therefore, has the shortest rest period

Meal stops vary in length with the size of the group, but generally held to a reasonable minimum of a half hour

If toll routes are included in the planned ride, EZ-passes are recommended to keep the group together

**NOTE:** *Remember to avoid the center lane when nearing or passing through a tollbooth. THEY ARE USUALLY EXTREMELY SLICK!*

## *UNSCHEDULED OR EMERGENCY STOPS*

Unscheduled stops for gas, restroom, or rider fatigue can lead to confusion in the group; and confusion can lead to accidents. The front road captain should be informed that a stop is necessary. In turn, they will lead the group in an organized fashion to the next convenient, safe place to stop. We ask any rider who observes a problem with another rider's equipment, to inform that rider as quickly and safely as possible. Any rider with equipment problems should inform one of the Road Captains of the issue immediately

If the rider must pull over, **ONLY** the rear road captain will accompany that rider to a stop. The front road captain should be informed if he or she is not aware of this situation. Once the front road captain is informed, they will pull the group over as soon as it is safe to do so, or travel to the next scheduled stop

It is unsafe for a large group to stop on the side of the road. If someone needs to pull over, the remainder of the group should continue to the next stop. At that time, the group can decide to wait for the missing members or to send two riders back to assist. If the group has a standing policy to wait for a specified period, the members left behind will be aware that they can catch up. All riders should have map of the route so they can reach their destination on their own if need be

## *ACCIDENTS*

First and foremost- **remain calm!!** In the event of an accident, the lead road captain will move the group to a safe area to pull over. The middle or rear road captain will pull over to assist immediately until first responders can be called and upon arrival, it will be the decision of the lead road captain whether to continue or cancel the remainder of the ride. Members of the group may be asked to aid in the event of an accident

- Aid and comfort those involved
- Maintain order and preserve the accident scene for police investigation
- Slow, divert, or stop traffic in a safe manner, using flares, if available
- Call to notify police, ambulance, and/or fire services as the situation demands. Always carry the phone number(s) of the local agencies when you ride; do not assume that 911 service is available. Do not assume that a particular mobile phone carrier will work in each area
- Report only the facts to the police- do not attribute blame or fault
- Obtain a copy of the police report as soon after the injury as you can- if possible, inquire at the scene about how and where you can obtain the report
- If possible, take photographs
- If possible, obtain license plate numbers and vehicle descriptions, including driver descriptions, in the event of a hit-and-run violation
- Obtain names and addresses of witnesses, if necessary

## *REPORTING AN INJURY TO HARLEY DAVIDSON INSURANCE*

Submit the following items to Harley Davidson Insurance (HDI)

- The completed Injury Report Form
- Include your email address
- Provide a summary of the facts surrounding the injury
- A copy of the person's release form and police report, if obtained

If the incident involves a death or serious physical injury, or if you need further instructions, contact Harley Davidson Insurance at 888-690-5600 or [dealershipinsurance@hdfsi.com](mailto:dealershipinsurance@hdfsi.com)

## *ALCOHOL/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE POLICY*

It is our chapter policy that no alcohol/controlled substance is used prior to/or during the chapter ride. If you believe, for any reason, that someone is uncomfortable riding as requested, or is under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance, we respect their rights, but ask that they not ride with the group. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

## *NOTES:*