

IMCHOG Riding Protocols and Recommendations

The following are the Intermountain HOG Chapter guidelines we would like every rider to follow to make sure all of our rides are safe. These guidelines are intended to serve as basic recommendations for most group riding situations. Remember, you have the ultimate responsibility for your safety, and to always ride within your abilities and that of your machine. Also remember that while on our group rides or wearing your vests, we represent the HOG and High Desert Harley Davidson, so please ride accordingly.

1. All rides are done in a staggered formation, except when riding single file. This means the lead rider is in the left 1/3 of the lane and the next rider is in the right 1/3 of the lane. This is for bikes, trikes, and sidecar rigs. You should try to stay in this formation except when it is necessary to negotiate curves, avoid obstacles, or increase your visibility to other drivers. However, the entire width of the lane is for your use.
2. You should maintain a safe riding distance of approximately 1-2 seconds from the rider on the opposite side of the lane in front of you. This gives you a safe riding distance of approximately 2-4 seconds from the rider directly in front of you. When riding in single file formation, you should increase the distance to 2-4 seconds from the rider in front of you. Keeping this distance and not falling behind helps maintain the integrity of the ride and lessens the chance of the group getting separated.
3. If you get separated from the group but can still see the group in front of you, do not exceed the speed limit to catch up. If you lose contact with the group in front of you, either follow the route using the Harley App, written directions, or wait for another chapter member or road captain who knows the route to take over as temporary lead.
4. Both vehicle lights and hand signals should be used. Hand signals should be passed back by every rider so that they make it to the sweep at the end of the group.
5. All riders should adhere to all applicable Federal, State, and local laws governing the operation of motorcycles. This includes, but is not limited to, observing posted speed limits, obeying all traffic signals and signage, and following laws related to lane usage, overtaking, and passing other vehicles. Riders are also responsible for being aware of and complying with laws regarding the use of safety equipment, such as helmets, and any restrictions on riding in certain areas or on certain road types. Riders should remain vigilant and courteous, always exercising safe riding practices.
6. You should never pass a rider while in formation, at a stop sign, a stop light, or while coming into a parking lot. Maintain your position in the formation until the next scheduled stop unless it is unsafe to do so.
7. When passing another vehicle on an interstate highway, it should be completed one rider at a time. Each rider needs to verify it is safe to do so when it comes their turn. Once the pass is completed, maintain your speed so the rider behind you does not "hang out" in the passing lane. Do not pass as a group and do not block the passing lane. This means you should not move into the left-hand lane until you reach the vehicle that you are passing.

8. If a rider needs to drop out of the formation, they need to do so in a safe manner, indicating so to the riders behind. All other riders should continue on, and the sweep will be the only one stopping with that rider. In case of an accident, other riders will likely stop to render aid. Once the sweep arrives on the scene, assist as directed by the sweep road captain. Those members not needed will be sent on to minimize the number of people and bikes creating an additional safety hazard.
9. When a rider drops out of formation and leaves a gap, all riders should maintain their position and not “close” the gap or switch sides of the lane. At the next scheduled stop, the gap may be filled in.
10. During the staging of the ride, you should place yourself in a position where you feel safe. If you prefer being in the back of the group, go there. If you do not feel safe riding behind a trike or a particular rider, then move to a different position within the group.
11. Any rider, no matter what they ride or their skill level, may ride anywhere in the formation that they feel safe.

If certain actions occur during a ride, you will be asked to leave the ride immediately:

1. Drinking alcohol, taking any illicit drug, or prescription medications that impair one’s ability to operate a motor vehicle. This includes showing up to a ride while under the influence.
2. There are other actions that will warrant personal attention from the Lead Road Captain if they occur during a ride:
 - a. Riding too close to the rider in front of you or making them feel pushed
 - b. Continually weaving or crossing the center line or being in the wrong lane on unmarked roads
 - c. Any other act that forces another rider into an unsafe riding condition
3. If there are further occurrences, you will be asked to meet with the chapter director, assistant director, lead road captain, and our sponsor (High Desert Harley Davidson) for further actions.

Rev 1/29/2025