

**I. PURPOSE**

To outline the responsibilities of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office Motor Unit and establish guidelines governing the operation, usage, and maintenance of motor vehicles.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office to establish a motor unit whose functions are: service of civil process, traffic management and enforcement, incident response and community relations events.

**III. SELECTION PROCESS**

- A. It is the policy of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office to announce openings for available positions on the Motor Unit through memorandum from the Chief, Professional Services Branch.
- B. Deputies shall submit a memorandum to the Supervisor, Policy and Planning Section, outlining their qualifications and expressing their intent to participate in the selection process to become a member of the Motor Unit.
- C. The selection process is as follows:
  - 1. Oral panel interview
  - 2. Riding agility assessment
  - 3. Selections will be based on the number of vacancies
- D. Minimum Qualifications:
  - 1. Sworn personnel must have a minimum of 2 years of sworn service and possess a Class "M" or "M2" motorcycle endorsement.

**IV. TRAINING/WORK ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Basic Motor Operations School
  - 1. Candidates selected to become members of the Sheriff's Office Motor Unit are required to successfully complete a minimum of an eighty (80) hour training course sanctioned by the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.
- B. Annual Training/Work Requirements
  - 1. To maintain certification, Motor Unit deputies are required to complete a minimum of thirty-two (32) hours of training each year. Generally, this requirement will be satisfied through participation in at least four of the six bi-monthly training sessions conducted by the Motor Unit annually. Each member is encouraged to participate in and pass a requalification course offered by the Fairfax County Police Department Motor Squad annually.

2. It is also recognized that to ensure the safety of all Motor Unit members, the highest level of proficiency and skill level must be maintained throughout the year. As a result, it shall be required that each member seek and coordinate a minimum of eighty (80) hours of Motor Unit related duty assignments annually. This required 80-hour Motor Unit duty assignment requirement is in addition to the mandatory bi-monthly training.

**V. MOTOR UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**A. Responsibilities**

1. Service of Civil Process – When assigned, Motor Unit deputies shall serve and execute all civil process in compliance with the Code of Virginia, rules of the State Supreme Court, and rules of the Fairfax County courts.
2. Traffic management and enforcement – Motor Unit deputies shall balance response to traffic disruptions, enforcing traffic laws in accordance with VA Code and the support of local law enforcement agencies within Fairfax County in responding to major events. Their primary assignment is the priority, (i.e. – parades or funerals).
3. Incident response - Motor Unit deputies shall be prepared to assist local law enforcement agencies within Fairfax County in responding to critical/emergency incidents. For non-critical incidents, response will be as requested and permitted on a case by case basis, if staffing allows.

**B. Other/Special Events**

1. Parades
2. Community job fairs and recruiting events
3. Funeral escorts/Miscellaneous escorts
  - a. The rendering of Law Enforcement Funeral Honors is a way to show the Sheriff's Office's deep gratitude and respect to those who have faithfully served. This ceremonial paying of respect is the final demonstration a grateful agency can provide to the families of the fallen. The Motor Unit will participate and / or provide support for law enforcement funerals within a fifty-mile radius of Fairfax County.
  - b. The Motor Unit will provide support for the funerals of active and retired Fairfax County Sheriff's Deputies and the immediate family members of active and retired deputies.
  - c. All internal and external requests for escorts will be coordinated through the Chief, Professional Services Branch. Escorts requested by any outside agency will be coordinated through the requesting entity's operation and support bureaus.
  - d. The purpose of escorting a funeral procession is: to ensure the safe movement of traffic and safety of the traffic through which it moves, to minimize the disruption of normal traffic, and to assist in the arrival of all participants in a coordinated manner. The safety of the deputies, participants, and the motoring public is paramount.

- e. While providing a funeral escort, the motorcycle's emergency lights must be used. Occasionally, the vehicle's siren may be used. A funeral is not an emergency response, therefore, the procession will not ordinarily enter an intersection against a red light, but will stop and wait until the signal is green.
- f. Occasionally, it may become necessary to take control of an intersection against the light, as when the procession would otherwise back up through another intersection and cause an unnecessary hazard or obstruction. As pre-determined, one of the escort motors will take control of the intersection and hold it until all participants and escorts are clear of the intersection. This must be done with the utmost caution: use red/blue lights and siren, but allow the cross traffic time to react and come safely to a stop, clear cars from the intersection as necessary, take a position to control the intersection; then direct the lead car in the procession to proceed.
- g. The procession shall not enter an intersection against any traffic control device unless directed to do so by an escorting deputy.
- h. Once control of an intersection has been achieved, the escort deputy does not leave the intersection until the procession has cleared it or has been relieved by a follow-on unit. At that time, the escort must pass the procession to reach the front and be ready to take control of another intersection. To make this as safe as possible, the motor unit holding the intersection must be positioned in such a manner as to allow approaching motors to pass safely. Ordinarily, the motor unit will be positioned to the left of the procession, in a separate lane if available and far enough away from the passing procession so other motors returning to the front may pass between the stationary motor and the procession. If the motor unit is to the right of the procession, the same spacing applies in reverse. This consistent location allows escort motors to anticipate each motor unit's position and provide a reasonably safe pocket through which to pass.
- i. Lane changes must be coordinated among the escort motors. At the predetermined intersection, one motor unit holds the intersection in the lane into which the procession is to move. As the procession passes this motor unit, the lead motor will guide it into the new lane. This provides a reference point for the escorted drivers so they do not change too early and helps prevent the procession from absorbing other traffic.
- j. When an escort route includes interstate highways, the escort will be suspended while the procession is traveling on the interstate highway. The escort motors will either accompany the procession or pull ahead and wait for it at the exit point, but will not attempt to control traffic on the interstate. Rare exceptions to this policy may occur with the lead agency's supervisory approval.
- k. On those occasions when an escort is provided in cruisers instead of motors, the procedures are modified. Cruisers do not pass each other during the escort. The lead cruiser holds the intersection until another cruiser comes up from behind, then proceeds while the second cruiser holds the intersection. This "bump and go" procedure is to be utilized to maximize

all vehicle occupant's safety. If there is a mix of cruisers and motors, the motors will remain in front of the cruisers with normal procedures utilized; the cruisers will utilize the "bump and go" method.

- I. Escort requests of any unusual nature such as parades or hazardous cargo will be approved and coordinated through the Chief, Professional Services Branch.
- C. Documentation
1. Any agency motorcycle use will be documented daily by each operator using the appropriate Motor Log assigned to each motorcycle. ([SOP 044b ATT. 1 - Motor Log](#)).
  2. Supervisors assigned to the Motor Unit shall ensure quarterly transfer of all Motor Log statistics to the Motor Unit Statistics Sheet.
  3. All Motor Unit members must sign and adhere to the Non-Standing Motor Unit Expectations and Member Agreement ([SOP 044b ATT. 2 - Non-Standing Motor Unit Expectations](#)).

**Note:** Motors shall not be ridden in inclement weather such as heavy rain, snow or sleet, high wind, or extreme heat at the discretion of the motor deputy or as determined by the motor unit supervisor. Ballistic vests may be considered optional in temperatures at or exceeding 90°F.

## **VI. EQUIPMENT**

- A. Motorcycles
1. Units #3982, #3983, #3820 and #3091 may be used for assignments within the community. Units #3109 and #3120 shall only be used for the purposes of motor schools, training, and competition events (i.e. - motorcycle rodeo).
- B. Mandatory Equipment
1. Motorcycle helmet
  2. Protective eyewear
  3. Boots that provide proper ankle protection
  4. Traffic Vest and whistle.
  5. Flashlight with cone
  6. Ticket book
  7. Protective gloves
  8. CPR mask / Bio-Hazard Kit
- C. Optional Equipment
1. Riding Gloves – (Approved by the Motor Unit Supervisor)
  2. Black leather jacket with agency patches
  3. Gortex rain jacket with patches and pants
  4. Heated Suit.
  5. Setcom Wired Helmet Kit
  6. Avon C50 Protective Mask

**VII. UNIFORMS**

A. Standard Duty Uniform

Motor Unit personnel will wear the Class A or B uniform with breeches and patrol dress boots when performing official duties. In addition, motor deputies are permitted to wear adequate clothing to ensure their protection from adverse weather conditions. Black ball cap with approved Sheriff's Office logo and motor insignia is permitted for use when stationary, in place of the motorcycle helmet.

B. Approved Training Uniform

1. Deputies attending training assignments will have the duty uniform available for response to major incidents.
2. The approved training uniform is as follows:
  - a. Class A or B duty uniform shirt or agency issued polo shirt
  - b. Khaki BDU utility pants
  - c. Black boots, providing ankle protection
  - d. Rain gear or other clothing to provide protection from adverse weather

D. Changes to Motor Unit uniform:

1. All requests concerning Motor Unit uniform changes shall be submitted to the Chief, Professional Services Branch. The Chief, Professional Services Branch will decide the merits of the request and forward the request to the Commander, Administrative Services Division with his/her recommendation for approval or disapproval.

**VIII. MAINTENANCE**

A. All motors personnel must ensure that their assigned motorcycle is properly maintained. Service shall be performed by Fairfax County DVS or an authorized repair facility.

1. All agency motorcycles shall be ready for immediate use at all times. Motorcycles shall be kept clean, operationally safe, and up-to-date on all preventative maintenance.
2. Each motor unit shall have a full tank of fuel and the water and oil levels shall be full prior to parking it for the night.
3. Motor Unit personnel shall perform safety/equipment inspections of their motorcycles, both before and after operating the motorcycle each time.
4. Upon approval by the Chief, Professional Services Branch or his/her designee, the motorcycle can be driven home. It must be secured in a locked garage or storage unit. If an adequate storage unit is not available, the motor must be secured using a lock, cable, or other device to immobilize the vehicle.

**\*The Sheriff or her designee may waive any and/or all provisions of this SOP, on an as needed basis.**

**FAIRFAX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**SOP NUMBER: 044b  
SUBJECT: MOTOR UNIT**

08/26/08  
DATE APPROVED  
04/08/19  
EFFECTIVE DATE



**STACEY A. KINCAID  
SHERIFF**

Revised: February 2012, January 2013, February 2014, August 2015, July 2017, April 2019