

# American Eagle HOG



## Chapter Ride Guide

### **Introduction**

The American Eagle HOG Chapter conducts group rides for the benefit of its chapter members. This Riding Guide contains information that each member is expected to know and observe so that everyone can participate to Ride Safe and Have Fun. All members are encouraged to read this guide prior to participating in group rides with our Chapter.

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### **Chapter Rides**

#### ***Ride Selection and Scheduling***

The Chapter rides are selected and scheduled by the Head Road Captain and/or Chapter Activities Officer along with the other Chapter Officers and Road Captains. The rides are normally chosen and scheduled at least two months in advance.

All Members are encouraged to make suggestions for the rides to any Officer or Road Captain.

All suggestions will be reviewed for suitability and the destination must be adequate for motorcycle parking and the ability to handle a large group.

#### ***Ride Schedule***

The ride schedule is published in the Chapter monthly newsletter as well as the online calendar on the chapter website ([www.aehog.com](http://www.aehog.com)). A ride may be cancelled at any time due to adverse weather conditions.

#### ***Road Captains***

The Road Captains are responsible for conducting the Chapter Rides. They select the routing and typically pre-ride the route prior to the ride for unsafe conditions when necessary.

Each dinner ride has a team of 3 Road Captains assigned. Larger chapter rides will have more depending on the size of the group and mileage for the ride event. Other Road Captains may be present on a ride but not assigned to groups and will ride within the group.

All ride participants shall follow the instructions, directions, and decisions of the Road Captains. Groups will typically contain 8-10 motorcycles. Each group will have a Lead Road Captain, a Wing Road Captain and a Rear Road Captain as appropriate. Road Captains will normally have an orange arm band as well as a yellow cord hanging from his/her shoulder that identifies the individual as a Road Captain.

### **Ride Participation**

All members are invited to attend all rides. The Chapter expects all riders to ride safely and ride within their experience and comfort level at all times.

### **HOG Chapter Event Categories**

Chapter events are conducted primarily for the benefit of our American Eagle HOG Chapter members. There are three categories of Events defined by the national HOG:

- **Closed events** are chapter events that are open to chapter members and one guest per member.
- **Member events** are chapter events that are only open to HOG members.
- **Open events** are chapter events that are open to chapter members, National HOG members and other guest as desired.

**NOTE:** All American Eagle HOG Chapter rides are “Closed Events” unless specifically stated. Simply stated, this means that you can participate in chapter rides if you are a current member and that you can have one guest per ride. If the guest is not a member of the chapter, then he/she will need to sign a chapter release form prior to the ride leaving the shop.

## **Group Riding**

Each rider is expected to observe and practice the following rules and procedures when participating in a group ride with the Chapter. There are four components to a safe and fun group ride:

- Personal Preparation
- Group Preparation
- The Ride
- Emergencies

### **Personal Preparation**

You are responsible for making sure you and your bike are ready and safe for the ride.

- **Check yourself**

Make sure you are alert, feeling well, and appropriately dressed. Any Chapter member operating a motorcycle in a Chapter ride must be properly licensed and insured to operate a motorcycle.

- **Check your Motorcycle and Equipment**

Check your tire pressure, oil level, turn signals, and lights. Any motorcycle used in a Chapter ride, event or other activity must be properly licensed, inspected and insured.

- **Fill Your Gas Tank**

All members are to begin the ride with a full tank of gas. All rides are planned with ample gas stops considering the smallest tank in the group and that everyone starts with a full tank.

- **Make Sure You Arrive for the Ride on Time.**

Not only is it fun to socialize prior to the ride, the Road Captain will make any announcements and give the pre-ride and route briefings during this time. These briefings normally will be conducted at least 5-10 minutes before the ride departs.

## **Group Preparation**

Rides are scheduled to meet at a certain time and normally depart 30 minutes later. During this time you are encouraged to sign in for the ride, sign the release forms (if necessary), and listen to the pre-ride briefing.

Each member is allowed one guest per ride. Each adult guest must sign an “Event Release Form for Adults” at the ride. Any Road Captain can provide you a release form.

Every minor participating in a ride, whether a member or guest, must have a “Chapter Release for Minors” signed by the minor’s parent or guardian at the ride.

The Road Captain will give a pre-ride briefing covering the route, the Chapter riding rules and any other information concerning the ride. Listen closely and feel free to ask questions.

## **The Ride**

Riding with a group can be fun and exciting, but only when everyone in the group observes the same rules. When riding with the Chapter, everyone is expected to observe the following rules.

The Road Captain will leave first and is followed by all other bikes, which fall into a staggered formation as soon as possible. The Rear Road Captain will follow the group.

When a large number of bikes are present, The Road Captain will divide them into smaller groups as appropriate. Each group will have a Road Captain and Rear Road Captain assigned to the group. In addition, if there are ample Road Captains going on the ride, a Wing Road Captain will be assigned to each group as well.

- **Ride within your ability and comfort level.**

Riding within your ability and comfort level is very important for the safety of the group. If at any time you feel that the ride has exceeded your riding ability or comfort level, or you have safety concerns, you should consider pulling off to the side of the road at a safe place. The Rear Road Captain will stop with you. You can then decide whether to continue the ride or not.

- **Obey all laws (Speed limits, Stop signs, Stop lights etc).**

- **Headlights to LOW beam, other running lights off. CB Radios ON if available.**

All riders except the Road Captains should set their Headlights to Low Beam and turn off any other running lights.

This makes it easier for the Lead Road Captain to see the Rear Road Captain and determine if a problem has occurred requiring the Rear Road Captain to stop.

Riders who have CB radios on their bikes are encouraged to utilize them for group ride communications. Normally, on the longer Chapter rides, more emphasis is placed on using the CB radios. The Lead Road Captain will determine which channel to use for the ride if applicable. (Normally Channel 24)

- **Ride in Staggered Formation with approximately 2 second spacing**

The Chapter rides in the staggered formation recommended by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and HOG. The bikes form two columns, with the leader at the head of the left column. The second bike will head up the right column and ride approximately one second behind the leader. The other riders follow the bike directly in front of them by two seconds, which puts them one second behind the diagonal bike in front of them. By using the two-second spacing, the distance of the gap will increase with speed.

- **Filling Gaps During The Ride.**

When a bike drops out of the ride and creates a gap, maintain your position in the pod. The gaps will be filled in at the next stop sign. On long rides we will go to single file and then return to the staggered formation to fill the gaps.

- **Use Hand and Foot Signals.**

The Road Captain will use hand or foot signals to indicate a change of course, hazards, or other information to the group. Each rider uses the same signal to pass the information back through the group. If you are new to group riding, only pass the signals back if you are comfortable with taking your hands off the controls. See Attachment A for signals used by the Chapter.

- **Keep the group together without extraordinary steps**

Occasionally the group will get separated by a stop light, traffic congestion, etc. It is not necessary or advisable to take exceptional steps to regroup. In the event the group is separated, the Lead Road Captain will adjust the ride (either by slowing down or stopping at a safe location) until the ride is regrouped. In some circumstances, this may take several miles. **BE PATIENT!** If you find yourself leading part of the group due to a break and you are not sure of the route, pull over to a **safe** place. Everyone behind you and the Rear Road Captain will stop so that you can let the Rear Road Captain assume the Lead Road Captain spot.

- **Pull side-by-side at stops, start together with the left bike accelerating faster.**

This helps move the group through the stops quickly and get as many bikes through the stop light as possible. As the two columns come to a stop, the right column will move up even with the left column. On the start, the bikes leave together with the left bike accelerating faster to reestablish the staggered formation.

- **Yield to Cars (Especially at Entrance Ramps and Lane Changes).**

When a car needs to enter from an entrance ramp or is signaling to break into the group, ***“yield and give them plenty of room”***. Remember: ***Just because you have the right-of-way, doesn't mean you are going to get it.***

- **Signal All Turns and Lane Changes with Turn Signal Lights and Hand Signals; Make Visual Checks Before You Move.**

The Road Captain will signal for turns and lane changes. You, in turn, make the same signal to pass it back through the group and to signal any other vehicles near you.

Before making a turn or lane change and after you have signaled for an appropriate amount of time, ***Look with your Head***, (not in your mirror) to see if you have clear space. If so, then make the turn or lane change. ***Never move without looking.***

- **The Ride Officially Ends on Arrival at the Destination.**

You can return home at any time and by any route you choose. If you are unsure how to get back home, ask a Road Captain for directions.

- **Drinking and Driving Never Mix.** This is especially true when participating in a group ride.

## **Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency requiring a stop, observe the following procedures so that the emergency may be resolved in the safest manner possible. **We do not want a group of motorcycles on the side of the road in an unsafe manner under any circumstance.**

- **Problem bike stops. All others continue.**

If a bike or rider problem requires a stop, the rider should signal and stop in as safe a place as possible, preferably well off the road. All other bikes are to continue with the Lead Road Captain to avoid having a group of bikes on the side of the road.

- **Only the Rear Road Captain stops to help.**

It is the Rear Road Captains responsibility to stop and render assistance to the problem bike.

- **Lead Road Captain leads the group to a safe location.**

If the Road Captain deems it necessary to check on the problem, he will stop the group at a safe place and call the Rear Road Captain to determine what action needs to be taken or send someone back to check out the problem.

- **All Road Captains have Cell Phones and a basic First Aid Kit.**

Although it is not required, it would be a benefit to all if each member had their own First Aid Kit.

- **Accidents**

In the event of an accident, the Road Captains will work together to accomplish the following:

Insure everyone stops in a safe location.

Notify the authorities by calling 911.

Render aid to injured persons. Remember, DO NOT MOVE and injured person or remove their helmet, this should be done by trained emergency response personnel.

Maintain the accident scene which includes getting the names, telephone numbers and addresses of witnesses. Take pictures of the scene.

# Attachment A



