

American Legion Riders Motorcycle Association



Post 582
Information Book
and
Application

A Brief History Of The American Legion Riders



The American Legion Riders

In the fall of 1993 Chuck (Tramp) Dare shared a dream with then Post Commander (Polka) Bill Kaledas at the American Legion Post 396 in Garden City, Michigan. The idea came about to start a motorcycle association that would operate within the American Legion. The idea was to provide an atmosphere whereas Post, Auxiliary and S.A.L. members, who shared an enthusiasm for motorcycles, could come together. It was meant to be a family oriented group.

Not knowing how to start this group up, and stay within the scope of the American Legion, a letter was written to then Department Adjutant Hubert Hess. In his November 19th, 1993 reply he stated that it "Sounds like a great idea". In this letter, and follow-up phone conversations, he gave us instructions on how to manage this program at our Post. He also provided us information on how to get approval for the use of the American Legion Emblem. We then sought to get this program recognized through our Post Membership. The idea was brought up at our Post meeting to have our Post sponsor the group to be known as the "American Legion Riders". It was passed by our members and thus became the birth of the first American Legion Riders group.

We started with just a small group. Within a few months we grew to nineteen members. We worked on developing a set of by-laws to help us to provide structure to our group. We designed an emblem for the American Legion Riders. This emblem, contained within its design, the emblem of the

American Legion. Working closely with our Department Adjutant we were able to gain approval, by the national headquarters of the American Legion, to have our emblem manufactured for our group. This emblem is worn today by Legion Rider groups throughout the country and is available to it's members through and State chapters.

Another important decision we made, with concurrence of our Department Adjutant, was to not require members that wanted to become legion Riders to transfer to our Post. Our Post sponsored the American Legion Rider group, but not all of our members belong to our Post. We felt that if we required members to transfer to our Post that this would cause a lot of hard feelings in other Post near our own community. What we soon found out was that our membership grew, not from current legion members, but many joined the American Legion to become members of the American Legion Riders. A very conservative estimate would say that over half of our current membership joined the American Legion to enable them to join the Riders.

Right after starting we proceeded to get down to "business". Our objective was to support the aims and purposes of the American Legion, through service to our Community, State and Nation. We did such things as putting on a "Bingo" at the VA Hospital, putting on fundraisers for local charities, participating in motorcycle "runs" to raise money for charity and participation in ceremonies and parades. We did have some Post members who thought, in the beginning, that we would be just a bunch of "Bikers". After seeing the kinds of things we did, we gained a lot of respect in both the American Legion community as well as our own community.

In 1996 we had an article published about the American Legion Riders in the American Legion National publication of the "Dispatch". An article in the American Legion Magazine soon followed up this article. In about 1996 "Tramp" moved to Texas, where he did a great job of promoting the Legion Rider program there. Today, there are groups of American Legion Riders throughout the country.

Where we are today

As the membership of the American Legion Riders is a very diverse group, so are the programs that they are involved in. By allowing each American Legion Rider Chapter to give their members the ability to manage their program at the Post level, the program has been allowed to grow. Today there exist Legion Rider programs in several states, and many more starting. The types of things that these groups are doing are far too many to mention in this article, but here are a few examples:

- 1. Participation in the annual POW/MIA Rally held each Memorial weekend in Washington D.C. known as "Rolling Thunder".**
- 2. Sponsoring or participating in local Charity events.**
- 3. Raising money for such organizations as local VA Hospitals, Battered**

Women and Children's Center, Varied Children and Youth programs, a School for Blind Children, Veterans Relief, Needy families and many, many others.

4. Sponsoring or participating in motorcycle "Runs" to benefit numerous charities, including charities for underprivileged children and medical research, just to name a few.
5. Participation in memorial ceremonies and community parades.
6. One group is spearheading an effort to erect a "Veterans Memorial Park" in the center of their Downtown area.

The recognition by local communities has marked the program as a true success. The American Legion Riders Group in Michigan was even honored by the Local City Council, when they drafted a resolution Declaring the American Legion Riders as a valuable asset to the community. Motorcyclist can be a very dedicated group of people. When you combine this with the fact that they are legionnaires, you create a win/win situation.

Who benefits from forming an American Legion Riders Group?

We all do!!!! Many of the groups, in existence today, have all had stories where some of their Post members were a little reluctant to let a group of "Bikers" in to their Post. After seeing what these groups were doing for the American Legion their opinion soon changed. Not only did the Post welcome them, but in most cases did what they could to help support their efforts, by participating in some of the groups fundraising events. There are also many stories where the American Legion Riders group worked in conjunction with the Post to sponsor a program. The Post was glad to have their help and the Riders were honored to be asked. We were able to break down some barriers. Just because one person wears a leather motorcycle jacket and another wears a golf shirt and slacks, we now know that we can work together to promote the aims and purposes of the American Legion. We have done it, and everyone involved was able to see the benefit. The American Legion Riders was never intended to be a "Motorcycle Club". As stated, it is to be able to work with the Local Post to assist in promoting the American Legion.

Membership, Membership, Membership!! Literally every Post program of the American Legion Riders has brought in members that may not have joined the American Legion were it not for the Riders program. The Riders program has been able to spark a new interest to join the American Legion. Some of these members, who joined for the Legion Rider program, have gone on to serve as Officers within their Post. Conversely, we have also had Post members go out and purchase motorcycles just to join the Riders. There was one story from a Post that recently started an American Legion Riders group. It advertised for the first meeting of the group. They originally intended for only about six or seven members to show up to the first meeting. When the meeting started they had seventeen people wanting to join, nine of these

people were joining the American Legion that night so that they could become members of the Legion Riders. Have you had a program that has brought in that many new members in one night lately?

***Pure enjoyment!!* The program was designed to have people work together and enjoy themselves. It may be a group of Riders working on a fundraiser for a local charity, it may be just a warm summer evening ride together or maybe just sitting at the Post sharing stories. It's all about members working together and playing together - it is there for them to enjoy.**

The American Legion Riders

To: Participate in parades and other ceremonies that are in keeping with the Aims and Purposes of the American Legion. To promote motorcycle safety programs and to provide a social atmosphere for American Legion members who share the same interest. To use our Association to promote and support programs of the American Legion through service to our Community, State and Nation.

The Beginning of the American Legion Riders

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- (1) Participation in the annual POW/MIA Rally held each Memorial weekend in Washington D.C. known as "Rolling Thunder".
- (2) Sponsoring or participating in local Charity events and providing Community Service.
- (3) Raising money for such organizations as local VA Hospitals, Battered Women and Children's Center, Varied Children and Youth programs, a School for Blind Children, Veterans Relief, Needy families and many, many others.
- (4) Sponsoring or participating in motorcycle "Runs" to benefit numerous charities, including charities for underprivileged children and medical research, just to name a few.
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What are the requirements to become an American Legion Rider?

- (1) Be a current member of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of the American Legion.
- (2) Be the legally registered owner of a motorcycle of at least 350cc (21.4 CI) engine displacement and possess a valid driver's license in your state of residence (military equivalents acceptable as well).

- OR -

Must be the legal spouse of an ALR member in good standing within the Chapter of application.

Note: Must meet requirements of both 1 & 2

What do I have to do to get an American Legion Riders Group started in my Post?

- (1) Get the interest of a few members of your Post. It only takes a few to get the ball rolling.
- (2) Obtain approval of your post membership to sponsor your group.
- (3) Obtain further info by going to the following website: <http://americanlegionriders.net/>
- (4) Or Contact: Bill Kaledas

30215 Rush
Garden City, MI. 48135
734 - 421-7146
E-mail: bkaledas@hotmail.com

Or
Chuck (Tramp) or Bernie Dare
106 Bauman
Gatesville, TX. 76528
254 -865-5884
E-mail: trampbiker@hotmail.com

Or
Keith (Dawg) Jones
1330 Michigan St.
Ferdinand, In. 47532
812-367-2793
E-mail: dawgj@psci.net

- (5) We can provide an updated list (available at <http://americanlegionriders.net/chapters.html>) to let you know if an American Legion Riders Chapter already exist in your State, along with contact names.
- (6) Although this program is run from the Post level, it is still a good idea to send "Courtesy Letters" to your District and Department officers to keep them aware of your progress.
Where two or more chapters exist in a single state, you may want to get together and discuss the program with your Department Adjutant.

Visit us on the web at: <http://americanlegionriders.net/>

Become An American Legion Rider



The American Legion Riders *Membership Requirements*

The membership requirements for the American Legion Riders are very straightforward. To become a member, you must...

...be a current member in good standing of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of the American Legion.

...be the owner of a motorcycle of at least 250cc engine displacement and must possess a valid driver's license in your state of residence (military equivalents acceptable as well) ~or~ must be the legal spouse of an ALR member in good standing within the Chapter of application.

To join the American Legion, you must have served at least one day on ACTIVE DUTY during any of these periods of conflict:

April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918 (World War I)

December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946 (World War II)

June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955 (Korean War)

February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975 (Vietnam War)

August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984 (Lebanon/Grenada)

December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990 (Operation Just Cause - Panama)

*August 2, 1990 to today (Operation Desert Shield/Storm/Iraqi Freedom)

A copy of your DD214 showing dates and character of service is required at

application.

(This information is available online at www.legion.org/pdf/mbrapp.pdf)

To join the SAL you must be a male descendant (includes stepsons and adopted sons but does not include in-laws) of...

- ...a member of The American Legion**
- ...or a Veteran who died in service during any of the qualifying periods of conflict listed above**
- ...or of a Veteran who served during one of the qualifying periods of conflict, was honorably discharged, and died subsequent to their service**

A copy of The American Legion membership card or DD214 of the Veteran through whom you are qualified is required at application.

(This information is available online at www.sal.legion.org/member.htm#memb)

To join the Auxiliary you must be a woman who...

- ...is eligible for membership in The American Legion**
- ...or is the mother, wife, daughter, sister, granddaughter, great-granddaughter, or grandmother of members of The American Legion**
- ...or is the mother, wife, daughter, sister, granddaughter, great-granddaughter, or grandmother of deceased veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during the listed war periods**
- ...or is a step relative to a qualified or deceased veteran.**

Note that, as with the SAL, in-law relatives to the qualified Veteran are not eligible for membership.

A copy of The American Legion membership card or DD214 of the Veteran through whom you are qualified is required at application.

(This information is available online at www.legion-aux.org/membership/docs/become.html)



The American Legion Riders

www.americanlegionriders.net

Today across America many thousands of American Legion Riders get on their bikes to ride for Americanism and Children and Youth programs in virtually every state in the nation, and more are organizing each month. One of the fastest-growing and most highly visible of the many programs offered by The American Legion, The American Legion Riders are a very diverse group, and so are the programs that they support. What do American Legion Riders do? The activities are far too many to mention in this space, but here are a few examples:

- American Legion Riders have become some of the most generous donors for The American **Legion Legacy Fund**, commonly raising as much as \$7,500 or more in a single donation.
- Legion Riders participate in the annual POW/MIA Rally held each Memorial weekend in Washington D.C. known as "Rolling Thunder".
- Legion Riders sponsor or participate in local and national charity events in support of the sponsoring American Legion Post.
- Legion Riders ride to raise money for such organizations as local VA Hospitals, Battered Women and Children's Center, varied veterans relief organizations, Operation Wounded Warrior, Heroes to Hometown, needy families and children during the holidays and many, many others.
- Legion Riders of Mulvane, Kansas founded a national movement called "Patriot Guard" (www.kspatriotguard.org) that honors and protects the sanctity of military funerals and memorial services.
- Legion Riders have formed special motorcycle Honor Guards and ceremonial teams highlighting the special bonds formed in military service and the motorcycling community.
- Legion Riders have also begun to teach motorcycle and driver safety in the community and in schools in cooperation with ABATE and other national motorcycling organizations.

Remember: American Legion Riders are a very dedicated group of Legion Family members. When your Post or district sponsors a new Riders organization, you create a an atmosphere of enthusiasm and growth for your post, district, and Department!

UPDATE for 2007: American Legion Riders from all parts of the United States plan to ride to raise money and awareness for The American Legacy Scholarship Fund. National Commander Paul A. Morin will travel with Riders over 2,100 miles from Indianapolis to Reno, Nevada in August 2007. Ride for America's future. Register [HERE](#) for The American Legacy Run!

Make a direct tax-deductible donation to The American Legacy Fund [HERE](#).

Commander's Morin's challenge: "Raise \$250,000 fo rthe Legacy Scholarship Fund!"

Interested in helping to raise one quarter of a million dollars? [Order a Fundraising Kit for The American Legacy Scholarship Fund.](#)

Would you like to form an American Legion Riders group in your city? Find out more at the Riders' own national website, formed in order to help new Riders groups assemble all over the nation. To find out who they are and to link to many existing ALR Chapters, go to www.americanlegionriders.net, or call Bill Sloan at (317) 630-1265.

VISIT The American Legion's [Emblem Sales Store](#) for high quality apparel, patches, and Rider gear designed specifically for the American Legion Rider community.

Welcome to Understanding Motorcycle Clubs

This is a document we borrowed, with permission, from a motorcycle web site. We have added some extra information that might be helpful to those who want to understand Motorcycle Clubs and how they are organized. It contains some information about the codes and values upon which many Motorcycle Clubs are based.

It's been asked if this document is meant to portray Riding Clubs as second class citizens to MC clubs. If just because you are in a Riding Club, you should "kowtow" to MC clubs.

The answer is no. A vast majority of MC club members are just regular people. Have jobs, families, good days and bad days just like anyone else out there. In other words, they are people too. They just choose a little bit different lifestyle than most and only ask others to respect their choice. They have certain codes they live by and it's not just when they have their colors on - it's 24/7/365.

The following is just some of the ideals they live by. I'll say again, different areas have different views on things even between members of the same club.

MC / RC Differences

MC: What is expected of a Prospect...

RC: What is expected of a RC member ...

MC: As a Prospect, strive to conduct yourself as a responsible Patchholder at all times.

RC: As a RC member, strive to conduct yourself in a responsible manner so as to not give your club a bad name. Whether you are wearing your patch or not, common courtesy and respect for ANY individual you make contact with will always leave a good impression of you, your club and motorcyclists in general.

MC: Always display a positive attitude.

RC: Always display a positive attitude.

MC: Participate as much as you think is acceptable; then participate more.

RC: Participate as much as you are comfortable with. You joined to ride and meet others with the same interest, but the more you participate the more you will get to know others and enjoy the experience. You will only get out of it that you put into it.

MC: If you see a Patchholder of your group that you have not met, take the initiative to introduce yourself as.. "Prospect (your name)."

RC: It's always good to introduce yourself to fellow club members.

MC: At all gatherings, make it a point to circulate when you have the time to do so and greet every Patchholder who is there.

RC: It's always good to meet new people.

MC: Don't get overly friendly with someone that is not a regular acquaintance of the club. If someone outside the club has questions, refer them to a Patchholder. Never give out a Patchholder's name, phone number, address, or any personal information to anyone outside the club.

RC: Meeting new people is one of the things a RC is about. Answer questions as you are able. If you don't know the answer to a question, refer the questioner to someone you think might know, such as one of the officers of your club. Don't give out personal information unless you know that the person being asked about wants it given out; that's only common sense.

MC: Never give out any information about the club itself to outsiders. This includes, but is not limited to, where the club is based, how many members are in the club, etc.

RC: RCs aren't normally out to hide anything. They are just a riding club and as such, really don't have much in the way of club business. If you know of sensitive private matters concerning the RC then it is expected that you would use good judgement in not sharing it with others who are not involved.

MC: While in public places, always conduct yourself with your association with the club in mind.

Remember that what you do, people will remember; good or bad.

RC: While in public places, always conduct yourself with your association with your club in mind.

Remember that what you do, people will remember; good or bad. The public perception of anyone who rides a bike should be considered and a good attitude is always the kind of perception we want to present, club or no club.

MC: Never let a Patchholder walk off alone in an unsecured area. If he/she is going out to their car, bike, or even just out to get some fresh air, go with them. Watch their back at all times.

RC: Never let someone go off alone without someone keeping an eye on them, especially in this day and time.

MC: Remember who you are 24 hours a day. Your association doesn't go on and off with your colors.

RC: You should always conduct yourself responsibly when dealing with other people, including e-mails and on the internet. RCs do not have colors - the patch is a purchased patch that shows you are a part of a riding club whose purpose is to get together to ride motorcycles and enjoy the companionship of others with a similar interest.

MC: Out of respect, if two or more Patchholders are having a private conversation, don't approach them within earshot, especially if they are talking with a Patchholder of another club. If you feel that you need to interrupt, put yourself in a place of visibility and wait to be acknowledged.

RC: It's only common courtesy not to interrupt a conversation or evesdrop.

MC: NEVER use the term "Outlaw Club" when speaking to a member of another club.

RC: NEVER use the term "Outlaw Club" or any of the other names they are known by when speaking to strangers (you never know when one of them might be a member of an MC, be a support member or know members of an MC).

MC: Never lie to a member of another club. If you are in a situation where you are asked about the club or its membership, it is acceptable to say "That seems like club business and I really can't talk about it". If this doesn't put the subject to rest, offer to put them in touch with a Patchholder for them to speak with.

RC: Never lie to anyone. Either answer the question or refer the questioner to someone who can.

MC: Always show respect to a Patchholder of another club. Even though they are with another club, they earned their patch.

RC: Show respect for other people, club or not. It's the polite thing to do.

MC: Never call a Patchholder of another club "brother". He's not your brother.

RC: Never call a member of another club "brother". If he is a friend and you two consider each other brothers, wait for him to address you as such in public.

MC: Remember, your patch is earned, it is not given to you.

RC: RCS don't earn their patches. The patch has no meaning except that it indicates you belong to a club that you signed up for and associate with.

MC: Never bring a personal friend or a stranger into the presence of Patchholders without asking permission to do so first.

RC: It's great to introduce new people to the group; just make sure you don't interrupt a conversation when doing so.

MC: At an open function, never turn your back to a Patchholder of another club. This is not so much for safety reasons, but as a show of respect.

RC: It's always polite to face the individual or group you are talking to.

MC: Always show respect and courtesy to Patchholders of other clubs. Don't come across like you want to be best friends. Be professional in such encounters; keep it short, then move on.

RC: Always show respect and courtesy to everyone, club or not.

MC: Never be quick to walk up to a Patchholder of another club in a public setting, even if you know them well and the clubs are on friendly terms. If you want to greet them, walk up slowly and wait for them to indicate that they want such a public display to take place. They may be on some club business and may not want to give the general public the impression that the clubs are on such friendly terms. If they look like they are going to ignore you accept it and keep your distance, the best approach is always to wait for them to come to you and let everyone else see that.

RC: Use common courtesy and common sense.

MC: Learn what different parts of our patch represent and what the different color combination of yours and other clubs represent.

RC: A RC patch should never be referred to as colors. RCs should NEVER wear any kind of location banner with their patch and NEVER wear any kind of support patch for any other MC. RC patches are usually bought – not earned.

MC Basics

The Club

The intent of this section is to give you an overview of the structure and philosophy of the traditional motorcycle club (MC). This does not necessarily express the feelings or priorities of any particular club, as all motorcycle clubs differ on some points. Regardless of the basic philosophy of this group, it is important that you understand the perspectives of other clubs that you may be associating with from time to time.

If motorcycles influence your lifestyle, then you are part of the motorcycle community. Of all the types of organizations found within that community, the traditional motorcycle club stands apart and ranks highest in stature.

Respect

A serious MC club commands respect for one reason. Those who are correctly informed recognize the deep level of personal commitment and self discipline that a man has to demonstrate and sustain in order to wear a patch. They realize that a club's "Colors" are closely guarded and the membership process is long and difficult. Other factors notwithstanding, they respect Patchholders for what they have accomplished by being able to earn and keep the patch they wear. This is respect born out of recognition of dedication and accomplishment. The MC Club strives for respect for this reason. This is especially true as it pertains to those persons outside of the motorcycle community. This segment of society is by far the larger, and therefore represents a larger market for any fund raising activities that the group might undertake. It stands to reason that cultivating a relationship with these people is important, and to be perceived by them as "Biker Scum" would not be advantageous to the group. They will therefore conduct themselves as upstanding citizens in every way... "Good neighbors" so to speak. The goal is to be admired and respected by the general public rather than feared. The serious club, and all of its members and guests, will always conduct themselves publicly in a highly professional manner.

Club Colors

The general public does not draw a distinction between different club colors. In many cases, they simply can't tell the difference: we're all "Biker Scum" to them. If one club causes a problem that touches the public sector, the offending club's identity is either confused or ignored and the heat comes down on all clubs. The general public does not make the distinction between a MC and an RC (Riding Club), therefore EVERYONE needs to be aware that no matter whether they are in an MC and RC or an Independent rider, their actions reflect on all in the motorcycle community. The MC clubs tend to police themselves to avoid such incidents.

Participation

A Patchholder will not discuss any club business whether it's about membership numbers, club goings on, or any member's personal information with anyone outside of the club. They understand that they are a Patchholder 24 hours a day whether or not they are wearing their colors. Everything they say or do in public can affect the club. They also understand that if they get out of line, that they are subject to be counseled for their own good and for that of the club. Wearing a patch is more than getting together for good times. It also means getting together for the other times, too. It constitutes a lot of work. It's

committing themselves to a lifestyle in which they do not look for how their brothers or sisters can help them, but for ways that they can be of help to their brothers and sisters. They always look to give rather than to receive. All of this may seem very idealistic, and in some cases it's just that. But it is an ideal that all clubs profess and are always striving for in principle and practice.

Always be aware of the "Golden Rule" of conduct while traveling in club circles: If you give respect, you'll get respect. If you act with disrespect, then you'll be treated with the same.

Levels of Commitment

When someone earns their patch, it does not mean that he or she has reached the ultimate goal and from that point they can kick back and coast. Moving from guest to probation to Patchholder is not climbing from the bottom to the top, but rather more like climbing a constantly ascending slope, and in time becoming a stronger and more committed brother or sister. A person's probationary rocker and later their patch are merely presented in recognition of what they have demonstrated along the way. In this fashion, the more senior the Patchholder is in the club and the more they experience, the more of a brother or sister they should be to all.

Purpose of Probation / Prospecting

Probation is not an initiation, as you would find in a fraternity. It is instead a period of time that is sustained until the person, in every sense, conducts themselves with the respect that is mandated to be a Patchholder. It's a time in which:

The attitude is conditioned so that he/she displays a sense of responsibility and respect toward the patch holders of the club, without which they will not develop a sense of respect for the group.

He/she is educated in basic MC protocol and etiquette.

He/she is given time to develop the habits that are basic to good security and good communications.

To get into the habit of participating.

To become accustomed to trusting the judgment, at times blindly, of those patch holders who will someday be his or her brothers and sisters.

The list could go on but the point here is to demonstrate that probationary period has definite objectives and that a person will go nowhere in the club if he/she is not aware of this and does not apply themselves to those ends. It's not possible to make a checklist of what is expected from a person in all cases. There isn't any formula for success, but the key is ATTITUDE AND RESPECT. Everything else can be learned in time, but a person's attitude comes from the heart.

Protocol Basics

These are some things for you, as a Riding Club member, to consider when dealing with motorcycle clubs. They are also things to consider if and when you are going to be around motorcycle clubs.

1. Patchholders are people too. They have good and bad days, they have jobs, families, and normal everyday problems and concerns just like anyone else. There are those who no matter what you say or do, it will not be right with them. Just like with any group, you will find both good and bad.
2. Protocol and Respect are primary rules when dealing with a motorcycle club patchholder.

If you are FORMALLY introduced to a patchholder, make sure either the person doing the introduction (or you) make sure they know what club you belong to & if you are an officer, what position you hold. Under no circumstances do you interrupt to correct a mistake while that person is introducing you or while they are talking. Wait till the introduction is done & politely introduce yourself correctly. i.e.....

Joe Rider, xxxxxxxxxxxx Riding Club, 1st Officer, Anytown Chapter.

Fred Spokes, Anystate Officer, xxxxxxxxxxxx Riding Club

(Use your name - not your nickname. Nicknames may come later.)

3. Greet them as you would meet anyone else & wait until the offer is made to shake hands. DO NOT interrupt, wait for them to recognize you. DO NOT be offended or make a big deal if they do not offer to shake your hand. Many times they want to get to know about you and your club a little better before they will offer to shake your hand.

4. Never, Ever, Lie. You can refuse to answer a question in a polite manner by saying something like, "That seems like club business, and I would like to refer that to one of our officers in order to get better information for you." Be prepared to answer questions about what your club is about. Such as....

A.) "We are a riding club & not a motorcycle club and have no intention of ever trying to become a motorcycle club".

B.) The Patch is bought & not earned.

C.) No dues or Dues - as applicable.

D.) All makes and models of motorcycle are welcomed. Or it's a brand specific or special requirements club.

E.) We are a non-territorial club.

F.) We are a neutral club and do not wear any MC support patches.

G.) Women riders are welcomed and in many cases are club officers.

H.) We are an AMA chartered riding club.

J.) Do not offer forum links or web sites, It's better to refer them to a club officer.

K.) Do NOT brag about how large the local or national membership is.

L.) Do not volunteer club info. If they ask a question about the local chapter answer it if you can. If they start asking questions about the number of members, or the National chain of organization refer them to one of the club Officers.

5. Women in leadership positions or being a patchholder in motorcycle clubs, while not totally unheard of, is very rare. That's just the way it is. Most motorcycle clubs would also rather deal with a man if there is business to conduct. Most realize what a riding club is about & will for the most part accept a woman as an officer, and a woman officer will most likely be allowed to attend any meeting. Whether or not they will deal directly with a woman officer or not depends on the individual motorcycle club/chapter. There is no set rule for this and they will let you know if it's ok with them or not. Many motorcycle clubs do not care to deal with the National officers. They would prefer to deal with the local or state representatives.

6. If anyone knows a patchholder, don't let him/her throw the patchholders' name/nickname/club's name around like you're a great buddy of theirs (even if you are). Many clubs consider that as a major disrespect to the whole club.

7. Watch where you are when speaking about them, and never say anything about them in public because you never know when that woman, man, or kid in regular clothes standing near you might be one of them, or a "support member". Patchholders do not always wear their colors. By the time the story gets back to the top club in your area, it will have been changed many times over and could be blown up way out of proportion.

8. Anything said about them between club members is club business ONLY. If comments, even those said in a joking manner were to get out, problems could start. Discussion outside the privacy of the chapter can start rumors which could cause a lot of problems for not only the chapter, but also for other chapters in and out of the state.

9. If for some reason you have to say something while in public about a motorcycle club, take the person you're talking to aside, alone, and say ONLY what you need to say to get your meaning across. Say as little as possible so anyone else can't overhear it & misunderstand what you're talking about.

10. Watch where you wear your patch (RCs don't wear colors, colors are earned, not bought) and it's just common sense to stay in numbers when wearing the patch. (Some motorcycle clubs can be very territorial and some clubs don't see any difference between a RIDING CLUB and MOTORCYCLE CLUB, good or bad.) If you are unsure of the areas or places normally frequented by motorcycle clubs, find out from your club Officers. If you are planning on traveling and are concerned about what the situation may be in regard to the relationship with the local motorcycle clubs in the areas you'll be traveling through or staying in, talk to your local officer and ask if they can find something out by contacting the officers in the areas you will be in.

11. "SHOW THEM RESPECT." That's A #1 with them! (and worth repeating).

12. If you already know a patchholder, or get to know one in the future, don't just walk up to him/her and interrupt when they are with other members. Wait till he/she acknowledges you first and NEVER touch them or put your arm around them like a buddy. Don't put your hand out to shake theirs; wait for them to extend their hand first. If for some reason you're not acknowledged at all, then just keep walking. If you need to talk to an officer of a Motorcycle Club the proper way is to go through the Sgt at Arms or one of the patchholders.

13. You have to decide whether or not you want to show respect by going to any of their functions or if you want to avoid all of them all together. If you do choose to show respect and go, you can do this in a way that may make you feel more at ease by going to one of their "support's" functions instead of the top club's function (if they have a support patch then you're still indirectly showing the top club respect). But if you do go, then you also have to go to their rival clubs' function or you'll be telling everyone that you're not a "NEUTRAL" club as you said you were. (Example: If you go to the Club A's function then YOU HAVE TO GO to the Club B's function, etc..) You have to decide how you want to stay neutral, by going or not going and you have to let all the other area chapters know if you're going too, so they're not in the dark and we can ALL stay on top of things.

**** NOTE ***** A better way to support them and still give the appearance of being a neutral club is to attend only "open to the public" events that a motorcycle club may be sponsoring.

If you feel that you do want or need to go to a "limited event", then you'll have to go representing yourself as yourself, preferably without wearing any patches identifying your club. Remember, if you're wearing your club patch, you are considered by everyone to be representing your whole club. If anything were to turn sour, then your whole club could wind up with problems down the road. Also, once the rivals of that club you visited find out (and they will within a day or two), then those rivals will see you as no longer being neutral & you could be considered a rival of theirs too.

14. No CLB's (Chapter Location Bars), any territory rockers, or anything giving the appearance of a rocker should be worn with the RC patch. State flags, state logos may be worn in some areas and not in others. It's best to check with the local RC officers to make sure what is ok in your area.

15. If someone from a motorcycle club requests that you remove your vest/patch, don't argue. The best reply is, "No Problem" & politely take it off and let your Club Officer know what motorcycle club it was so they can deal with any potential problems. You normally will only get asked once.

16. If an establishment has a sign indicating "No Colors", even though your patch is not considered "colors", the vest should be removed out of respect to the other clubs and the policy of the establishment. While you may just be a Riding Club, it's only respectful to honor the house rules. Motorcycle clubs that honored the "house rules" would probably be deeply offended that you didn't. Also remember, many establishments choose to have this policy and it applies to all clubs that use any kind of patch; they do not distinguish between a MC and a RC. Be aware of the local motorcycle club hangouts & it's best not to wear the RC patch into them without an invitation.

17. Do not wear your Patch into a motorcycle club clubhouse unless you have asked if it's ok to do so or have been invited for a "sit down" with the officers of the motorcycle club, or been invited As a Riding Club Member, to attend a function there.

18. In regard to women who are with a MC club, but not in the club: Old Lady is not a negative or derogatory term, it's just a slang term commonly used. "Property Of" patches are their way of showing support for their man and the club he's in.
19. A patchholder may not, and many times will not, acknowledge your wife or girlfriend, especially upon a first meeting.
20. DO NOT touch or sit on a patchholder's bike unless invited to do so. Do not expect the invitation.
21. A prospect can usually be identified by the back patch they are wearing. There are many different ways motorcycle clubs identify prospects. They can have the rockers without the main patch. They can actually have a patch saying "PROSPECT". Some do not wear any patch, because all the Patchholders know who the prospects are. You want to treat a prospect or even someone you suspect is a prospect the same way you would treat a patchholder - with respect and courtesy.
22. Have absolutely no doubt that a motorcycle club is serious and many have been known to physically educate a person who shows disrespect or displays a bad attitude.
23. Be aware of the behavior and attitude of the other RC members who are with you (especially if anyone has been drinking) at events. If necessary, try to take action to avoid problems before they happen. For example, if someone appears to be getting too angry or loud and possibly disrespectful, take them aside or suggest going somewhere else until things settle down. You could also let one of the officers of the club know about the situation. If an incident should occur in spite of your efforts when no Officers are present, make sure to let your officers know as soon afterward as you can. If no club officers happen to be there, then ALL of the RC members that are there need to make the attempt to take that person aside, and strongly suggest that the offending RC member go somewhere else to settle down.
24. Be aware that problems created in one part of the country by a RC member or issues with the RC in one area have the potential to affect RC members in other areas and states.
25. The term Brother or Bro has special meaning to a Patchholder, do not call a Patchholder Brother or Bro. Their Brothers are fellow Patchholders and those that have earned that term.
26. Don't ever touch any part of another club member's colors, which includes the vest or jacket it's sewn on. That is considered serious disrespect, which could cause them to aggressively educate the un-informed.

Terminology (edited 5-20-07)

AMA = American Motorcycle Association

Ape Hangers = High handlebars so Biker's hands are at or above their shoulder height

Backyard = Where you ride often

Baffle = Sound deadening material that sits inside a muffler and quiets the exhaust note

Blockhead = The V-twin engine Harley produced 1984 -2000

Boneyard = Salvage yard for used bikes & parts

Brain Bucket = Small, beanie-style helmet (usually not DOT approved)

Broken Wings = a patch meaning the rider has been in a crash.

Burnout = Spinning the rear wheel while holding the front brake. Many places have contests to time how long it takes for the tire to blow out.

Cage = Automobile, Truck, Van..... not a motorcycle.

Cager = Automobile Driver

Chopper = Bike with the front end raked out or extended out.

Chromeitis = Someone that just cannot get enough aftermarket accessories (especially Chrome) is said to have Chromeitis.

Church = Clubhouse

CLAP = Chrome, Leather, Accessories, Performance

Clone = A motorcycle built to resemble and function like a Harley-Davidson motorcycle without actually being a Harley-Davidson motorcycle (the vehicle title will identify it as something other than a Harley-Davidson)

Colors = M/C Backpatch

Crash Bar = Engine Guard

CreditGlide = RUB's Motorcycle

Crotch Rocket = Sport bike

Counter steering = Turning the bikes handlebars in one direction and having it go in the opposite direction

Custom = Custom built bike

Cut = Vest with Club Colors

DILLIGAF = Do I Look Like I Give A Fuck

DOT = Department of Transportation

Drag Bars = Low, flat, straight handlebars

Evo / Evolution[®] = The Evolution engine (V-Twin, produced from 1984 – 2000)

Fathead = The Twin-Cam engine (V-Twin, produced from 1999 – Current Day)

Flathead = The Flathead engine (V-Twin, produced from 1929 – 1972)

Flash Patch = Generic patches usually sold at swap meets and shops.

Flying Low = Speeding

Forward Controls = Front pegs, shifter & rear brake control moved further forward to stretch your legs out

FTW - Fuck The World

Hard Tail = A motorcycle frame with no rear suspension

HOG = Harley Owner's Group

Independent = Someone not a part of any club or group, but normally a part of the biker culture.

Ink = Tattoo

Ink-Slinger = Tattoo Artist

Knuck / Knucklehead = The Knucklehead engine (V-Twin, produced from 1936 – 1947)

LE / LEO = Law Enforcement Officer/Official

Leaving Your Mark = Oil puddle on the ground where you parked your scoot

M/C = Motorcycle Club

MM = Motorcycle Ministry

MSF = Motorcycle Safety Foundation

OEM = Original Equipment Manufacturer

Pan / Panhead = The Panhead engine (V-Twin, produced from 1948 – 1965)

Pillion Pad = The passenger seat

Pipes = Exhaust System

Plugs = Spark Plugs

Pucker Factor = Refers to how tight your ass got on a close call

R/C = Riding Club

Rags = Also used to refer to Cut or Colors. In some areas it's used only when referring to a woman's colors.

Rat Bike - Usually an older bike that doesn't look like it's been taken care of at all.

Revolution™ = The Revolution engine, Harley-Davidson's first water-cooled engine (V-Twin, produced from 2002 – Current Day)

RICO = (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Laws passed for Law Enforcement to combat organized crime such as the mafia that are also used against some MC clubs.

Ridin' Bitch = Riding as Passenger

Rocker = Part of M/C colors which usually designates geographic location or territory

RUB= Rich Urban Biker

Rubber = Tire

Rubber Side Down = Ride Safe; Don't Lay the Bike Down

Run = Road trip with your Buds, most of the time with a place to go to in mind

Scoot = Motorcycle

Shiny Side Up = Ride Safe; Don't Lay the Bike Down

Shovel / Shovelhead = The Shovelhead engine (V-Twin, produced from 1966 – 1984)

Sissy Bar = Passenger Backrest

Slab = Interstate

Sled = Motorcycle

Softail® = A motorcycle frame whose suspension is hidden, making it resemble a hard tail

Straight Pipes = An exhaust system with no Baffles

Tats = Tattoos

Tail Gunner = The last rider in a group

Thirteen "13" - Common patch worn by "Outlaw" bikers. Can have several meanings. The most common held meaning is it's being the 13th letter of the alphabet "M" and stands for Marijuana or Meth. It's also known to stand for the original or "Mother" chapter of an M/C. In the last few years, many places are saying the "M" stands for Motorcycle.

In the "Ese"/ Mexican community "13" is often used to represent the "South Side" and "La Eme" (Mexican Mafia).

Turn your back = To completely disassociate from a person or club.

Twisties = Section of road with a lot of turns

Wannabe = Refers to someone that tries to pretend to be a part of the biker lifestyle

Wrench = Mechanic

XXF-FXX / XXFOREVER - FOREVERXX = Patch worn by MC members to represent their total commitment to the club and every other member of that club.
(XX stands for the name of the club)

1%er = If you read the papers or listen to the news, the media and law enforcement agents have redefined the term "1%er". The term was first used in the 60's to describe some of the people that attended the motorcycle events back then. The AMA (American Motorcycle Association) stated that 99% of the people at their events were god fearing and family oriented. The other 1% were hard riding, hard partying, non mainstream type people. Thus the term 1%er was born. Some of the early bikers embraced the term and decided to call themselves 1%ers. It did not mean that they were law breakers or low life individuals. They were simply men that rode their motorcycles seven days a week in all kinds of weather, liked to drink and raise a little hell. Sometime during the 80's law enforcement changed the meaning of the 1%er to what they wanted it to represent. It didn't matter that their meaning was incorrect, they just spoon fed it to the general public and the courts as they had so many other things.

Motorcycle Clubs are rich in history and tradition. One of those traditions is the wearing of a 1%er patch on our vests and referring to ourselves as a 1%er club. The 1%er definition as we see it is one that explains our commitment to Biking and Brotherhood. We ride our motorcycles every day rain or shine. We ride thousands of miles each year with our Brothers to attend parties, social events, funerals and just plain spending time together. We work, have families and do all the things that our neighbors do. In addition to that we belong to a Brotherhood that we are able to combine with our day to day lives. To say that 1%er's are criminals or people of a lesser moral code than the rest of society is a tainted opinion.

"Lick and Stick" - This is a temporary pillion back seat placed on the fender through the use of suction cups.

"Fender" - A female passenger who is not an Old Lady but simply a lady a biker has invited for a ride. (Also Fender Fluff)

"Moonlight Mile" - A short adventure with a lady friend away from camp.

"Running 66" - It's very rare but at times it's necessary to ride without a club patch or cut. This is also known as "riding incognito".

"Shower Head" - Refers to the new Harley-Davidson V-Rod motorcycle motor. It's water cooled motor features what looks to be a showerhead attachment on it's right side.

"Broad" - A female entertainer for the club. She may be a dancer or at times a prostitute.



QUICK TIPS: MSF's Guide to Group Riding

Motorcycling is primarily a solo activity, but for many, riding as a group -- whether with friends on a Sunday morning ride or with an organized motorcycle rally -- is the epitome of the motorcycling experience. Here are some tips to help ensure a fun and safe group ride:

Arrive prepared. Arrive on time with a full gas tank.

Hold a riders' meeting. Discuss things like the route, rest and fuel stops, and hand signals (see diagrams on next page). Assign a lead and sweep (tail) rider. Both should be experienced riders who are well-versed in group riding procedures. The leader should assess everyone's riding skills and the group's riding style.

Keep the group to a manageable size, ideally five to seven riders. If necessary, break the group into smaller sub-groups, each with a lead and sweep rider.

Ride prepared. At least one rider in each group should pack a cell phone, first-aid kit, and full tool kit, so the group is prepared for any problem that they might encounter.

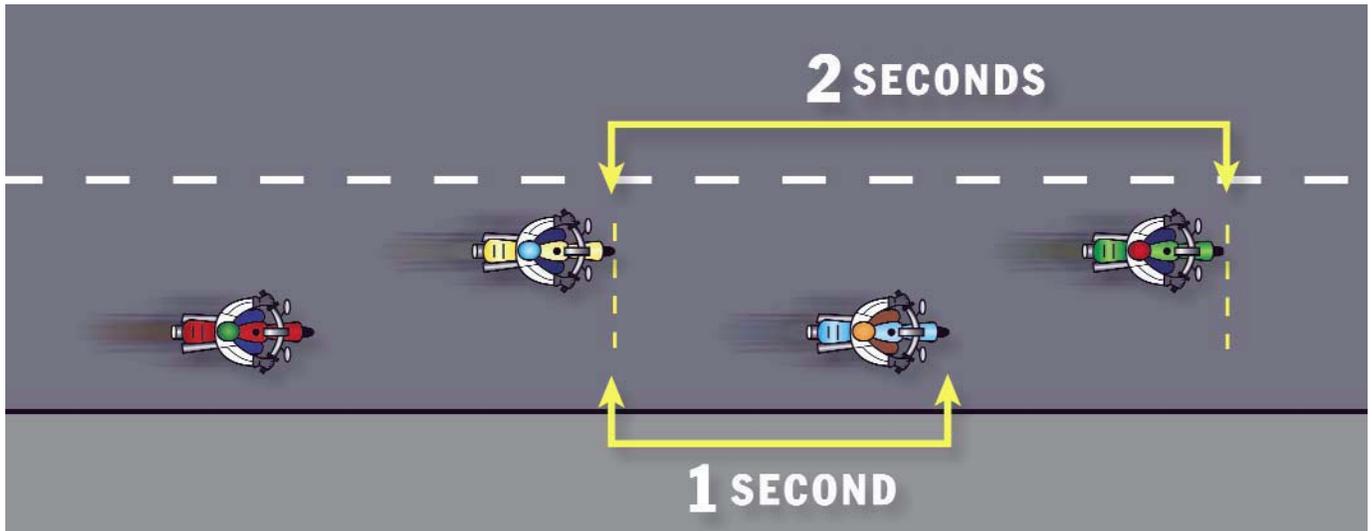
Ride in formation. The staggered riding formation (see diagram below) allows a proper space cushion between motorcycles so that each rider has enough time and space to maneuver and to react to hazards. The leader rides in the left third of the lane, while the next rider stays at least one second behind in the right third of the lane; the rest of the group follows the same pattern. A single-file formation is preferred on a curvy road, under conditions of poor visibility or poor road surfaces, entering/leaving highways, or other situations where an increased space cushion or maneuvering room is needed.

Avoid side-by-side formations, as they reduce the space cushion. If you suddenly needed to swerve to avoid a hazard, you would not have room to do so. You don't want handlebars to get entangled.

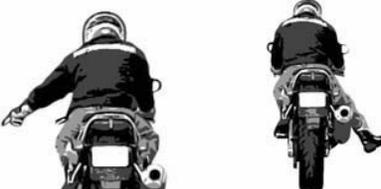
Periodically check the riders following in your rear view mirror. If you see a rider falling behind, slow down so they may catch up. If all the riders in the group use this technique, the group should be able to maintain a fairly steady speed without pressure to ride too fast to catch up.

If you're separated from the group, don't panic. Your group should have a pre-planned procedure in place to regroup. Don't break the law or ride beyond your skills to catch up.

For mechanical or medical problems, use a cell phone to call for assistance as the situation warrants.



MSF's Guide to Group Riding: Hand Signals

<p>Stop - arm extended straight down, palm facing back</p> 	<p>Single File - arm and index finger extended straight up</p> 	<p>Turn Signal On - open and close hand with fingers and thumb extended</p> 
<p>Slow Down - arm extended straight out, palm facing down</p> 	<p>Double File - arm with index and middle finger extended straight up</p> 	<p>Fuel - arm out to side pointing to tank with finger extended</p> 
<p>Speed Up - arm extended straight out, palm facing up</p> 	<p>Hazard in Roadway - on the right, point with right foot; on the left, point with left hand</p> 	<p>Refreshment Stop - fingers closed, thumb to mouth</p> 

You Lead/Come - arm extended upward 45 degrees, palm forward pointing with index finger, swing in arc from back to front



Highbeam - tap on top of helmet with open palm down



Comfort Stop - forearm extended, fist clenched with short up and down motion



Follow Me - arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward



Pull Off - arm positioned as for right turn, forearm swung toward shoulder

