



# Police Unity Tour

Southern California, Chapter VII  
Handbook

## I. Introduction

Each May, to coincide with National Police Week, The Police Unity Tour bicycles to Washington D.C. to honor the service and sacrifice of America's Law Enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty.

This publication will serve as a resource for anyone participating in the *Police Unity Tour (The Tour)*.

The primary purpose of *Police Unity Tour*, is to raise monetary support for and awareness of the *National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial (NLEOM)* in Washington D.C.

## II. History of the Police Unity Tour

The Tour started in 1997 with only 18 riders who raised \$18,000. Over 1,300 law enforcement officers from across the country participated in 2011 and raised \$1.5 million. The Tour in its 15 year history has raised nearly \$10 million. Each rider, motor, and support person is responsible to raise a minimum of \$1,800 in donations to participate.

The California Chapter was established in 2001 with three riders from the Riverside Police Department, the Los Angeles Police Department and the California Highway Patrol. Our Chapter has grown in strength over the last 10 years and in 2011 we had 300 riders along with support personnel.

### **Our Motto:**

**“WE RIDE FOR THOSE WHO DIED”**

Today, the Tour is the largest single sponsor of the **NLEOM**.



## III. Membership

The Tour requires a *serious commitment* of both time and energy. New applicants that wish to ride must be sworn law enforcement officers (active, reserve or retired). Returning riders must be members in good standing.

Support team members may be non-sworn personnel and are typically law enforcement personnel, family, survivors, or trusted friends. No one who is on modified-duty, relieved of standard duty (with or without pay), under indictment, or charged criminally may participate. **All applicants and members must abide by their department's rules and regulations, the by-laws of The Unity Tour, and the rules of this handbook.** The *Police Unity Tour, Inc.* reserves the right to refuse membership to any applicant for any reason.

### A. Member Designations

Members are either “riders” or “support staff”. Riders are members who will ride bicycles and support staff are members who drive or ride in a support vehicle and work to provide logistical support during the Tour.

#### IV. Applications

**Applications are accepted on a "first come first served" basis.** Each application must be accompanied by a non-refundable check for \$125. A waiting list is established for those who were not initially accepted because spaces were not available. Occasionally, there are a few people who drop out for various personal or professional reasons. Registration for the Tour opens August 1<sup>st</sup> for the following year.

##### A. Requirements of Riders

- Participation in fundraising (see next section)
- Raise at least the minimum donation for the rider or support category
- A quality "road" or "mountain" bicycle for riders.
- An ANSI or SNELL certified bicycle helmet.
- Purchase and wear the approved Unity Tour uniform, jersey, etc.
- Attendance at official meetings and training rides.
- Completion of required paperwork (Registration/Medical/Waiver/etc.)
- Attend the host city's welcoming ceremony.
- Attend the NLEOM Candlelight Vigil Service on May 13<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC. Uniform requirements as per your department's policy.
- **Under no circumstance will alcohol be consumed during working hours or while wearing any form of Police Unity Tour attire/uniform.**

#### V. Fundraising

Fundraising occurs throughout the year. However, applicants shall raise and submit the required amount of funds by **April 1<sup>th</sup>**. The Chapter Board of Directors will

designate the minimum donation for each rider or support member each year. If a member does not reach the minimum donation by the April 1<sup>th</sup> deadline, the monies raised will be honored as a donation to the NLEOM, however, the rider/support member will not be allowed to participate. No monies will be refunded.

Each member has an individual account set up by the Treasurer and they may check on their "account balance" at any time. The Southern California Chapter will not supplement any member's required minimum donation.

Any person or organization, other than riders or support members that makes a donation of \$1000.00 or more will have their name placed on the sponsors page of the website. Riders are also encouraged to obtain goods that will assist the **Unity Tour** (water, food, bike parts, etc.) Riders should check with the Support Team Coordinator, **before** any arrangements for support supply donations are made.

Members should also participate in any sales, special events, etc. that involve fund- raising. It is important to try to make every meeting in order to remain informed about the most recent developments in Tour planning and events. The Chapter VII website ([www.socalput.com](http://www.socalput.com)) should also be checked frequently for updates.

#### VI. Airline Reservations

All members are responsible for their own transportation to and from the east coast. This includes making the reservations and paying for the flight.

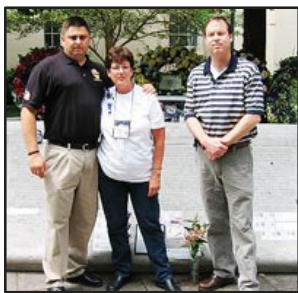
#### VII. Bracelets of the Fallen

Chapter VII riders will generally be riding for those officers from the southwestern states, however riders may request to ride for a specific officer who died in the line of

duty within the calendar year preceding the start of each Unity Tour. It is the rider's responsibility to learn about that particular officer ([www.odmp.org](http://www.odmp.org)) and to contact the department and/or the deceased officer's family prior to the Unity Tour.

The member should inform the family about the Unity Tour and that the member will be wearing their officer's bracelet while bicycling to Washington, D.C.

Arrangements can be made to meet the officer's family members and/or the department members at the Memorial to present the bracelet to them. If the family or department will not be at the Memorial, the bracelet may be sent with a letter to the family



or the department after the member returns home from the Unity Tour.

### VIII. Training

Riders must train and be in excellent physical condition for the Tour. Medical clearance must be obtained prior to training. Training rides will be scheduled and applicants should make every effort to attend. Riders are observed and evaluated by the executive board, ride marshals, and support staff. A member may be asked to relinquish their position as a rider and participate as support staff if their performance is not up to the standards required.

On training rides, members should be prepared to make their own repairs if necessary. A visit to a reputable bike shop is suggested. First, have the bike properly fitted to you and also have the bike checked to see if it will endure the varying conditions. Professional bicycle mechanics will be available throughout the Tour in May and will have tubes, tires, and a variety

of other standard parts and equipment necessary for repairs. It is recommended that you have available any non-standard parts that could be needed.

Registration closes on December 31<sup>st</sup> at midnight so there is ample time to train. Riders should begin a program of cross training (cardio, weights, etc.) as soon as they have been accepted to the Tour. Spin classes during the winter months are an excellent start.

Be mindful that the Tour route consists of a 70-mile day, followed by a 100-mile day then a 50-mile day. Wind, temperature extremes, rain and hills are present to some degree on most of the Tour days and should be taken into account. Riders will be expected to maintain an average speed of 15 MPH.



For first-timers, it is suggested that they team up with a veteran of at least one Tour. It may be very helpful in discovering what is needed, especially in the area of training and clothing. Riding in a large pack is different than riding alone. Every effort should be made to train at the same speed as the Tour rides. Consultation with a personal trainer and bicycling publications is recommended. Pay special attention to diet and water consumption. A Camelback® or similar hydration system is recommended when training, however is not necessary during the ride since support crews will have water accessible. It is critical to drink fluids or eat food that will replace your electrolytes. Water alone, is not sufficient and could cause problems such as dehydration.

### IX. The Tour

The Tour begins with a "**Send Off Ceremony**". The Ceremony will be held in Somerset, N. J. at 0700 hrs. on May 10th.

The ceremony is open to the public and all sponsors should receive an invitation.



### A. Safety/Equipment

*Everyone's safety is of the utmost importance.*

#### **Bicycles:**

Helmets, eye protection and glove use is required at all times during training and the Tour itself.

#### **Motors:**

Helmets and eye protection must be worn at all times during the Tour regardless of state law.

Eye protection shall be shatterproof, scratch free, give a clear view to either side and allow air to pass through to prevent fogging.

Communication, such as calling out "gravel" or "passing on your left" to other riders is not only important for safety, but is also courteous. Riders shall not pass on the right.

### B. Ride Marshals

*"Ride Marshals"* will be assigned to monitor the riders, keep track of times on breaks as well as ensure the safety of all riders. **The white ride marshal jerseys are no longer part of the uniform and shall not be worn during the Tour.**

Riders **SHALL NOT** go more than two wide, depending on road conditions. The support staff, motors, "ride marshals" or executive board members will advise when to be in double or single column formation. Generally we will have one entire traffic lane available to ride. Riders should stay as far right as is practical to allow motors to safely pass on the left.

### C. Other Safety Considerations:

- Keep in mind that the motors need room

to pass the riders to block the intersections, lights etc. Please stay to the right and out of the way of the motors and call out loud when a motor is passing.

- Calling and pointing out road hazards, such as gravel, glass, potholes, etc. to other riders is both important for safety and courteous.
- It is paramount that the group stays together. Remember, this is a "UNITY" tour. The two lead riders will set the pace. **Do not pass the lead riders** unless you have permission to do so. The lead riders will have communication with the rear cover riders. If the lead is slowing on a downhill section it might be to allow the slower riders an opportunity to catch up. The ride will, at times, be too slow for some and at times, too fast for others. This is just the nature of a pack style ride consisting of this many cyclists of different skill levels.
- The pace of the ride should allow members to talk amongst themselves and get acquainted. Please be cautious while conversing with other riders and watch where you are going at all times. **Many a mishap has occurred because someone took his or her eyes off the road for a moment.**
- **Under no circumstances will riders be permitted to hold on to any moving vehicle.**
- There are schedules and time constraints, particularly on the last day. Members that cannot keep up with the group may be asked to get into a support vehicle to rest. This is for a short term only. If a member cannot **consistently** stay with the group, then they should re-evaluate their position as rider. Also, injury or illness may require the rider to withdraw during the Tour. ***It is preferred that the individual rider***

*assess their own abilities and withdraw as a rider before having to be asked.*

- **Any request by an executive board member, ride marshal, motor officer or support staff to get into a support vehicle shall be honored.**
- Medical personnel accompanying the Tour shall examine any rider who falls or crashes. Transportation to a medical facility may be required. A roommate/ride partner and/or support staff member should accompany an injured rider. All members' medical forms will be readily accessible by Medic 1. The medical form should accompany the injured rider to the facility.
- A mechanical breakdown may require the rider and bike to get into a support vehicle for repair. The Tour has excellent bike support and most repairs are done quickly and effectively. Riders should not bring more than one bicycle unless prior permission is obtained. Bicycles will need to be stored and transported back, so it is necessary to know in advance, the number involved.

#### **D. Rest & Meal Stops**

Most stops have been pre-planned based on distance and terrain. Other stops may occur



as a result of accidents, weather or for other safety concerns. Stops are kept to a minimum. A

two-minute whistle, horn, or siren blast will sound, signaling riders to get ready to start to ride. Any rider not ready to leave after the two minutes have passed may have to get into a support vehicle.

Water and “support food” such as bananas, energy-bars, bagels etc. will be supplied by the Tour. Breakfast and lunch will be provided by the Tour. Dinner is the responsibility of the member. Hotels are located close to a variety of restaurants.

#### **X. Support Staff/Team and Support Vehicles (“Support”)**

All persons who participate as “Support” are required to raise funds, attend meetings and must meet all eligibility requirements for membership. (Civilian support members are permitted to operate and ride in support vehicles during the Tour). Only authorized drivers will drive support vehicles.

The Tour will have several rental vehicles. Authorized law enforcement agency vehicles and personal vehicles may also be used in the Tour. Vehicles not specifically needed in the escorted tour will not be permitted to drive in the caravan. Occasionally, a law enforcement agency will supply manpower and vehicle(s) to assist the Tour.

##### **A. Lead and Rear Cover Riders**

Two riders will be designated “**Lead Riders**”. Both should be familiar with the route. Lead riders will call out road hazards, turns, etc. These riders will also monitor the pace of the other riders. Lead riders will have radios and be in constant communication with support vehicles and the “**Rear Cover Riders**”. The lead riders should ensure that any intersections are safe and clear for the other riders before they proceed through. Rear cover riders will also have radios and stay in constant communication with the lead riders and support vehicles. Rear cover riders should report any riders that are leaving the pack and the reason (mechanical, restroom, injury, etc.)

##### **B. Other Support Vehicles**

Trucks/trailers will carry luggage, extra bikes and support food and drink. Mini busses and vans are used for picking up and shuttling riders to hotels when they cannot keep up with the tour group.

Motorcycle escorts are **invaluable**. Motor officers will serve as lead vehicles, block intersections, on/off ramps, driveways and control traffic, etc. while they ride up and down the line of bicyclists. They also advise the ride marshals or executive board members on the status of stragglers, riders not staying in line, road detours ahead, and generally monitor the safety of the bicyclists.

### C. Duties of Support Personnel

Support personnel are responsible for the maintenance of their vehicle. Fluid checks, gasoline, air pressure, etc. should be checked at least daily. Support personnel should also assist the riders during rest stops with water, food, etc. and make sure there is enough supply to go around. They will also pick up riders with mechanical problems and riders that fall behind. Support personnel will make appropriate notifications during the Tour as needed. (escorts, lunch stops, etc).

Please show respect and appreciation for all support personnel. Support personnel work very hard and this ride could not be completed without them.

### XI. Hotels, overnight stays, and D.C.

Hotels for the Tour are generally reserved one year in advance. The Hotel Coordinator has arranged for sleeping accommodations. (The location may vary from year to year depending on the route taken and availability).

**All personnel must respect the rules of the hotel/overnight area as we represent law enforcement and are obligated to demonstrate the proper decorum of our**

### **profession.**

The Tour provides the room and the member must pay any additional costs.

**Prior approval by the Hotel Coordinator must be obtained for any non-member staying with the *Unity Tour* in any hotel during and immediately after the Tour.**

The Tour will cover the hotel expenses for each member (double occupancy) during the ride and in Washington, D.C. to enable members to attend the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Candlelight Vigil. Attendance at this service is mandatory. For a single occupant room, the member will be responsible for the additional half of the room rate in advance. Members may request a roommate assignment. All other members will be assigned a roommate.

On May 14<sup>th</sup> the annual Police Emerald Society parade occurs. This parade includes Pipes and Drum Corps from all over as well as a caravan of antique and custom police vehicles. May 15<sup>th</sup> is National Peace Officers Memorial Day and services are held on the west lawn of The Capitol. The President of the United States is typically the keynote speaker.

Members wishing to opt out of the overnight on May 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> will be responsible for notifying the Hotel Coordinator prior to April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Payment of all additional room costs must be made by the member by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Any roommate requests must be submitted to the Hotel Coordinator by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Hotels have set deadlines that the *Unity Tour* must meet for reservation changes and final rooming lists, therefore no exceptions or deviations from the above policy can be made.**

### A. Luggage

We use a two- bag system. Your main bag will be sent ahead and will not be accessible after the ride starts. The three day or second bag will be no larger than 12w x 22L x 13H and will contain everything you need for the three days of riding/travel. The three day/second bag will be unloaded each evening at the hotels for each rider and placed in the rider's assigned room. The three day/second bag will be brought down each morning by the rider at the designated time and loaded into the truck. Please keep your three day/second bag to the correct size as the support crew has to carry it to your room.

**Make sure all your luggage has been tagged with the appropriate Red or Blue Unity Tour tags provided by the Tour.**

### **B. Bike Box**

Riders are required to purchase, rent, or borrow a bicycle transportation case or box for the Tour. Bicycles will be shipped via air cargo 5 days prior to our departure for New Jersey. It is recommended that you take your bicycle to a reputable bicycle shop to pack your bicycle. If you wish to pack your own bike, there are instruction on the website under "Downloads/Bike Packing 101". Orders for bicycle cases will be taken for those wishing to purchase one. The bicycles will be re-assembled with the assistance of bicycle mechanics upon arrival, if needed.

### **C. Airline Firearm Regulations**

Firearms shall be unloaded and stored in a hard-case lockable container. The container shall be locked and placed inside your checked baggage, separate from the ammunition. The ammunition shall be placed in a ammunition storage container/box, such as the box you receive it in from the store or range. It is recommended that you use luggage with TSA approved locks, so that you may lock your luggage at check-in.

### **D. Arrival in Washington, DC**

Unless other arrangements are made, all

chapters of the Tour will meet at a predetermined time and location (RFK Stadium). All riders will be wearing their Police Unity Tour jersey and black or blue bicycle shorts. All chapters will then ride together to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.



Immediately after arriving, the Tour C.E.O., Exec. Director, and each chapter president will present one ceremonial check to the director of the N.L.E.O.M. Sponsors, family, friends, and co-workers are encouraged to be present at the Memorial when the *Police Unity Tour* arrives and for the ceremony that follows. The arrival ceremony is typically held at 1400 hours on May 12, at the N.L.E.O.M. After the ceremony, members will check into their respective hotel rooms and most will prepare themselves for an evening in DC.

### **E. The Candlelight Vigil**

On the afternoon and evening of the Candlelight Vigil (May 13<sup>th</sup>), *Unity Tour* members will be assigned certain tasks to assist NLEOM staff. While not all members will have designated positions or responsibilities, **all members are required to attend the Vigil.**

In the past, assisting visitors at the wall and greeting survivors as they get off the busses and escorting survivors to their seats have been part of the responsibilities. Class A dress uniform, white gloves, hat



and mourning band for badge are required for uniform personnel.

Sworn, plain clothed law enforcement officers, retired or members without uniforms will dress in appropriate attire. Suggested attire would be khaki pants and chapter polo shirt w/ PUT jacket if applicable, and with badge or credentials draped. Remember that members are representing their agency and the Police Unity Tour. This night is for the survivors not the Police Unity Tour. Please be mindful of this. Some members may be asked to help in other ways in D.C. Please make yourself available to assist as needed.

The Vigil concludes with the reading of the names that are being added to the wall. **Out of respect for the attending survivors, all members are strongly urged to remain until the last name has been read and the ceremony has concluded.**

After the vigil there is usually some type of reception sponsored by the Washington, D.C. F.O.P. Traditionally, members have worn their *Police Unity Tour* jackets to the reception. This is acceptable, however, again, be mindful that you are representing the *Police Unity Tour* and your agency whenever that jacket is worn.

#### F. Clothing

*Police Unity Tour* jerseys and jackets are purchased from a single provider selected by the The Police Unity Tour National Chapter. All Police Unity Tour jackets and jerseys purchased by the Police Unity Tour are for members use while they are in good standing with the Tour. All orders will be placed and distributed by the chapter. See the website for ordering instructions.

***Alteration of Unity Tour clothing is expressly prohibited.***

#### G. Jerseys

The Tour jersey is “relaxed” fit. Riders that prefer the more traditional European fit

should order two sizes smaller in the “relaxed” fit. Only the agency patch may be worn centered and sewn on the middle pocket on the back of the jersey. Only one patch is permitted on the jersey. Jerseys must be purchased at a rider’s expense through the Southern California Chapter at the time of registration. Jerseys are for riders only and **will not** be worn by non-riders. The privilege of wearing the jersey is an honor that is earned by riding in the Tour.

Riders wearing the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jersey shall not have department patches, sponsor logos or advertisements affixed to the jersey. The 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary jersey shall not be worn on May 12<sup>th</sup>, the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, going into D.C.

Jerseys shall not be given to, or sold to, any organization, group or member of the general public.

Jerseys may only be presented to groups, sponsors, organizations or survivors if they are in a static display or encased in a shadow box or frame.

The white ride marshal jerseys are no longer part of the Unity Tour uniform and shall not be worn anytime during the tour.

#### H. Cycling Jacket

The lightweight traditional cycling jacket runs true to size. If you like “extra” room in your cycling jacket, order a size larger. The agency patch may be worn centered and sewn on the middle pocket on the back of the jacket. Only one patch is permitted on the jacket.

#### I. Support/Motor Clothing

Support team members will receive the designated royal blue polo-shirts with “Police Unity Tour” in white letters on the back, Police Unity Tour patch on the right shoulder/sleeve, and may have a departmental patch on the left shoulder/sleeve, from the chapter.

They may also purchase the duty or cycling jacket at the time of registration.

Support members may wear jeans during the first two days of the Tour, but must wear

black or dark blue pants on the third day when entering D.C. Cargo type pants are acceptable.

Motors may wear their department uniform or black/dark blue cargo pants with the Unity Tour polo shirt during the first two days of the Tour, but must wear their dept. uniform on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day when entering D.C.



#### **J. Bicycle Shorts / Pants**

Bicycle shorts must be either the tight fit cycling shorts or the baggy mountain bike style and must be black or dark blue in color.

Long pants must be black or dark blue in color.

Under no circumstances shall sponsor logos, advertisements or patches be affixed to the shorts or pants.

#### **K. Duty Jacket**

A heavy “duty” style jacket is available for purchase. The department patch is sewn on the left sleeve and *Unity Tour* patch is sewn on the right sleeve. An American Flag patch (2" X 3" with gold border) above the front left pocket is also permitted.

Name tags may be affixed to the right side chest and shall consist of the members first name or initial and last name. No rank shall be attached.

No other patches or writing may be applied to the jacket.

### **XII Miscellaneous**

Many members wish to honor the memory of a lost officer or comrade while riding. They may do so by attaching mementos to their bicycle. All such mementos should be in good taste and are subject to the final decision of the chapter president. Members will be asked to remove items not directly related to the mission or dignity of The Tour, or approved by the Chapter President.

### **XIII. Tax Information**

*Police Unity Tour, Inc.* is a “not for profit” organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Service Code 501(c)(3). Donations to the *Police Unity Tour* are tax deductible.

The tax identification number is #26-4384010

