

SAFETY OFFICER

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Tallahassee HOG GROUP RIDING (Part 1)

First, let me start off by saying hello for the first time, and to say it is an honor to step in to represent Tallahassee HOG as your Safety Officer. My goal is to remind you what we have already learned about motorcycle safety, and if I am lucky, a few things that may be new to you. So here we go!

Your leadership committee has asked that I remind everyone about the cornerstones of good Group Riding.

PRE-RIDE:

Each Road Captain has been issued a Tallahassee HOG approved Pre-Ride checklist. The checklist was designed to "touch base" to get everyone on the same page and cover the basics of the group ride you are about to embark on. Topics include: introductions, the route, hazards, speeds, hand signals, group riding rules, any planned stops, and important information to the ride. Please pay close attention and ask questions or address any concerns you may have. This is the Road Captain's road map to help keep you safe.

COMMUNICATION:

Good communication is one of the most important aspects of good group riding etiquette, and it starts before the ride begins. This is a key component of making sure everyone is on the same page before you set out. Sena's, Cardo's and other communication devices are great, but are not required and do not preclude the use of hand signals. We use the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) Hard Signals. Learn em' and pass em' back, even if you are using communication devices!

RIDE FORMATION:

We ride in two different formations: Staggered and Single File. Most of our rides are designed and planned for a staggered formation to minimize our traffic foot print as well as our safety. But from time to time, road conditions and hazards will dictate a single file formation. Tips for safe staggered formations:

- a. **12 second rule.** Although we rely on the Road Captain to ensure safety in our group and movements, always keep your head on a swivel and watch for possible hazards road emergencies 12 seconds ahead of you. Things happen fast and riders in front of you may have to react before hands signals can be given!
- b. **2 second rule.** Always maintain a 2 second gap between you and the rider directly in front of you.
- c. **1 second rule.** Always maintain a 1 second gap between you and the rider to the right or left of you.
- d. **Rider leaves the formation.** If a rider breaks down or "taps" out of the group and leaves the formation, fill the gap. The proper way to fill the gap is for all riders directly behind and in the same line as the rider that left the formation is to move forward. **Do not criss cross to fill the gap!**
- e. **Stay together.** Always maintain your distance. This keeps the group tight, prevents group encroachment by other vehicles, enhances communication, and gives our group a visibility advantage.

Thanks for reading and stay tuned for Part Two.

BE SAFE!