



WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION RIDE MARSHAL MANUAL

RIDE MARSHAL OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

RIDE MARSHAL PURPOSE:

WABA Ride Marshals perform two very important functions for WABA. As a Ride Marshal, you are WABA's eyes on the road and the first line of response if there is an incident involving any ride participants. Thus, you are responsible for alerting the WABA Emergency Response Staff about any incidents and 911 if someone needs medical help or it's an emergency. Secondly, you are a representative of WABA and you are to set a positive example for other cyclists during the ride.

Ride Marshals provide a friendly and welcoming ride environment for all participants and provide encouragement to other riders. Your participation in the ride as a volunteer ride marshal and how you interact with other riders can "make it or break it" for participants.

RIDE MARSHAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Respond to Emergencies & Incidents:

Since WABA staff can't go along for the ride and see everything that happens along the route, **YOU are the eyes and ears of what happens.** When an incident or crash occurs, there is often a marshal present in that group. We have a 1 to 10 marshal to rider ratio. If a marshal is not present in a small group when an incident or crash occurs, it is likely that a marshal will soon pass by and can then stop.

To respond to an incident, follow the **Response Procedures for Marshals**, which is listed at the end of this manual. To give an overview of the Response Procedures:

If someone in your group is involved in an incident or crash, or if you pass by a group of riders on our ride event (which can be signified by the colored wristband and cue sheets), **please stop and respond to the incident.**

If someone is having trouble with their bicycle, offer your expertise to help fix a flat or mechanical issue if you feel confident assisting (it's surprising how many people get flats on our rides and how often they don't know how to fix it!). Don't feel as if you need to donate or offer your spare tube or CO2 cartridge, but if they have the supplies or if you can fix it with a patch kit, please help them out or, alternatively, encourage them to leave the ride early if they don't want to continue.

If a minor incident occurs such as a blister or bump on the knee from falling while clipped in, offer first aid supplies to the person. You are not required to perform first aid yourself, only to offer supplies from your marshal kit that we provide you. If a person on our ride is resting on the side of the road, see if they

are okay and need help with navigation or want to join your group. If they seem like they may be dehydrated or nearing physical exhaustion (signs can include extreme sleepiness, headache, dizziness, or lightheadedness), encourage them to drink more water or eat a snack if they have it, or retire early and call a friend to come pick them up.

If the incident or crash is major and it seems like the person needs medical attention, or if the crash involved a vehicle, **it is a very good idea to call 911 to have the police arrive and take down a police report** (and to request an ambulance if the person is injured). **If the incident or crash is major, you must call the WABA Emergency Response Staff** to alert WABA of the incident and let us know if we are needed to respond and drive out to provide assistance, speaking to the police if the crash involved a vehicle, or collecting the injured person's bike if they leave in an ambulance.

At the end of the ride, make sure you turn in any Incident Report Cards to the WABA table or the Event Planner at the finish location or post-ride celebration.

During the week following the ride, you will also receive an email asking you to complete a Marshal Report in the form of a Google Survey online. We ask that everyone complete this form as it is crucial in letting us know of any incident that went unreported the day of the event as well as useful for collecting information about the route that we can use to improve the event for next time.

2. Be a Positive Representation of WABA and Bicycling:

You are representing WABA while marshaling one of our rides. From the time you leave the start location, during each pit stop, along the route, and until the time you leave the finish line or post-ride celebration you are a representative of this organization, and we ask that you act accordingly.

A positive representation means biking responsibly and abiding by traffic laws. Just don't be a jerk. Show respect to all other road users. Although **as a WABA ride marshal you should follow ALL traffic laws**, please make sure that you always:

- **Stop at all red lights**
- **Yield to pedestrians**
- **Be predictable** (*i.e. use hand signals when turning to let cars know your intentions*)
- **Do not ride more than two abreast**

3. Help Make the Event a Positive & Fun Experience for Participants:

This experience should be fun for both you and other ride participants. By being friendly and welcoming to other cyclists, you'll enjoy the ride even more.

Share cycling advice with others. Chat up cyclists in your group and talk about how long you've been riding, what bikes you have, how you got involved with WABA, etc. Be prepared to answer basic questions about WABA and what the organization does (hint: we're an advocacy organization that works to make it safer and more enjoyable to ride a bike in DC, MD, and VA, and we teach people how to bike and how to bike more confidently).

And, as you're biking, make sure to call out or let others know about road hazards like big potholes or debris in the roadway. People are going to depend and count on you for help with the little things like when turns are coming up, so you're encouraged to use hand signals and/or call out upcoming turns.

Lastly, make the event a positive experience for ALL participants. If you notice someone along the ride who doesn't have anyone to bike with, invite them to join you. If you notice people who are on our ride that may look lost, stop and inquire if they need help navigating. Biking is always more fun with friends, so make some on this ride.

RESPONSE PROCEDURES FOR MARSHALS

Emergency or Incident Response Procedures – Ride Marshals who are the first to come upon the scene of an incident or crash, or if you are present when it occurs, should follow the procedures described below:

1. **Check the scene.** Don't put yourself in danger. First, try to ensure the injured person is safe and out of further harm's way. Also try to prevent other cyclists from being involved in the incident.
2. **Check the injured cyclist(s).** Verbally ask the injured how they are. Look them over for visual signs of injury. Use your best initial judgment to determine if they are safe to move off the road out of traffic, and if they need Emergency Medical Services.

If it doesn't appear to be a major injury, help them get out of traffic and to a safe spot to rest on the side of the road. Move their bike to the side of the road too. If the crash involved a vehicle, try to snap a photo with your cell phone of where the car and bike ended up, which could prove helpful if the cyclist needs it for future action. Offer your first aid supplies to the injured cyclists. Do not go beyond the medical training you have received.

Do Not Move a seriously injured cyclist that is lying on the ground, even if they are in the middle of the roadway. Moving an injured cyclist could cause severe damage if there is injury to the neck or back. This is especially true if the cyclist has lost consciousness. Do not move them, but rather form a circle of protection around them with any other marshals or riders to protect them from traffic and call 911 immediately. Keep the cyclist down until medical attention arrives.

If you need additional help and another marshal is not nearby to assist, go up to and pick out a specific person in the crowd and give them clear instructions on how to help.

3. **Call 911.** If it's clear the injured cyclists needs medical attention, YOU should call 911 immediately. Don't ask anyone else to do it or have the injured person do it, you should make the call and describe the situation and give directions to the closest intersection, using your cue sheet to help.

Even if the injured cyclist is able to move off the road to safety, often times the injured cyclist is in shock and adrenaline from the crash may affect how the cyclist feels their injuries. Ask the cyclist if they want you to call an ambulance if it's not apparent if they need help. If the cyclist responds that they aren't sure, then err on the side of calling 911 since they don't have to leave in the ambulance if the EMS or Firefighters arrive and deem it unnecessary to do so. If the cyclist seems to have hit their head, it is recommended you do call 911 and they get checked out at a hospital.

4. **Help control the flow of traffic.** If you are not needed to stay with the injured person directly, keep the flow of cyclists and traffic moving around the crash as safely as possible.

Unless other riders witnessed the incident and their reports could prove helpful in filling out your Incident Report Form and/or a police report, encourage other cyclists on the ride to keep moving on. **Do not take on the responsibility of directing automobile traffic**, only local police have the authority to control traffic at road intersections. But do ensure that an injured cyclist who can't move out of the roadway is protected and remains safe.

5. **Contact the WABA Emergency Response Staff.** There is a WABA staff person on-call as the Emergency Response Staff and you have their number on the information sheet/contact sheet

in your marshal kit. If you lost that number, you can also call the Event Planner number **on your cue sheet**, and they will give you the Emergency Response Staff person's number.

Although the Emergency Response Staff is not medically trained, we are required to be alerted to any incidents or crashes as part of our event insurance, and in many cases for more significant crashes it's a good idea for the Response Staff to report to the scene to assist in gathering information, ensuring the police arrive and filing a proper police report, and assisting with the injured person's belongings and bike.

If you need to call 911, you should always do that FIRST before calling the Emergency Response Staff, and only call the Emergency Response staff when it is safe for you to do so and when the injured person is being helped. If the incident is somewhere between mild and major and you're not sure whether or not to call the Emergency Response Staff (for example if the cyclist was doored and fell off their bike, but does not look to be badly injured or in need of an ambulance), err on the side of calling to let us know.

***WABA must know about ALL incidents or crashes, as is required by our event insurance.**

6. *Stay with the injured cyclist, and call someone for them.* Stay with the injured cyclist until they are able to ride again, they decide to retire early and have transportation home, or they are put inside the ambulance and you find out where they are being taken.

***Do not leave the injured cyclist, even if the injury was minor, on the side of the road by themselves, even if they say they are okay.**

If you called 911, wait with the injured cyclist and talk with them to help them remain calm and reassure them help is on the way.

If the incident was not major and they wish to continue on, make sure they are well rested and 100% okay to continue before riding on all together. They should be both physically and emotionally ready to keep riding. Often after a crash, even if it's minor, the cyclists can be shaken up and not okay to continue biking for a while. If that's the case, encourage them to stop early, go home and rest, and call someone to pick them up. Make sure their bike is okay to continue as well.

Whether the incident was minor or major, while waiting with the person, always offer to call a family member or friend for them if they want to. You must stay with the injured cyclist at least until the WABA Emergency Response Staff has arrived.

*If the injured person is put in an ambulance it is important that you ask the EMS personnel or police officers what hospital they are being taken to. This is important for our records and in communication with the injured cyclist's family or friends.

7. *Fill out the Marshal Incident Report Card.* While waiting for the ambulance or police to arrive, if the person is well enough to provide information, fill out the Incident Report Card found in your marshal first aid kit. There will be a small pencil in the kit to write with. ****You must collect all information!** It is very important you put down your full name and number, and the injured person's full name and number so we can follow up if necessary.

You can also always fill out part of the report card then (like the person's name and number), and then fill out the rest of it later once the person has been placed in the ambulance or once the Emergency Response Staff has arrived.

8. ***Continue on your ride.*** Once the cyclist decides to continue on, or retires early and transportation arrives to take them home, or gets put into the ambulance, or the Emergency Response Staff arrives and dismisses you, then you may continue on your ride.

If you end up continuing on your own, try to meet up with another group who may be close ahead or behind you. If the incident caused you to be stopped for a long time and the sweep ride marshals passed you (or you were sweep), you are welcome to continue on or retire early and return directly to the finish to turn in your materials. ***If you do retire early after an incident you must call the Event Planner to let them know of your decision so we aren't looking out for you at the end.**

9. ***Assisting other ride marshals.*** If you come upon a Ride Marshal who is working an accident site, please check and see if they require assistance or if there's anything you can do to help.

****Note:** If you encounter an incident with a bicyclist who is not a part of our ride, you are not required to provide assistance, however, use your best judgment to respond. For example, if you see a cyclist is alone (who is not on our ride) and just got in a crash and is in need of emergency medical assistance, the right thing to do would be to stop and call 911 for that person.

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Handling Unsafe or Uncooperative Cyclists

You may encounter ride participants who are behaving unsafely, aren't cooperating, or acting disrespectfully, and it is part of your responsibility to respond and resolve the situation.

Enforcing WABA's Helmet Rule – WABA's event insurance requires all cyclists on our rides to wear a helmet at all times while riding their bike on the ride. Every participant also signed a waiver agreeing that they would do so. Ride Marshals who encounter a cyclist who's part of our ride (again, identifiable by the wristband and/or cue sheet) without a helmet on, at any time during the ride while on their bike, should advise the cyclist to put on a helmet.

You should say something like, *"As a WABA Ride Marshal, I must ask that you please put your helmet back on. WABA requires it so you won't be able to continue riding as part of this ride without it."* If necessary, ask to take their cue sheet from them if they refuse to wear their helmet. If the cyclist without a helmet is uncooperative, be persistent. Invite them to ride with you and your group. Make sure you keep an eye out for them down the road. Cyclists wearing helmets that are not fastened should be treated the same as cyclists without helmets.

Uncooperative or Unruly Cyclists - Should a cyclist not follow a Ride Marshal's specific requests to correct unsafe cycling technique (i.e. riding more than two abreast) or become verbally abusive toward other riders, a Ride Marshal should inform the cyclist that he/she may be removed from the ride and not allowed to participate in any future WABA rides. If necessary, treat it as an incident and try to get the uncooperative cyclist's full name and report back to the Event Planner. Always remain calm and professional when dealing with an unruly cyclist.

Ride Marshals must maintain their composure and walk away from an escalating situation that might become confrontational. Please use good judgment; remain firm, yet polite at all times. **Do not become physical.**

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RIDE MARSHAL CREDENTIALS

Membership Commitment – Ride Marshals are part of the cycling community on WABA rides. As such, Ride Marshals have the responsibility to be a WABA member and are encouraged to join or renew if you are not a current member. Since 2015, we have required all volunteer marshals to be WABA members.

Cycling Experience – Ride marshals are viewed by other participants as experts. You must be able to complete the entire ride length you signed up for. You must be confident and experienced biking in city traffic and being passed by fast moving cars on back roads. You must be confident in your ability to follow directions and navigate your cue sheet. You should feel comfortable helping to guide and direct, as well as ride alongside other cyclists.

Maturity – A Ride Marshal must demonstrate maturity. The individual must be able to communicate effectively in a way that other cyclists will take seriously. Always maintain a positive attitude when reminding cyclists of safe riding techniques and the rules of the road. Remember that the bright yellow Ride Marshal jersey is highly visible and Ride Marshals must always follow the rules of the road, ride responsibly, and always set a good example when on the road.

Communication Skills - A Ride Marshal must have the ability to communicate effectively and be able to speak loudly, especially in situations that are dangerous or complex. Communications should be brief and to the point and not confrontational in nature. Ride Marshals must be able to see, hear, and speak well to successfully perform Ride Marshal duties.

Ride Marshals must have and bring on the ride with them a working cell phone in order to call 911 and the WABA Emergency Response Staff if necessary. Unfortunately, we cannot make exceptions to this rule as a matter of safety. If you don't have your own cell phone, please borrow one from a family member or friend for the ride.

Preparation for the Ride – Marshals will receive information on the route as soon as it's been re-tested, generally one week prior to the ride date, which will usually include both the route cue sheet and overview map. Marshals are strongly encouraged to look over the route and map to become familiar with the route ahead of time. Marshals are welcome to pre-ride the route as well. Please DO NOT share the cue sheet or map with anyone else. WABA's rides are fundraisers for our non-profit and if you share the route with friends, fewer people will do the ride and we won't raise as much money for our advocacy work. Ensure your bike is in excellent working condition prior to the ride.

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RIDE MARSHAL EQUIPMENT

Ride Marshal Vest – Each Ride Marshal will be issued a bright yellow bib or vest which is the official uniform of the WABA Ride Marshal. The bib will say either marshal or captain on the front and/or back. The bib is to be worn over your normal clothing or cycling apparel and is to be worn at all times during a WABA ride, even during pit stops. Please make sure you return your marshal bib to the WABA table at the end of the ride.

Cell Phone – Because Marshals may encounter an incident or crash which they will need to respond to by calling 911 and/or the WABA Emergency Response Staff, it is required that the marshal carry a phone. If you don't have a personal cell phone, you will need to borrow one from a family member or friend and supply us with that contact number at least two full days prior to the ride. Upon checking in the morning of the ride, we will ask you to make sure you have your phone with you and that we have your contact number.

Other Equipment – Marshals should also carry tire levers, a patch kit (most marshal kits include a patch kit for you to borrow during the ride), and an air supply of either a portable tire pump or a CO2 cartridge and adaptor. It is also recommended marshals have a spare tube with them.

First Aid Kit – Every marshal will be supplied with a small marshal kit upon checking in the morning of the ride. The quart sized plastic bag needs to be carried with you at all times during the ride, in a pack, bag, or clothing pocket, and you will need to return it along with your vest at the ride finish. The marshal kit contains a reminder about emergency procedure response steps, contact information for the WABA Emergency Response Staff and Event Planner, and basic first aid supplies such as band aids, medical tape, gauze, gloves, ibuprofen, and Benadryl. It also contains two copies of the Incident Report Card and a writing utensil.

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Thank you so much for your commitment to becoming a ride marshal for WABA. WABA takes your commitment very seriously and we appreciate you volunteering your time and expertise. The DC region's cycling community is what it is today because of cyclists like you and we are very grateful for your support and all you continue to do for biking in DC, MD, and VA.

If you have any questions or comments about your marshal commitment or the information provided here, please contact WABA's Events Coordinator at events@waba.org.