

# 2019 Sweet Ride Marshal Training

Thank you for listening to the Sweet Ride marshal training! I'm Cyrus Chimento, WABA's events coordinator.

- First, thank you so much for volunteering to be a marshal for the Sweet Ride with WABA. Your support is indispensable and helps me continue to improve WABA's events. I really appreciate it.
- Second, if you have questions about this training, or your role as a marshal, reach out to me over email ([events@waba.org](mailto:events@waba.org)) or call me at 202-518-0524 x218.
- I'm going to go over a few things today:
  - First, an explanation of the Sweet Ride
  - Second, the order of operations on the day of the event
  - Third, WABA's expectations of you as a marshal
  - Fourth, interacting with riders and handling incidents on the ride

As you are probably aware, the Sweet Ride is a new WABA signature ride, filling a hole in our spring schedule of events, as well as our programming in northern Virginia. We want it to be a fun ride with a route for bicyclists of any experience and comfort level. To that end, we are offering four routes of 5, 15, 30, and 50 miles, and partnering with Conte's Bike Shop and Crystal City Business Improvement District to make the post-ride celebration (or Shindig) a fun afternoon for riders and non-riders alike. Since this is the first year of the event, we are expecting no more than 300 riders.

One thing to note: since the Sprouts Ride in April, we have started to transition towards giving marshals a more hands-on role at our rides. As a marshal, we want you to provide a sense of safety for riders who do not feel comfortable navigating through the route on their own, or with the aid of cue sheets or RwigPS directions, as well as responding to any incidents that you come across while you are riding.

For marshaling the 30 and 50 mile rides, things won't look too much different, but we'll want you to remember this golden rule, so I will repeat several times:

**Your responsibility is to make the most uneasy and inexperienced riders feel comfortable, so be sure to prioritize riding with these riders. Any riders that want to go faster are free to break away from the group and ride the route on their own.**

For the 5 and 15 mile rides, however, things do look pretty different. You'll take on more of a ride leader role. We'll send you out in a pair so one marshal can lead and the other can sweep the group. And, for these routes especially, your responsibility is to make the most uneasy and

inexperienced riders feel comfortable, so be sure to prioritize these riders. Any riders that want to go faster are free to break away from the group and ride the route on their own.

I am still working on figuring out a system for this that works well, so please keep that in mind as you do the ride, and make sure to fill out the survey afterwards with your feedback.

Now, I'm going to go over the order of operations for the day of the event:

- Before you arrive, download the free, turn-by-turn Ride with GPS navigation, test that it works for you, and come prepared with a fully charged phone.
- Ursula Sandstrom, WABA's outreach manager, will be your point of contact onsite on the day of the event.
- When you get to The Grounds in Crystal City, check in at the marshal check-in table, which will be separate from the general check-in line. Please arrive at the beginning of the check-in period for your ride: 9am for the 50 miler, 10am for the 30 miler, and 11am for the 5 and 15 milers. A volunteer will give you a yellow vest and kit. The kit contains first aid supplies, incident report forms, and WABA contact info.
- Next, head over to the meeting point for riders who want to be part of a group and verbally check-in with Ursula. Feel free to ask her any clarifying questions on the morning of the ride.
- Ursula will dispatch you on the ride at regular intervals based on the number of riders heading out. She will also present a review of helmet fit, and the ABC quick check to any riders that congregate to ride with marshals. (You can review the videos of these lessons beforehand—there are links on the marshal resource page.) If you are marshaling the 5 or 15 mile routes, Ursula will designate you as a lead or sweep marshal for the group, and dispatch you to lead a group of riders.
- Once you head out, have an awesome, fun, and safe ride. Navigate the route, dealing with any rider issues as they arise. If you are marshaling the 5 or 15 mile routes, you are leading a no-drop ride. Note that your responsibility is to make the most uneasy and inexperienced riders feel comfortable, so be sure to prioritize these riders. Any riders that want to go faster are free to break away from the group and ride the route on their own. You can tell them something like: "if we're going too slow, you don't need to ride with the group".
- When you arrive at the pit stop, check-in with WABA staff there. Let riders know that you will spend 15 minutes at the pit stop and then continue the ride. Before you head out, announce to the riders at the pit stop that you are preparing to continue the ride—it would help to give riders a 5 minute warning, and then issue a "rolling out" warning.
- When you finish the ride, check in with Ursula or the volunteer collecting the yellow vests and kits to return them. Let us know if you encountered any incidents during the ride.
- Then, enjoy the Shindig! You can pick up your free beer or ice cream token at the WABA table.

I want to note here that while you're on the ride, the rules of common sense prevail. I trust you to assess what needs to happen in a given situation, and you should feel empowered to deputize riders if necessary.

Now, I want to get into the expectations of marshals. We rely on marshals to make sure that riders are safe, following traffic laws, and to be WABA's eyes and ears on the road (since WABA staff can't be). You are providing a very important service to our riders and we are placing a lot of responsibility on you. Here are a few important notes:

- You are representing WABA. That means you might be one of the main interactions a rider has with WABA, for the first time ever, or for that day. Make every effort to be friendly, conversational, helpful, and attentive.
- Make sure you see riders' issues out until their resolution: if a rider has a breakdown or another issue, stay with them and make sure they know what their next steps are before you keep riding. For instance, if a rider needs to go to a bike shop, or find a metro station, help them find the nearest one and talk through how they will get there or get home. If you're riding with a group, have the sweep rider stay with the person that needs help. Make sure that the lead and sweep rider communicate in person—if you're leading, don't assume the sweep will take care of it (they might be managing something else). Again, riders are welcome to keep going without a leader if they want.
- We expect that you will ride safely and legally. That means:
  - Stopping at stop signs and red lights. (Remember, you don't have the authority to stop or direct traffic—each person on a bike is responsible for their own safety, so no calling “clear” through intersections)
  - Wearing a helmet (this is not a policy stance—it's required by our insurance).
  - Not riding more than two abreast.
  - If leading a group, make box-left turns at lights.
  - Yielding to and notifying pedestrians of your presence (especially on trails!).
  - Signal your turns.
  - Positioning yourself properly on the roadway—that is, if you plan to go straight through an intersection, don't be in the right-turn only lane; instead, position yourself in the rightmost lane that serves your destination. If you do this, it helps keep all riders safe because they'll follow your example.
  - I've added links to Marshal Resources page (which is linked in the email I sent you) of several videos made by the League of American Bicyclists. These videos demonstrate safe and legal bicycling and are good review. In the future, another option is to take a WABA City Cycling class (free for WABA members!).
- Finally, be a good representative of bicycling in general. I don't think you'll have any problems with this, but we want to make sure we're not being aggressive, obnoxious, or rude to other road users while on a WABA ride. Don't get into arguments or altercations with drivers—that'll cause problems for others on the ride either in front of you or behind you.

As a marshal, you will be interacting with riders during the event and may need to respond to an incident. Overall, we want you to be attentive and encouraging to the riders you encounter. That means a few things:

- Be positive and enthusiastic. Particularly if you are doing the long route, the ride can be really difficult depending on a rider's experience and the weather conditions. Being cheerful throughout will go a long way to helping riders who are having difficulty enjoy the experience.
- Don't make riders feel bad about quitting. If you can tell someone isn't having fun, give them some friendly encouragement to end the ride early and go back to Shindig if they want to. There is no shame in that.
- Also, make sure you know where you're going—try not to get lost. Riders expect you to know where you're going, so try to follow through on that. You have access to the routes—review them beforehand. Ride them beforehand if you can.
- If you see someone on the side of the road with a mechanical issue, they may have it completely under control. But, we still want you to stop with them, make sure they're alright, and ask if they need help.
- Note that when checking in on people, good intent doesn't guarantee good impact. Be wary of giving unsolicited advice (which can feel condescending) or encouragement that makes someone feel targeted rather than supported.

Incident response happens when a rider needs medical attention.

- You are not required to render first aid, but if you feel like you can deal with a rider's injuries with the materials in your marshal kit, and the rider is fine with you doing so, feel free to render care as you are comfortable.
- If you don't feel comfortable, you should call 911. Even if the rider insists that they are fine, you should call 911; endorphins can mask the severity of injury and they may not feel fine in 4 hours. The rider doesn't have to go in the ambulance (that is their choice, if they are able to make it), but EMTs will just be there to make sure they are ok. This is required by WABA's event insurance. Please don't leave the scene until someone more qualified than you can take over. Do not surpass your own training or expertise. Good Samaritan laws ~~in DC~~ limit your liability, but it's best to play it safe and only administer first aid if you are fully confident in your abilities. The Good Samaritan laws ~~in DC~~ state that, if you are not fully qualified, you must hand over responsibility to the licensed caregiver upon their arrival at the scene.
- After you or someone else has called 911, contact WABA's emergency response staffer on-call. Their phone number will be in your marshal kit.
- Make sure you document the scene as completely and as soon as possible, by completing the incident report form in your marshal kit.
- Again, stay with the injured party until they are in someone else's care. Communicate with other marshals to ensure the rest of the group is okay to ride on.

If you haven't already, please make sure to read the full marshal manual and the rider guide, both linked on the marshal resource page, which goes into this information in significant detail.

**Last reminder: Your responsibility is to make the most uneasy and inexperienced riders feel comfortable, so be sure to prioritize riding with these riders.**

That's all I wanted to review with you. Don't hesitate to email [events@waba.org](mailto:events@waba.org) or call me (Cyrus) at 202-518-0524 x218 to talk over your questions or concerns. Again, thank you! You are all amazing and I am so grateful for your willingness to help us pull off events like the Sweet Ride! Thank you, and happy riding!