



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING INSTRUCTION

MOUNTED PATROL UNIT

ISSUED: November 26, 2025

EFFECTIVE: November 26, 2025

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Steven Johnson
DATE: October 13, 2025

ACTION: Amends SOI (October 11, 2023)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): 6.1.2

I. PURPOSE

The mission of the Milwaukee Police Department Mounted Patrol is to provide police services in those areas and assignments deemed appropriate by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division with an emphasis on impacting crime through effective community engagement.

II. OBJECTIVES

- A. Provide highly visible police presence within the city of Milwaukee during horse patrol with a focus on maximizing positive interactions with the public.
- B. Provide highly visible police presence at large crowd events.
- C. Provide crowd management, or crowd control when required, at outdoor festivities, concerts, gatherings, sporting and special events.
- D. Provide public education and community service programs for schools and community groups.
- E. Provide public education and positive police contact at community events.

III. ORGANIZATION

- A. The Mounted Patrol shall consist of specially trained riders and horses. It shall be assigned to the Specialized Patrol Division with such hours and duties as directed by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division. Assignment to the patrol shall be under the sole discretion of the Chief of Police.

B. MOUNTED SUPERVISOR

A police supervisor shall be designated the "mounted supervisor" and shall coordinate the operations of the Mounted Patrol.

C. TRAINING OFFICERS

Selected officers from the Mounted Patrol will be designated as "training officers" and as such will assist the Mounted Supervisor in the development and coordination of the training of the horses and the riders.

IV. **RESPONSIBILITIES (WILEAG 6.1.2)**

A. MOUNTED SUPERVISOR

The mounted supervisor shall be responsible for:

1. Supervising the assigned personnel in all duties, under the direction of the commanding officer of the Specialized Patrol Division.
2. Scheduling assigned personnel within the unit.
3. Selection and evaluation of horses based upon conformation, disposition, height, weight, age, and other factors that would affect the horse's performance.
4. Inspection of tack and equipment for serviceability and replacement.
5. Reports and Records
 - a. Training records of personnel and horses;
 - b. Care and maintenance of horses;
 - c. Equipment inspection reports;
 - d. Vehicle inspection reports;
 - e. Other reports as may be required.
6. Conducting training of new horses and riders.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.2, 6.1.2.4)

B. TRAINING OFFICERS

Training Officers shall assist in those duties related to training as directed by the mounted supervisor, with the approval of the commanding officer of the Specialized Patrol Division.

C. VEHICLE MANAGER

The vehicle manager shall ensure that all vehicles assigned to the Mounted Patrol are inspected monthly and the monthly *Vehicle Equipment Checklist* (form PS-10E), and related reports, are submitted to the mounted supervisor.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.4)

D. HORSE EQUIPMENT MANAGER

The horse equipment manager shall ensure that all horse related equipment assigned to the members of the Mounted Patrol are accounted for and inspected for serviceability. The horse equipment manager will also be responsible for maintaining a current inventory list of all horse related equipment.

(WILEAG 6.1.2.4)

E. HERD HEALTH MANAGER

The herd health manager shall ensure that treatment of significant illness, injury, prescribed medications, or other veterinary intervention is documented. The herd health manager will also be responsible for ensuring the horses are weighed and vaccinated regularly.

F. OFFICERS

Officers assigned to this unit shall:

1. Perform their primary duties except when their services are required for special duties or training purposes.
2. Be responsible for and maintain horses, vehicles, trailers, all special equipment and supplies for the patrol.
3. Attend formal training as directed and approved by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.2, 6.1.2.4)
4. Be familiar with and refer to the Mounted Patrol Unit Operations and Training Manual for best practices and procedures.

V. **UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT (WILEAG 6.1.2)**

The mounted patrol uniforms and equipment shall be in compliance with this standard operating instruction.

A. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

In addition to the regulation uniform, the mounted patrol will be issued and wear the following:

1. Department authorized mounted riding helmet.
2. Department authorized riding breeches.
3. Department authorized black riding boots.
4. Department authorized waist length leather jacket.
5. Department authorized "soft" campaign style brim hat with rank appropriate cords and leather chin strap.
6. Department authorized riding spurs as selected by the mounted supervisor.
7. Department issued crowd control helmet, chest protector, arm protectors, horse face

shield, and nose guards.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.3)

B. TACK AND RELATED ITEMS

Each officer shall be issued the necessary riding equipment and shall be responsible for the care, maintenance, and security of this equipment. Condition of the equipment (tack) will be inspected daily by the officer and deficiencies will be reported to the mounted supervisor for replacement or repair. These items consist of the following:

1. Department issued saddle.
2. Department issued horse halter.
3. Department issued horse bridle.
4. Department issued lead/neck rope.
5. Department issued breast strap.
6. Department issued saddle pad.
7. Department issued saddlebags.
8. Department issued cantle bag.
9. Department issue mounted long (36") baton and leather holder.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.3)

C. VEHICLES

1. Officers will make the following checks on the squad assigned to them, on the respective date, for serviceability. Vehicles will be inspected monthly by the vehicle manager and the results will be forwarded to the mounted supervisor via a *Vehicle Equipment Checklist*.
2. The following checks shall be conducted:
 - a. Check oil level;
 - b. Check air pressure;
 - c. Check brake fluid;
 - d. Check radiator fluid;
 - e. Check transmission fluid;
 - f. Check clean battery terminals;

- g. Check first aid kit;
 - h. Check fire extinguisher;
 - i. Check police tape;
 - j. Inspect interior for cleanliness;
 - k. Inspect exterior for damage;
 - l. Check camera and computer (if applicable) to ensure they are working;
 - m. Check lights for working order;
 - n. Check to ensure siren is working.
3. Officers shall also check trucks and attached trailer, before deploying, for:
- a. Proper connection of trailer;
 - b. Clean interior of trailer;
 - c. Air pressure of trailer tires;
 - d. Shovel and rake in bed of truck;
 - e. Lights working properly;
 - f. Full water containers and hay bags.

VI. TRAINING (WILEAG 6.1.2)

A. TRAINING PROGRAM

Officers and horses shall undergo an established training program coordinated by the mounted supervisor, or a designated training officer. The training program for the officers shall be a minimum of 4 (four) weeks of basic mounted proficiency with an additional two (2) weeks of field training with the approval of the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division.

(WILEAG 6.1.2.2)

B. BASIC OFFICER TRAINING

Each rider must master:

- 1. Grooming and care of the horse;
- 2. Maintenance of the equipment (horse tack);

3. Horse loading and trailer operations;
4. Horsemanship;
5. First aid for the horse;
6. Stable safety;
7. Patrol techniques related to a mounted unit;
8. Stress training (handling horses during stress situations);
9. Crowd management;
10. Crowd control;
11. Formations;
12. Arrest procedures and techniques.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.2)

C. BASIC HORSE TRAINING

Each horse must master:

1. Stress training;
2. Crowd control;
3. All "two tracking" maneuvers;
4. Trailing;
5. Formations.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.2)

VII. HOURS OF ASSIGNMENT

- A. The Mounted Patrol Unit shall be comprised of shifts as designated by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division. Personnel shall work eight (8) hour shifts as scheduled by the mounted supervisor.
- B. Two (2) hours of duty time (performed during the regular eight hour shift) will be used towards the care, cleaning and maintenance of the horse, related equipment, and horse stables. This maintenance shall be in accordance with a schedule established by the mounted supervisor.

VIII. USE OF THE MOUNTED PATROL (WILEAG 6.1.2)**A. SPECIAL USE**

In addition to the regular patrol duties as directed by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division, the Mounted Patrol may be used for:

1. Locating missing persons or in assisting criminal investigations in large open areas or difficult terrain;
2. Directed patrol missions;
3. Special events;
4. Festivals, large gatherings, or sporting events;
5. Crowd management;
6. Crowd control;
7. Public education programs;
8. Community service programs.
(WILEAG 6.1.2.1)

B. REQUESTS FOR THE MOUNTED PATROL

1. All requests for the Mounted Patrol at planned events shall require the approval of the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division or designee.
2. Unplanned or unscheduled use of the Mounted Patrol shall be approved by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division, or designee, or a source of higher authority.

IX. PATROL PROCEDURES

A. Officers assignments shall be made by the mounted supervisor.

B. ROUTINE PATROL

1. The walk is the primary gait for patrol. If situations arise that require a rapid response, riders may trot or canter. At no time are officers to gallop their horses on city streets.
2. Officers should monitor their horse for signs of illness, injury, exhaustion, dehydration, or other medical distress and provide appropriate rest or care.
3. Unless otherwise instructed, officers shall conduct patrols of their assigned areas with a focus on neighborhood events and places of heavy foot traffic.

4. Officers should place an emphasis on side streets, alleys and areas of large concentrations of parked vehicles.
5. Officers shall take proper action for any violations of city ordinances and state statutes.
6. Every effort should be made to conduct all business with the public from horseback.

C. UNAUTHORIZED RIDERS / HANDLERS PROHIBITED

No unauthorized person may ride a Milwaukee Police Department horse. Only a mounted supervisor shall determine who is qualified to enter the stable area, ride or handle a department horse.

D. FEEDING HORSES ON PATROL

1. No unauthorized person(s) may feed a department horse while on patrol.
2. When on extended missions horses may receive feed at a designated site consistent with the established feeding regimen.
3. When assigned to an area that contains grass, officers are to restrain horses from grazing.

E. SEVERE WEATHER

1. During severe weather conditions, officers shall be assigned to dismounted patrol or other duties as designated by the mounted supervisor.
2. Severe weather includes:
 - a. Temperatures above 90 degrees, high humidity, or below 15 degrees (including wind chill);
 - b. Active lightning;
 - c. Heavy snow, sleet, or icy conditions;
 - d. Conditions that are considered hazardous to the horse or rider.

X. **SECURING MOUNTS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

If emergency situations should arise, e.g., providing first aid, officers shall secure the horse.

- A. The halter rope, which is attached to the halter ring, shall be used to secure mounts.
- B. Mounts shall not be secured near property which may be damaged, such as autos, shrubbery, etc.

- C. Mounts shall be kept away from platforms, holes, etc.
- D. Mounts shall not be secured to moveable objects such as ladders, utility guide wires, etc.
- E. Secured mounts shall be checked frequently.
- F. When possible, secure horses in a shaded area where they can be observed at all times.

XI. ARRESTS

- A. When officers take a subject into physical custody, they shall request a conveyance vehicle.
- B. When effecting an arrest, officers should remain mounted when possible, and request either another mounted officer or uniform squad for a backup.
- C. All necessary arrest information shall be provided to the conveying squad.
- D. If the nature of the arrest necessitates the presence of the arresting officers during the booking process, they shall return their mount to the stable, remove the tack and equipment, proceed to the booking site, and notify the mounted supervisor of the situation.

XII. ILLNESS AND INJURIES

A. IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATION REQUIRED

Any illness or injury to a horse shall be communicated immediately to a mounted supervisor, or designee, who will advise the officer on a course of action.

B. SERIOUS OR FATAL INJURY

If the injury or illness to the horse is of a nature that cannot be treated, or the animal is in a condition of extreme pain and suffering, a mounted supervisor shall be notified. A decision shall be made as to whether the horse should be referred for treatment or euthanized. This procedure will be done by an attending veterinary physician. Only in exigent circumstances will a department member act at the direction of a mounted supervisor, or a mounted officer, and put the animal down with a firearm.

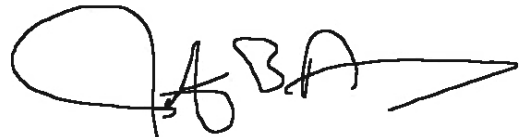
C. CRITERIA FOR EUTHANASIA

1. The horse is a danger to itself or handlers.
2. The horse's condition is chronic and not treatable.
3. The horse's condition appears hopeless.
4. Examples would include, but not be limited to:

- a. Uncontrollable struggling and thrashing in traffic or a crowd;
- b. Injuries such as severe bleeding, open bone fractures, evisceration with rupture of the bowel, or dismemberment.

XIII. WASTE MATTER

- A. Any waste left by the horse in the staging area shall be placed into the trailer and returned to the stable or suitable receptacle.
- B. Any waste left by the horse while on patrol shall be removed by the mounted officer before securing.
- C. Mounted officers will make every effort to remove waste left by their mounts in areas of high visibility and pedestrian traffic as soon as is practical and safe to do so.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B.N.' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk