

NATIONAL MS SOCIETY – LONE STAR CHAPTER

MS 150 RIDE MARSHAL MANUAL

RIDE MARSHAL OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

RIDE MARSHAL PURPOSE

Ride Marshals perform two important functions for the MS Society. As cyclists on the road, Ride Marshals act as both Good Will and Safety Ambassadors for the MS Society on MS 150s and MS 150 Recommended Rides held during the year.

RIDE MARSHAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Good Will Ambassador

Ride Marshals are official representatives of the MS Society. Ride Marshals are encouraged to talk to the general public, store owners, and bystanders along the route and thank cyclists for participating in the MS 150 or on a MS 150 Recommended Ride. Ride Marshals should be prepared to answer general questions about the MS 150 or its Recommended Rides

Safety Ambassador

Ride Marshals act as Safety Ambassadors by sharing cycling advice and encouraging safe cycling behaviors. Ride Marshals may also perform the role of first responders at accident scenes along ride routes and identify unsafe cyclists to ride officials. In addition, Ride Marshals are often willing to provide basic assistance to riders who may experience problems, such as flat tires, along the route.

Accident Scene Procedures – Ride Marshals first on the scene of an accident scene should follow the procedure described below:

- **Check the Scene.** Don't put yourself in danger. Prevent other cyclists from being involved in the accident. Make sure cyclists can see your Ride Marshal apparel.
- **Check the victims and provide assistance.** To the extent of your training, check accident victims for vital signs and act accordingly. Ride Marshals should provide First Aid to injured cyclists until assistance arrives. Do not go beyond the training you have received. **Do Not Move** an 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 cyclist has lost consciousness. Keep the cyclist down until medical attention arrives.
- **Request assistance.** If you need additional help and another Marshal is not available to assist, pick-out a specific person in the crowd and give them instructions.
- **Assist other emergency personnel.** As directed by EMS, Police or Sick Puppy personnel, provide whatever assistance possible. At accident scenes, offer your assistance to the extent of your first aid training or as directed by proper authorities, i.e. help carry or assist accident victims to walk to ambulance or side of roadway.
- **Control the flow of traffic.** If you are not needed to stay with the victims directly, keep the flow of cyclists moving around the accident as safely as possible. Maintain a safe condition at all times for cyclists and enlist the help of other cyclists, as needed. If needed, be prepared to stop ALL bike traffic when an ambulance arrives. **Only local police have the authority to control traffic at road intersections. The MS Society does not authorize Ride Marshals to take on the responsibility of directing automobile traffic.**

- **Ride Marshal assistance.** If you come upon a Ride Marshal who is working an accident site, please check and see if they require assistance or if you can “relieve” them and allow them to continue along the route. This will keep the duration of each stop at a minimum, so that no one Ride Marshal has to spend too long stopped.

Handling Unsafe or Uncooperative Cyclists

- **Helmet Rule** - Cyclists without helmets are not allowed on any MS 150 or MS 150 Recommended Rides. Ride Marshals who encounter a cyclist without a helmet at any time during the tour, should advise the cyclist to put on a helmet or withdraw from the ride (possibly taking a SAG ride to the finish, if available). If the cyclist without a helmet is uncooperative, the Ride Marshal should take note of their rider number and turn it in at the next rest stop or call the contact number (if provided) for the Recommended Ride organizers. Cyclists wearing helmets that are not fastened should be treated the same as cyclists without helmets.
- **Prohibited Equipment Use** (Cell phones, Earplugs and related distracting devices) – Cyclists, like motorists, should never use a cell phone or use ear phones while riding. Ride Marshals should remind cyclists of the danger of using these types of devices and to immediately stop using the device. Cyclists may use cell phones if they safely pull off the ride to receive or make a phone call.
- **Uncooperative or Unruly Cyclists** - Should a uncooperative or unruly cyclist not follow a Ride Marshal’s specific requests to correct unsafe cycling technique (i.e. riding more than two abreast), to wear a helmet, to stop cell phone/ear plug usage or become verbally abusive, a Ride Marshal should inform the cyclist that he/she may be removed from the ride and not allowed to participate in any future MS 150 rides. If the cyclist is wearing a team jersey, the team leader will also be notified of his/her actions. Take note of the cyclist’s rider number/team and turn it in at the next rest stop or turn in the rider number at the end of the ride. 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.**

RIDE MARSHAL CREDENTIALS

Financial Commitment – Ride Marshals are part of the cycling community on the MS 150 ride. As such, Ride Marshals have the financial responsibility to register as a rider and submit the required registration and transportation fees to the MS Society. Like all MS 150 riders, Ride Marshals must be in good standing with the MS Society meaning that ALL pledges, past and present, must be honored.

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 red 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.

Experience - A Ride Marshal should be a veteran of several large organized rides, in addition to at least 2 Houston to Austin BP MS 150 Bike Tours within the last 5 years. Knowledge of mass starts, safe riding techniques, possible accident-prone situations, and crowd mentality on bicycles is a basic requirement of all Ride Marshals.

MS 150 Recommended Training Rides - Participating in Recommended Rides will give the Ride Marshal experience and provide other cyclists with exposure to Ride Marshals. Ride Marshals wearing the official Ride Marshal apparel in any event will always be expected to perform Ride Marshal duties. Upon arriving at ride starts, Ride Marshals will be required to sign in and complete the Recommended Ride's waiver. Each Recommended Ride is different and Ride Marshals will be expected to learn about the route, ride conditions and any special safety needs before they support a ride.

CPR/First Aid Training – Ride Marshals must provide proof of current Adult CPR certification to be eligible to be a Ride Marshal. Ride Marshals may consider carrying a CPR breathing device on the ride. First Aid training is also required and often accompanies CPR training courses provided by organizations such as the MS Society. The MS First Aid training sessions (at no cost to the Ride Marshal) will cover the basics: Bleeding, Shock, Head Trauma, Broken Bones, and Heat Stroke. CPR and First Aid Training do not have to be obtained from the MS Society as long as a Ride Marshal can provide current certification documentation.

Volunteer Agreements/Waivers – A Ride Marshal Volunteer Agreement, as well as the Ride Marshal Code of Conduct, must be signed by each Ride Marshal prior to receiving any Ride Marshal apparel or assignments. Waivers must also be signed to participate as a Ride Marshal in any MS 150 or Recommended Ride. All Ride Marshals must sign the Volunteer Agreement and Ride Marshal Code of Conduct every year.

RIDE MARSHAL EQUIPMENT

Ride Marshal Apparel – Each Ride Marshal will be issued at least one jersey which is the official uniform of the MS 150 Ride Marshal. The jersey is to be worn at all times during a MS 150, even if a Ride Marshal is a member of a team. The official Ride Marshal jersey must be worn at any Recommended Ride a Ride Marshal has agreed to work and may be worn at MS 150 recognized team training rides. MS 150 Ride Marshal jerseys may not be worn at events that are not associated with the MS Society. As agreed to in the Ride Marshal Code of Conduct, Ride Marshals should return any issued Ride Marshal jerseys or apparel should a Ride Marshal decide to step down from the Ride Marshal Program.

Other Equipment - Please note that all other equipment is the responsibility of the Ride Marshal. It is highly recommended that Ride Marshals carry a cell phone for emergency use during any ride. When possible, the MS Society may procure extra tubes, CO₂ cartridges, and other equipment that will assist Ride Marshals in providing a service to the Recommended Rides and MS 150 participants.

Addendum A

BP MS 150 Houston to Austin specific Ride Marshal Requirements

Ride Marshal Credentials – BP MS 150 Ride Marshals are responsible for ensuring their Ride Marshal records and documentation is up to date. Ride Marshals must carefully monitor any upcoming events or deadlines that require registration or attendance such as the deadline to sign up as a Ride Marshal for the BP MS 150.

Availability – Ride Marshals should keep the Ride Marshal Program leadership informed of their availability before and during the BP MS 150 Ride weekend. Ride Marshals are a critical part of the BP MS 150 and the MS Society is counting on Ride Marshal attendance and participation.

BP MS 150 Ride Start Procedures - Specific instructions and assignments will be distributed at a special Ride Marshal meeting to be held shortly before the MS 150 Ride. Instructions will include where to report to on Saturday and Sunday morning and other last minute information. BP MS 150 Ride Marshals should plan on arriving at Saturday's Ride start location by 6:00 a.m.

Mass Starts – Ride Marshals typically assist MS Society officials maintain control of the mass start of cyclists on Saturday and Sunday morning. Assistance often includes preventing stray cyclists from taking off between the group releases. Individual cyclists going out alone could place themselves in danger. Police will be directing traffic to allow the groups of cyclists to clear intersections. Ride Marshals should spread out along the Ride and should not ride in groups of more than two Ride Marshals.

Team Ride Marshals - Ride Marshals who are members of a team may start with their individual teams on both days during the tour. Even though Ride Marshals may start with their team, they are still responsible for monitoring all cyclists on the BP MS 150. Ride Marshals who are members of a team must also wear the designated Ride Marshal jersey at all times during both days of the BP MS 150.

Rest Stops - Generally, there are a sufficient number of volunteers to control the flow of cyclists and vehicles at/around Rest Stops. If a Ride Marshal observes a situation out of their control, stop and assist to control the cyclists entering and leaving the Rest Stop *on a temporary basis only*. Ride Marshals can verbally advise cyclists to get move off the roadway while they ride past rest stops. *The Ride Marshal's primary responsibility is to provide support "on the road."*

Cycle Breakdowns / Stranded Cyclists – Ride Marshals should instruct cyclists with mechanical failures, physical exhaustion or who need to stop for any other reason to step off the road surface and remove their bicycle off the roadway. SAG (Support and Gear) vehicles patrol all roads frequently and will assist cyclists.

- The primary function of SAG vehicles is to assist cyclists that cannot continue the Ride whether it is because of mechanical failure, flat tires, or exhaustion. Ride Marshals should instruct the cyclist that the proper way to gain the attention of SAG support is to remove his/her helmet and wave it at an approaching SAG vehicle on the same side of the road as he/she is. The SAG vehicles will not

- The Ride Marshal's job is to see that cyclists with mechanical issues remain off the roadway while waiting for a SAG vehicle. Spare inner tubes may be distributed to Ride Marshals to be given out as a courtesy when needed by other cyclists. While it is not the responsibility of the Ride Marshal to fix flats for riders, assisting riders in need is a gesture of good will.

Location – Ride Marshals should know their location at all times, be aware of their distance to the next rest stop, and names of major roads in the area. Ride Marshals should carry extra route maps to share with others, if needed. All MS 150 SAG vehicles are equipped with very specific road maps, which may be of assistance in an emergency. Ride Marshals may need to contact MS 150 officials in an emergency so Ride Marshal and/or emergency location might be critical.

BP MS 150 –SPECIFIC RIDE MARSHAL REQUIREMENTS

Experience - A Ride Marshal should be a veteran of at least two Houston to Austin MS 150s. Cyclists must be 18 years or older to be eligible to be a BP MS 150 Ride Marshal.

Support of BP MS 150 Recommended Training Rides – BP MS 150 Ride Marshals, wearing Ride Marshal apparel, must support in at least **two** BP MS 150 Spring Recommended Rides. Supporting a team training ride, while good experience, does not count toward the Recommended Ride Requirement. BP MS 150 Ride Marshals who volunteer in advance to work a Recommended Ride will not have to pay the registration fee. As volunteers for that ride, the fee is waived. Ride Marshals must sign up IN ADVANCE and sign-in upon arrival at the Recommended Ride start. Ride Marshals must also sign a waiver for each of the rides and display their Rider Number so that it is visible. Ride Marshals who volunteer to support these recommended rides may **NOT** expect to receive a free t-shirt or other perk. However, at their discretion, the Recommended Ride organizers may provide t-shirts and other perks to Ride Marshals.

Safety Training – Eligible BP MS 150 Ride Marshals must demonstrate minimum standard cycling skills exhibited by completion of a formal Cycling Safety Skills training course.

New Ride Marshal Training – All volunteers new to the Ride Marshal program are required to attend a 2-hour Ride Marshal Orientation class.

Volunteer Agreement/Waiver – Each year a signed Ride Marshal Volunteer Agreement/Waiver must be on file for each BP MS 150 Ride Marshal.

Code of Conduct – Each year a signed Ride Marshal Code of Conduct must be on file for each BP MS 150 Ride Marshal.

Meeting Attendance - Official Ride Marshal meetings will be kept to a minimum. There is usually a general meeting to distribute Ride Marshal jerseys. A mandatory meeting will be held the shortly before the BP MS 150 Ride for final instructions and assignments.

At the mass starts on Saturday and Sunday morning, BP MS 150 Ride Marshals, when moving to their start assignment, are allowed to go around cyclists waiting to start the Ride. Ride Marshals are also allowed to move to the front of the Sunday morning breakfast line to be ready for their morning assignments. Ride Marshals are reminded to always be courteous to other cyclists who are waiting in those lines. Ride Marshals may **NOT** move to the front of bathroom lines throughout the BP MS 150.

Ride Marshals are a special group of dedicated volunteers who not only fundraise but volunteer their time and energy for a great cause. Ride Marshals have the opportunity to make the MS 150 a positive experience for the cyclists! The MS Society hopes that you will find the Ride Marshal role a worthwhile experience!