



Rescue Riders Information Sheet

Background: Let's face the facts. Motorcycle accidents and fatalities are a major concern. "Our nation's greatest traffic highway safety challenge is motorcycle fatalities," says U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters, noting that biking deaths are rising while other vehicle fatalities are declining"

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2007, 5,154 people died in motorcycle crashes, the highest level since NHTSA began collecting data in 1975. The 2007 figure represents a 6.6 percent from 4,837 the previous year.

Motorcycle crash fatalities have increased every year for the past 10 years. Motorcyclists were 35 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in a crash per vehicle mile traveled in 2006 and eight times more likely to be injured, according to NHTSA.

We created the Rescue Riders Ride for a Reason® program to recruit, educate and organize bikers in support of each other, our communities and our nation. We do this by helping provide bikers with the tools & training needed to provide emergency assistance in times of need.

The Golden Hour: In the world of emergency care, the "Golden Hour" is defined as the time period of about one hour in which the lives of a majority of critically injured trauma patients can be saved if definitive trauma care intervention is provided. This principle of rapid intervention can also be applied to non-trauma patients such as those having a heart attack or a stroke, in which time to treatment dramatically affects a patient's outcome.

Training: Rescue Riders must have training to be able to provide assistance. We recommend that our volunteers complete Accident Scene Management (Basic & Advanced) and CPR certification where available. In those areas where ASMI training is unavailable we recommend First Responder Training, Red Cross or American Heart Association First Aid training.

Tools: We recommend that Rescue Riders find a permanent place on their motorcycles to carry a "first responder" kit and tools to help secure an accident scene. Unfortunately many qualified volunteers are unable to provide emergency care without the appropriate tools. Rescue Riders should carry a first aid kit that contains materials that coincide with your training and comfort level. We have created a "first responder" kit for you to use or if you prefer you can purchase a kit from the vendor of your choice.

Cost: There is no cost to join or participate in the Rescue Riders program.

Good Samaritan Status: In today's litigious society, there can be a reluctance to help our in emergency situations. Fear of liability for any misstep can paralyze even the most helpful Good Samaritan. The truth is that each state has laws or regulations to protect the general public from liability during rescues or rescue attempts.

Good Samaritan laws are meant to protect those who come to the aid of others for no other reason than kindness. Good Samaritan laws only help if the rescuer (or would-be rescuer) is acting without any expectation of reward. In other words, if you are getting paid to rescue then you aren't a Good Samaritan. Paid rescuers are expected to do their jobs correctly and can be held accountable for mistakes.

The best way to protect yourself from possible liability when helping others is to always act on behalf of the victim.

The statutes in Illinois and most states in the Nation allow you to provide emergency medical assistance within your training and comfort level and still be protected from civil prosecution.

Duties & Expectations: As a Rescue Rider, you are acting as a Good Samaritan. Your participation is defined by you. Many Rescue Riders complete training and ride as they always have. If you would like to be a more active Rescue Riders volunteer we support many area events and rides at the request of the event/ride organizers. Our leaders broadcast Rescue Riders support missions on the [Rescue Riders Forum](#), the [Rescue Riders Calendar](#) as well as our Facebook groups. For those of you who desire to be actively involved in the Rescue Riders program we invite you to join us as a Mission Coordinator. Mission Coordinators reach out to area events, rides and organizations to offer Rescue Riders support. Once an event is identified as a good fit with our organization, Regional Directors in your area will post the Rescue Riders support missions and help coordinate the efforts of our volunteers.

There are several things that we as Rescue Riders **cannot** do when actively serving on missions. Those are as follows.

1. Accept compensation: By accepting compensation you sacrifice your good Samaritan status. If you support a ride or event you must pay to attend as any other person would as free attendance can be considered compensation.
2. Road Block or Guide Runs: We all see runs where road captains block intersections to help keep the group moving. The problem is that this is typically illegal and not why we were asked to support this event.
3. Consume alcohol: Rescue Riders can not consume any alcohol while on a Rescue Riders mission. Doing so could compromise your Good Samaritan status as well as dull your decision making abilities when they are needed most.
4. Accept a dispatch: As Rescue Riders we are not "dispatchable". From a liability standpoint, should someone need medical assistance and we are not at the scene they need to call 911. If a Rescue Rider is dispatched, precious time could be lost and you could be held liable.
5. Provide assistance beyond your training: We have all seen episodes of popular television shows where Good Samaritans use items like ball point pens and pen knives to perform emergency tracheotomies. Unless you are a medical professional that has been trained in these types of procedures you should not attempt to provide this level of assistance.