

Shepherd Program

Your chapter has been meeting on a monthly basis. New friendships are being forged, you're becoming a family, and life is good! But what about the new riders, you know, the "first timers?" Where and how do they fit in? Are they standing off to one side of the group? Are they mixing in on their own? Are you, the Chapter President, even aware that they are there?

Let's put ourselves in the shoes of the new member for just a moment. They've probably never ridden in a group environment before, and they'll most undoubtedly be somewhat nervous at the prospect of meeting new folks. They're in new surroundings, and it's up to us to make them feel comfortable. That's where the "shepherd program" comes in.

A shepherd has the responsibility of greeting and signing up new members as they appear at your chapter events. Remember that these "shepherds" are the new rider's first contact with the chapter and Star. It's imperative that the first impression be a positive one. The shepherd is there to set the new rider at ease, and to answer all of the new rider's questions about us. The shepherd also has the opportunity to evaluate the new member's riding ability, and to get a general idea of how well the new member mixes in with the group.

Shepherds must be accomplished and highly experienced riders with 3-5 years experience. The Shepherd's driving record should be exemplary, and they should not have more than two moving violations on their driving record within the past three years. The Shepherd will not have any DUI (driving under the influence) violations or reduced DUI (wet reckless) violations on their driving record.

We highly recommend that all Shepherds attend an experienced riders education course taught by the MSF (Motorcycle Safety foundation) or similarly accredited organization. Shepherds must be familiar with your chapter's structure, rules, and procedures, as well as being informed about the Star Touring & Riding Association and its Mission Statement and your Chapter Charter License.

All of your shepherds should be supplied with member riding packets. These packets contain your chapter's membership application, ride waiver, Star Touring & Riding applications, and ride rules.

Listed are tasks that should be preformed by the shepherd

1. Shepherds should attempt to identify any new rider(s) as they show up to the meeting, contact them and make introductions. The Shepherd and the new rider are to "team up" from the moment of initial contact.
2. Shepherds will present the new rider with the chapter's ride packet and go over everything in detail. Have the new rider fill out the appropriate forms (whether or not they plan to join the chapter or STAR) and return the completed forms to the Chapter President, or Sergeant at Arms. These forms must be completed prior to the beginning of the ride. Should any of the new riders be female or have a female passenger, make sure to inform the chapter LOS representative of their presence.
3. Shepherds will educate the new rider on the chapter's rules and regulations, specifically the ride rules, signals, etc. (The Shepherds may elect to do this as a group as it promotes camaraderie and the Shepherds can assist each other if necessary.)
4. Shepherds should maintain as much contact with the new rider as prudently possible. Remember, you, the Shepherd, are the new riders' or prospective members first contact with the chapter.

We believe that all of your members will benefit from the Shepherds program. Your Shepherds will obviously feel a stronger sense of involvement with your chapter's development. The new rider will feel more at ease because he/she got necessary information first hand and on the spot.

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