



SOUTHERN NEVADA MOUNTED UNIT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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1. MISSION

The mission of the Southern Nevada Mounted Unit (SNMU), an all-volunteer non-police mounted unit, is to focus on community engagement and public safety through visible presence emphasizing building trust with the community, enhancing community safety during events and serving as a positive accessible point for contact between the public and law enforcement fostering goodwill and a sense of security.

Tagline: Building community trust and public safety through equine engagement.

In pursuit of its mission, SNMU may:

- A. Serve as ambassadors on behalf of organizations, municipalities, and law enforcement.
- B. Participate in Search and Rescue/Recovery (SAR) operations.
- C. Participate in community events and parades.

2. VETTING

2.1 Selection Requirements

- A. Minimum 18 years of age with a valid Driver's License.
- B. No felony or domestic violence convictions.
- C. Willingness to undergo a five-year Driver's License inquiry and cursory background check.
- D. Successful completion of interview process.
- E. Demonstrated ability to behave professionally and congenially at all times.

2.2 Ongoing Requirements

- A. Commit to positive community engagements and representation.
- B. Attend ongoing training.
- C. Serve at events.
- D. Behave in a team-oriented manner.
- E. Work well in a public relations capacity.

2.3 Selection Process

- A. Submit a letter of interest to a SNMU Board Director via email, including:
 - a. Description of candidate's interest, background, and availability.
 - b. Description of candidate's equestrian experience.
 - c. Self-assessment of candidate's equestrian abilities.
- B. The Director will discuss the letter of interest with the candidate and recommend to the Board whether the candidate should proceed.
- C. At least two Directors of the Board shall interview the candidate using a standard set of questions, also known as an Oral Board.
- D. For volunteer riders, one or more Directors will conduct a horsemanship skills assessment, including:
 - a. Candidate's understanding of basic equine anatomy and care.
 - b. Candidate's general riding skills.
 - c. Candidate's ability to ride through an obstacle course.
- E. Volunteer riders must have access to a horse that meets requirements (below) and a trailer when needed.
- F. A candidate may be approved, offered remedial training, or re-assessed at a future date.
- G. Approved candidates will function in a trainee role, working with other team members until they have successfully completed a basic mounted unit class.
- H. Upon completion of a basic certified mounted-unit class (40 hours) the trainee will be classified as a Basic Volunteer Rider for 18 months.
- I. The Basic Volunteer Rider must complete an advanced mounted-unit class (40 hours) within 18 months of completing the basic class. Upon completion of advanced training, the rider will be classified as an Advanced Volunteer Rider.

3. OPERATIONS

3.1 The President of the SNMU Board shall serve as the Director of Operations for the unit or designate an alternative acceptable to the Board.

3.2 The Director of Operations is responsible for activities such as:

- A. Proper care and well-being of horses and riders.
- B. Maintenance of records.
- C. Coordinating with organizations seeking Mounted Unit engagement.
- D. Ensuring proper vetting and training of horses and riders and they are fit for service.

4. **EVENTS**

- 4.1 The Board of Directors shall develop the schedule of pre-planned events for each calendar year.
- 4.2 Ad hoc events, such as un-planned Search and Rescue or Desert Well-Check support may be added to the schedule as needed.
- 4.3 The Director of Operations shall serve as Event Leader during each event or may designate an alternate Event Leader.
- 4.4 The Event Leader is responsible for the safety and effectiveness of Unit activity during each event.
- 4.5 The Event Leader shall direct all horse and rider teams during the event, conferring with others as needed, including:
 - A. Breaking up the group into teams.
 - B. Directing routes.
 - C. Making group safety decisions, such as requiring certain gear, calling retreat due to bad weather, etc.
- 4.6 Event Riders are responsible for:
 - A. Prioritizing the safety and well-being of their horse
 - B. Ensuring their own safety and well-being.
 - C. Informing the Event Leader of any safety and well-being concerns, for any horse or rider.
 - D. Preparing their horses for the event in an orderly and timely fashion, including grooming and tacking.
 - E. Following the direction of the Event Leader.
 - F. Adhering to requirements for horse and rider equipment and uniforms.

5. **SAFETY AND WELL-BEING**

- 5.1 Horse owners or lessors are responsible for regularly scheduled horse health and maintenance, and for the costs of those services, including:
 - A. Veterinary checks.
 - B. Vaccinations and deworming.
 - C. Hoof care.
 - D. Dental care.
 - E. Wound care.
 - F. Weight management.
 - G. Adequate hoof protection for rides and events, according to the terrain.
 - H. Adequate and appropriate feed and supplements as needed to maintain health.
- 5.2 Horse owners or lessors must maintain records of horse health, care, and maintenance and must provide those records to the Director of Operations annually or upon request.
- 5.3 Horse owners or lessors are required to carry equine liability insurance and provide proof of insurance to the Director of Operations upon request.
- 5.4 During events, each rider shall ensure that:
 - A. Horses receive sufficient breaks to prevent exhaustion or mental fatigue.
 - I. Horses receive sufficient water breaks to maintain proper hydration.
 - J. Horses maintain their feeding schedule as closely as possible.
- 5.5 Horse owners or lessors must timely inform the Director of Operations or designated Event Leader if their horse must withdraw from an event due to health or well-being concerns.
- 5.6 Riders shall always treat their mount in a humane and calm manner, recognizing the horse as their partner, with independent thoughts, feelings, and emotional needs.

6. **PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 6.1 Horse Requirements
 - A. Horse and rider must be adequately size-matched.
 - B. The horse shall demonstrate a generally quiet disposition and gentle manner.
 - C. Stallions shall not be used.
- 6.2 Tack Requirements
 - A. All tack shall be brown, black, or tan. Bright colored tack is not allowed.
 - B. Saddle shall be western style and in good repair, provided by the rider.
 - C. Headstalls and reins shall be brown, black, or tan, either English or Western style.

- D. A variety of bits may be worn, provided they are humane and adequate to manage the horse.
 - E. Horses shall wear a matching halter and lead under the headstall.
 - F. Pommel bags and saddle bags shall be black, brown, or tan.
 - G. Black or brown saddle pads shall be used for daytime events.
 - H. Nighttime events may include reflective leg cuffs, reflective brow band and flashing red bike light on the rear of the saddle.
 - I. Special tack may be required for certain events.
- 6.3 Personnel Requirements
- A. Riders shall ensure their mount is properly groomed and tacked.
 - B. All volunteers shall adhere to uniform requirements and present themselves in a clean and professional manner, as a representative of the Mounted Unit.
 - C. Owner trailers used for transport shall be clean and in good condition in accordance with vehicle requirements and regulations.
- 6.4 Uniform consists of:
- A. LAPG brand polo shirt in Silver Tan, long sleeve preferred, short sleeve accepted.
 - B. SNMU sewn-on shoulder patch on each sleeve.
 - C. Dark blue denim pants that are not faded or torn.
 - D. Riders may wear black or brown boots; ground crew may wear shoes of choice.
 - E. Riders may wear cowboy hat in black, brown, or straw, or a black or brown helmet. Volunteers may wear hats of their choice.

7. TRAINING PROGRAM

- 7.1 The Director of Operations shall develop and maintain a mounted unit training program modeled after the Western States Mounted Officers Association courses, to include:
- A. Grooming, saddling, and tack maintenance
 - B. Overall health maintenance
 - C. Basic equitation skills
 - D. Equine obstacle and harassment training
 - E. Defensive tactics and public safety
 - F. Continuing education for riders and horses
- 7.2 The Director of Operations shall ensure that riders and horses complete Basic and Advanced training courses and earn Continuing Education Units annually.
- A. Rider must successfully pass Basic Training (40 hours minimum with assessment) before riding in public.
 - B. Rider must successfully pass Advanced Training (40 hours minimum with assessment) to continue serving in public.
 - C. Horse and rider must complete continuing education annually (20 hours minimum from approved sources).
 - D. The Advanced class also serves as continuing education or a refresher course.
- 7.3 Should a horse or rider fail to complete training or annual continuing education, they may be restricted from serving on the unit or required to retake training, at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- 7.4 Before going into service, the horse must pass an evaluation of their ability to:
- A. Remain calm under a variety of sensory stimulations.
 - B. Work in close contact with other horses.
 - C. Stand quietly in a crowd of people.

8. VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 In addition to any requirements elsewhere stated in this document, to remain in active status in the Mounted Unit, volunteers are required to:
- A. Volunteer a minimum of 10 hours per month in qualifying activities.
 - B. Serve at a minimum of four official events annually, either as a rider or on ground crew.
 - C. Record their activity in the manner required.
- 8.2 Qualifying volunteer activities include:
- A. Caring for OTHER unit horses, such as mucking, feeding, exercising, or turnout as requested.
 - B. Training YOUR horse or OTHER unit horses under saddle, in service-related activities, such as trail riding, street riding, arena work, desensitizing, obstacle training (including jumping).
 - C. Serving at a Mounted Unit event.
 - D. Participating in fundraising activities specifically designated for the Mounted Unit.
- 8.3 NON-qualifying activities include:

- A. Caring for your own horse.
 - B. Exercising your horse in-hand or turnout.
 - C. Horse sports that do not correlate to mounted service, such as barrel racing or roping.
- 8.4 When in uniform, or when in conversations about the Mounted Unit, volunteers represent the Mounted Unit.
 - A. No alcohol, cannabis, tobacco, or illegal drugs may be consumed while in uniform.
 - B. While in uniform, volunteers must be sober and behave professionally
 - C. When representing the Mounted Unit, volunteers must speak respectfully toward the public and about the community, including individuals, businesses and government agencies.
- 8.5 Volunteers may not commit the Mounted Unit to any activities that are not coordinated and approved in advance by the Director of Operations or their designee.
- 8.6 Other than routine questions, volunteers shall redirect inquiries from the public to the Director of Operations or a member of the Board.