

Freedom of Road Riders, Inc.

Pocket Guide for Members

This Freedom of Road Riders POCKET GUIDE is designed to help you, the new member, familiarize yourself with Freedom of Road Riders, its Mission Goals, Policies, and Programs. We hope that your experience in FORR will be a rewarding one.

Freedom of Road Riders, its Locals, Districts and members are comprised of people from all walks of life and ages that share a common passion and love for the motorcycle lifestyle, no matter what make & model they ride.

In the mid 1960's, state governments across the country were enacting motorcycle policies on Qualifications, Licensing, and Restrictions regarding the use and operation of motorcycles. By the late 1970's prosecution of these restrictions on Personal Freedoms by became rampant. Influenced by the insurance and medical lobbies, elected officials were progressively enacting 'For Your Own Good' laws against motorcyclists, including forced compliance of various articles of protective gear and riding apparel. A clear disregard of our right to the pursuit of Life, Liberty, Happiness, and the American Dream.

Recognizing that some of these enactments were totalitarian in nature, and a selective form of discrimination against a lifestyle, it was feared that soon the federal government might step in and our riding future could be jeopardized. Groups of enthusiasts and riders began forming Motorcycle Rights Organizations or MROs across the country to take a stand against these totalitarian enactments at the state level.

They soon realized the only way to compete with the powerful, money-backed lobbies on an even and level playing field, was to develop and promote a solid 'Grass Roots' Movement. Education, and political activism are powerful tools against an ever increasing push to control our lifestyle. In 1981, Freedom of Road Riders became Missouri's MRO, and the movement to contain these types of enactments and recover our lost freedoms continues today.

Although the federal government has maintained and agreed that these enactments are now the business of individual state governments. Federal lawmakers influence state legislators by threatening to withhold needed Federal Highway funds if the state doesn't comply with the Federal sentiment toward the American motorcyclist.

Again, influenced by the insurance companies and medical trauma staff lobbies, legislators continue seeking legislation that 'protects motorcyclists from themselves.' Today MROs are in every state in the United States and across Europe. Freedom of Road Riders members have gone on to help develop new programs that help motorcyclists both on state and federal levels, including the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) in Washington, D.C.

We would like to encourage our new members to take full advantage of all the opportunities and programs Freedom of Road Riders offers. Your participation will not only help you to achieve a better understanding of Legislation that could help or hinder your continued love for the motorcycle lifestyle, it will strengthen FORR's efforts to monitor and inform you of legislation involving Safety, Education, and Laws that could affect you as a rider.

The following is just a brief overview of Freedom of Road Riders Inc. It's Districts, Locals, officers and members. Please feel free to speak with other members of FORR about programs and other opportunities FORR offers to enrich your experience as a member.

The Locals

When you signed up as a Freedom of Road Riders member, you probably indicated a Local near you to join. If not, a Local nearest to your geographical address will be assigned to you when your membership application is processed.

In the beginning, FORR had only a handful of Locals, mostly located in the western half of Missouri. Soon Locals spread to cover the width and breadth of Missouri. Today FORR has more than 32 Locals serving over 2,400 Missouri members.

Locals serve the members needs by providing a forum and platform where members can come together and meet to discuss, plan, and implement strategies that help motorcyclists to better understand and deal with the ever-changing legislative picture, here in Missouri, across America and around the world.

Locals also provide needed support for elected positions, various events, and FORR's District and State functions. Freedom of Road Riders encourages you to participate in the many activities your Local and District provide. It is our belief that our members and their Locals form the 'Power Base' from which FORR draws its strength. To succeed in our legislative and lobbying efforts, a 'Grass Roots' movement, involving the participation of our members is crucial. Locals help by solidifying and organizing member support for these endeavors.

The Districts

Freedom of Road Riders' Locals are divided into 10 geographical 'Districts' across Missouri. District core functions are two-fold. One, they act to organize Locals in the District for events, fund-raisers, and other functions that include the Locals within the District, and they also coordinate functions with other Locals and Districts in the state. Often the District rallies the Locals together for fund-raising events, special appreciation events and rides.

All Districts have a 'Legislative' branch that meets separately from the regular District 'Events' branch meetings, but usually in conjunction with each other's meeting. The District Legislative branch organizes fundraisers for our legislative efforts, both locally and across the state, and keep up to date on the legislators elected within their area.

The District Legislative works hand in hand with the FORR's State Legislative Coordinator in Jefferson City and Local 'Political Action Teams.' District coordinates efforts among its Locals for targeting and tracking problems with their area legislators. They also help legislators identified as 'friendly with our campaign issues' by performing such 'grass roots' efforts as putting out 'yard signs,' distributing campaign literature, manning phone lines, and possibly making contributions to their campaign from FORR's PAC fund.

District Legislative also holds voter registration drives, and hosts hospitality rooms for political fundraisers such as 'Truman Days' held by the Democratic Party and 'Lincoln Days' held by the Republican Party. These are just some of our many functions to help our members and their Locals achieve a better understanding of and coordination in the legislative arena.

Locals elect member representatives to meet at both District Events and District Legislative branches to keep the Locals and their members informed on the ever changing political arena. Both 'Events' and 'Legislative' define the short and long term mission goals of the District and it's Locals, and coordinates these with FORR's legislative actions.

FORR Programs

For over 30 years, FORR has developed programs to help our members become better riders, including one of the best rider education/safety programs in the country. Our instructors are all Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) trained, and offer both Beginner and Experienced Rider Courses.

Statistics show that over 90% of riders on the road today are self taught. It is our belief that once an educated rider expands his or her riding capabilities, they become more confident in themselves, producing a more rewarding and safe riding experience.

Freedom of Road Rider delegates annually attend the Motorcycle Riders Foundation's Meeting of the Minds conference, and the Mid-South M.I.L.E., which is held by the MROs of Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas (MAKOT). These conferences allow riders from around the country, and the world to exchange ideas on legislative issues affecting motorcyclists. FORR's delegates also attend various meetings and functions held by other state MROs to coordinate and concentrate multi-state legislative efforts. Often members from several states will make a trip to Washington, DC to lobby for our efforts.

On the Local, District and State level, educational seminars are offered to help members achieve an informed and productive role as voting riders. During election years, they also host Candidate Forums and candidate support drives to help inform FORR members of their choices in candidates.

Our charitable contributions to the motorcycling community and the community at large are unparalleled. Locals and Districts across the state hold many rides and events like our annual Toy Runs. We also support charitable organizations in their fundraising efforts. FORR members actively support rides to help the less fortunate in our communities. But most importantly, Freedom of Road Riders is here for YOU. Help us spread the word. Our most cherished asset is YOU, the Freedom of Road Riders Member! Bring a friend to your next meeting.

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