

PALM Bike Tour



A family-friendly, scenic and affordable bicycle tour across Michigan's lower peninsula the last full week of June.

PALM is open to all cyclists able to ride 30-60 miles per day for six days. The tour is limited to 700 participants.

Pedal Across Lower Michigan begins near Lake Michigan and meanders east, passing scenic, cultural, and historic sites. Many attractions will lure you from your bicycle – and you will have plenty of time to enjoy them. The route, which changes each year, generally avoids major urban areas. Sometimes a small downtown may be included for special interest, or for finding lunch or a snack. We use paved routes geared to the novice and intermediate touring rider. The daily distances and terrain combine to make PALM well suited to family bicycling. Daily distances may range from 30 to 60 miles, but are usually 40 to 50 miles each day. Optional longer routes are provided to challenge more experienced riders, including a “century” (100 mile route) each tour.

PALM is not a race, but a tour with emphasis on the social and recreational aspects of everyday cycling.

The tour gathers Saturday afternoon for check-in and orientation. Riders depart Sunday morning. There is no mass start – proceed to the route after you've put your tent and gear on the truck and had your breakfast. We have designated camping areas in open spaces such as school athletic fields, with nearby toilet and shower facilities. We end our tour on Friday with a shorter route and a PALM-provided group lunch.

Join us! #palmbiketour

MISSION STATEMENT:

Pedal Across Lower Michigan (PALM) is a non-profit group dedicated to encouraging family bicycling and the promotion of bicycling safety.

Before Registration

PALM will accept registrations until the ride is full.

Our low cost includes: SAG (support and gear) service, overnight facility use for tent camping with showers and bathrooms, transport of luggage between sites, road markings and GPS cues for routes, daily watermelon stop, bicycle education, and children's activities!

Price increases after May 10 and some add-ons may not be available after May 10.

TOUR COST

Adult participant:	\$ (see website)
Minor 11-17 years:	\$ (see website)
Minor 0-10 years:	\$ (see website)
Private SAG:	\$ (see website)

ALL PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS AND NON-RIDERS, MUST REGISTER.

YOUR EQUIPMENT

Any human-powered bicycle in good working condition can be used on PALM. No roller-blades, skateboards, mopeds or scooters are allowed. Please review guidelines for electric bicycles.

Each cyclist is expected to carry the basic minimum tools; at least enough to repair a flat tire.

Bike shops accompanying the tour can make repairs in the evening – not on the route. They charge for their parts and services. If you ride a non-standard bike, come prepared with parts the bike shops may not have in stock.

HELMETS REQUIRED

Your certified, properly-fitted helmet **MUST** be worn any time you are on your bike, even in the parking lot. Children in trailers must also wear helmets.

FAILURE TO WEAR A HELMET COULD RESULT IN YOUR REMOVAL FROM THE TOUR.

MINORS AND SPONSORS

Participants of all ages are welcome, and families are encouraged. Everyone traveling with the tour, whether riding or not, must register.

By state law, riders under the age of 18 must have an adult sponsor on the tour who will be responsible for them, **AND** must have the signature of a parent/guardian consenting to their participation and accepting the terms of the release.

A parent/guardian must sign a waiver for each rider under the age of 18 and this must be presented at check-in or the minor will not be allowed to participate.

No children under 16 may ride unaccompanied. A parent/guardian or sponsor must ride close behind all children, and have them in their sight at all times.

If a minor is picked up by a SAG vehicle, a parent/guardian or sponsor must ride with the minor.

Adults sponsoring minors must be a registered rider and must sign the waiver accepting responsibility. One adult may sponsor no more than eight minors.

OPTIONAL ADD-ONS

Meal plans and bus transportation are provided for an additional fee.

Cafeteria meals: \$ (see website)
Eleven meals – six breakfasts (Sunday-Friday) and five dinners (Sunday-Thursday)

Transportation: \$ (see website)
First site to last site, Saturday morning or Friday afternoon

Add-on items must be ordered by May 10. Meals will be available as an add-on until the end of May. Bus transportation will be available until buses are full.

CAFETERIA MEAL PLANS

It's just what it sounds like – you and a few hundred new friends dine together in the school cafeteria. Dishes are prepared by school lunch staff and vary by school. Attend the evening meetings to learn what your meals will be the following day.

The meal plan must be reserved prior to the May 10 deadline.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

You may park at the end and get a ride to the beginning on Saturday, or park at the beginning and get a ride back on Friday. Saturday is the more popular option.

Seating is limited and must be reserved prior to the May 10 deadline.

Before Registration (cont.)



SHIRTS AND GIFTS

Participants receive a tour T-shirt and a gift. You may order additional T-shirts at registration.

CHANGES AND CANCELLATIONS

Refunds for tour cancellation by participant(s) before May 10 will be subject to an administrative fee for each registration.

Sorry, no refunds for any reason after May 10.

Instructions for changing or cancelling add-ons or your tour registration are in the Registration FAQ.

TRUCKS AND LUGGAGE

Baggage will be trucked between campsites.

Cyclists must carry everything they need during the day (medications, bathing suits, jackets, snacks, first aid, spare tires, money). The trucks will carry everything else (tents, sleeping bags, clothing).

Bags will get wet in the trucks. Do not bring valuables or anything that could be easily damaged by water.

Bags must not weigh more than 40 lbs. and be able to be carried, loaded, and unloaded by one individual. Use more bags if necessary. Don't tie bags together.

SUPPORT AND GEAR (SAG)

Tour SAG vehicles drive the route to help riders who are injured, ill or have disabled bikes.

SAG service ends at 5 p.m. each day.

If a rider is unable to finish the route on two separate days and requires a SAG ride to the next site, the rider will be asked to arrange for transportation back to their car or to their home.

If a minor is picked up by a SAG vehicle, a parent or authorized guardian must ride with the minor.

PRIVATE SAG VEHICLES/ CAMPERS

All vehicle drivers parking on site must register as a participant and display a PALM Parking Pass at all times while on site. If you intend to have a vehicle or camper accompany you from site to site, indicate this in the registration ADD-ONS.

Private SAGs must stay off ride route.

Private vehicles and campers must park in the designated areas at each site. Do not arrive at the next site before noon, and do not set up camp without first checking with Site Coordinator.

SAFETY AND EDUCATION

We recommend participants complete the online **Traffic Skills 101** course. See this link and more at the bottom of our Pedal Safely page.

We have a League-certified safety instructor offering optional classes every evening on topics such as bicycle maintenance, efficient cycling, and self-contained touring. We recommend all new participants attend the free class after Saturday's orientation meeting.

DOGS / ESA

Several of our school sites specifically state that NO PETS are allowed in school buildings or on school property. In the past we've allowed animals on PALM, but we can no longer allow this as we must follow school mandates.

STATE LAW

Absolutely no alcohol, firearms, smoking, or fires of any kind on school grounds.

Obey all traffic laws. Violators will be removed from the tour and may incur traffic tickets.

VOLUNTEER STAFF

Be sure to call 734-669-0172 or email palmbiketour@yahoo.com before registering.

MISSION STATEMENT:

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After Registration

We're so glad you're joining us!

SATURDAY CHECK-IN

Registration packet pick-up is 3-5 p.m. on Saturday at the first site on the tour. Your packet includes your fanny flag, maps, rules, t-shirt, gifts and other items. Participants must pick up their own packets as a staff volunteer will attach your wristband.

Be sure to bring printed, signed waivers for all participants. Don't forget that a parent or legal guardian **MUST** sign the waiver for all minors.

PACKET PICK-UP

All participants must check-in on Saturday at the first site. The site opens at noon for the staff to mark camping areas, long-term parking, and set up registration. Please allow the staff to prepare to make check-in and packet pick-up smooth and easy!

Check-in begins at 3 p.m. and continues until 5 p.m.

Late check-in may be available after the 7 p.m. meeting, approx. 8-9 p.m. Limited check-in may be available Sunday morning 8-9 a.m. only for those who did not camp on site.

You will turn in your signed waiver(s) and receive your tour wristband, receive your registration packet with fanny flag and pick up your t-shirt.

There will be late arrival check-in for a limited time after the mandatory Saturday evening meeting. Do not skip this meeting!

Dinner on Saturday is on-your-own.

Breakfast on Sunday morning at the first site is included with your optional meal plan.

The baggage trucks close at 9 a.m. so please pack up your site before breakfast, or eat early so you can pack up after. Most riders leave the site by 9 a.m. and the staff volunteers will be on their way to prepare the next site for your arrival.

PALM WRISTBANDS

Your **PALM** wristband must be worn **at all times**. Ensure you got the correct color wristband depending on if your registration included the optional meals add-on.

Due to limited seating, only those with the wristbands for paid meals will be allowed in the cafeterias. Meal times are usually 6:30-8:30 a.m. for breakfast and 5-7 p.m. for dinner but may change by location, so always attend the evening meetings and check the information table.

PALM FANNY FLAGS

Your **PALM** fanny flag must be visible **every day!** Pin on bike bag, facing the road, or on lower back of shirt. Be sure it is visible from the road so PALM SAG drivers can see it. Many people print their name and their hometown on the flag. Your emergency contact info is on the back of your flag.

SHIRTS AND PARADE

Save your commemorative PALM t-shirt for Friday to wear in the parade at the end of the route!

You can swap your clean, unwashed shirt for a different size (if available) on Tuesday after the meeting. You may buy additional t-shirts (if available) on Wednesday after the meeting.

INFORMATION TABLE

Local site information including nearby restaurants and attractions, lost and found, and other messages are located at the information table. Please check it every day after your ride. Add your thoughts to the comment book!

TRUCKS AND LUGGAGE

Trucks open at 7 a.m. and close at 9 a.m. each morning.

Do not leave your bags on the ground near the truck. You must load your own bags on the truck. Staff volunteers cannot load them for you.

PALM is not responsible for bags left on site.

Each bag must be 40 lb. or less!

Do not tie your bags or other items together.

Trucks will be unloaded when there are enough participants at the next site willing to help unload ALL trucks.

Please use duffel bags – they pack well on the trucks. Be sure to put your sleeping bag inside a waterproof bag. Pack clothing in sealed plastic bags.

HELMETS

Your certified and properly-fitted helmet **MUST** be worn any time you are on your bike, even in the parking lot. Children in trailers also must wear helmets.

Your helmet should sit straight on your head – not tipped toward the back of head. The chinstrap should be slightly snug – only two fingers should fit between it and your chin.

After Registration (cont.)



To signal a SAG driver:

TAP-TAP-TAP the top of your helmet. If you wave, they will wave back and keep driving!

Failure to wear a helmet could result in your removal from the tour.

CAMPING

Camp only in the areas designated by PALM staff.

Do not ask school staff for permission to camp or park in other areas – not all school staff may know what arrangements have been agreed upon in our building use contracts.

Our volunteer Site Coordinators have worked closely with school administration on designated accommodations.

WEATHER

We camp outside unless severe weather is near the area. Be prepared to sleep in the rain! PALM staff will announce if severe weather dictates we must take shelter inside the school.

We will not unload trucks if severe weather is in the area. We will attempt to unload bags into the school if it is raining.

SUN SAFETY

There are water bottle refill sites along the route.

Drink lots of water!

Don't skimp on sunscreen! Keep a small container with you and reapply during the day.

BIKE LOCKS

Use your own discretion when locking your bike. There are not always suitable places to use a lock at the school buildings or on the route.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity will be available in designated areas for C-PAP machines ONLY. No fans, lights, etc.

Check with the information table for the location of the device charging station.

CHARGING STATION

Please silence calls and alarms while your device is charging.

The station is in high demand, so please remove your devices as soon as they are charged.

Be sure to remove devices from the charging station before breakfast so it can be loaded onto the truck for use at the next site.

PALM is not responsible for devices left at the charging station after 9 a.m.

HEADPHONES AND EARBUDS

For safety, no headphones or earbuds allowed while on your bicycle.

QUIET TIME

As a courtesy to all riders, quiet time is from 10 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Early risers, please be considerate of those still sleeping! Trucks do not open for loading until 7 a.m. so there is no need to take down tents before 6:30 a.m.

STATE LAW

Absolutely no alcohol, firearms, smoking, or fires of any kind on school grounds.

MISSION STATEMENT:

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Preparing for PALM



IS YOUR **BODY** READY FOR A SIX-DAY TOUR?

For those of you who have never participated in a multi-day ride, you may be asking yourself: how do I get physically ready?

PALM is geared toward families and beginners and the daily mileages reflect that. However, how easy the ride will be for you, and especially how much you enjoy yourself, is directly proportional to how well you prepare.

Start riding in the spring as soon as weather permits.

Try to ride at least 3 times a week. In the beginning, try for at least 5-10 miles. After 2 weeks, add an additional 5-10 miles to each ride. After a few more weeks, add another 5-10 miles per ride. Continue this gradual building up until you get to at least one 50-mile ride each week right up to PALM.

The secret is to not only build up your muscles and aerobic capacity, but to become comfortable in the riding position and especially the saddle. Everyone, even pro riders, get a sore posterior. Take a “butt break” every 10-15 minutes while riding by coasting, standing up on the pedals, and stretch; first one leg, then the other.

Remember, PALM is not a race. Enjoy the scenery!

Get off the bike for at least few minutes every 10-20 miles. You have all day to get to the next site and there's plenty to see and do along the way.

Mobile SAG service (getting a ride to the next site for yourself and your bicycle) is meant for an unexpected health issue and not because you got tired. If you request a mobile SAG two days in a row, you may be asked to leave the tour.

IS YOUR **BIKE** READY FOR A SIX-DAY TOUR?

For a bike ridden only on pavement, if it has been more than 5 years or 2000 miles, you may need an overhaul. All the bearings will need to be cleaned and repacked with grease. That includes the front and rear hubs, bottom bracket, headset, and pedals. You may also need a new chain, cables or brake pads.

If you are not comfortable servicing your own bike, take it to your local bicycle shop to have it tuned up and checked out. Make sure to tell your mechanic that you are going on a tour. A good mechanic will find anything that is likely to go wrong during the tour.

While you're there, ask them to see if the bike is properly set up for you. Have them look at the seat's height, tilt, and fore-aft position, as well as the handlebar position, to be sure everything is set up properly for you. Remember that these are starting positions – as you ride, you may want to make adjustments. Ask the shop how to make these adjustments so that you can do them yourself.

Remove your bicycle from the roadway completely when stopping and before starting to work on your bike.

At minimum, be prepared to fix a flat tire – this is the most likely mechanical problem you may encounter. Mobile SAG may be called to get you and your bike to the next site if it is not able to be fixed on the route.



Packing for PALM



Each bag must be under 40 pounds!

Please use duffel bags – they pack well on the trucks. Wheeled suitcases are not recommended. Be sure to put your sleeping bag in a waterproof bag. Pack clothing inside resealable plastic bags.

Attaching a durable, unique “flag” on your bags – such as one made from duct tape or fabric – can make the task of locating your bags easier. You may also consider using a GPS tracking device.

You must load your own bags on the truck. Staff volunteers cannot load them for you. Trucks open at 7 a.m. and close at 9 a.m. Do not leave your bags on the ground near the truck.

Do not tie bags or other items together. Each bag must be able to be loaded and unloaded by one person – oversized bags requiring two people to carry are not allowed, even if below the 40 pound limit.

YOUR BICYCLE AND RELATED ITEMS INCLUDING –

- helmet – **required**
- rear-view mirror
- spare tube, tire levers, patch kit, pump or CO2 kit
- bike multitool or the correct sized tools for your bike
- spoke wrench, chain tool, chain lube
- handlebar bag and/or a back rack and straps
- water bottle(s) for the bike
- lock and cable for securing bike
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

YOUR CAMPING NECESSITIES INCLUDING –

- sleeping bag, some sort of sleeping pad, small pillow
- tent, rain fly, ground cloth, stakes and small mallet
- flashlight and batteries
- earplugs, if a light sleeper
- toiletries and medicines, sunblock, lip balm, mosquito repellent
- quick-dry camping towel and washcloth
- clothes line and clothespins
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

YOUR RIDING GEAR AND OTHER CLOTHING INCLUDING –

- jerseys or shirts (one for each day, or plan to wash out at night)
- cycling shorts (at least two pair so that you can wash one at night)
- cycling tights (if prediction is for cool weather)
- cycling gloves (with padding)
- rain gear – at least a rain jacket for cycling
- casual clothing for warm evenings and cool nights
- socks and underwear
- swimwear and shower shoes
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Pedal Safely



Remember this tour is run entirely by volunteers who are on vacation too – help out if you see an opportunity. Things will run smoother and you'll have as much fun as we do!

BE RESPONSIBLE.	BE POLITE.	BE PREDICTABLE.	BE CAREFUL.	BE HELPFUL.
<p>Obey ALL traffic laws. In particular, STOP at stop signs – don't just yield.</p> <p>Keep to the right of your lane when safe to do so.</p> <p>Don't ride in low light conditions without lights.</p> <p>Keep your head up and scan your surroundings. Regularly check your mirror.</p>	<p>Ride no more than two abreast.</p> <p>Drop to single file when traffic approaches.</p> <p>Get bikes completely off the roadway when stopped.</p> <p>Use paved shoulders where available, debris free, and of sufficient width.</p> <p>Call out, "Car back", "Car up", "Slowing", or "Stopping" to alert other riders as to what you see and what you are doing.</p>	<p>Use hand signals for all turns.</p> <p>Stay in your lane – ride straight; don't swerve.</p> <p>Say and signal "stopping" or "slowing."</p> <p>Warn other cyclists before passing. Ring bell or call out "On your left!"</p> <p>Don't swerve around potholes or debris without first checking that it is clear behind.</p>	<p>Watch out for vulnerable cyclists.</p> <p>Watch for gravel, sand, potholes and other hazards.</p> <p>Warn other cyclists if you spot a hazard.</p> <p>Pass parked cars a door width out, in case one opens.</p> <p>Always cross railroad tracks at a right angle.</p> <p>If chased by a dog, squirt with water bottle, yell "GO HOME" at the dog, or try to out run it.</p>	<p>Be grateful for SAG drivers – they're volunteers too!</p> <p>Get involved – you'll be glad you did.</p> <p>Above all, be safe and have fun!</p>

There is a Bicycle Education class after each nightly PALM meeting!

HAND SIGNALS

Proper hand signals are necessary to let drivers, as well as other riders, know your intentions.

LEFT TURN: Left arm and hand straight out.

RIGHT TURN: Right arm straight out OR left arm bent at elbow, hand pointing up.

STOPPING: Left arm bent at the elbow, hand pointing down.

DEBRIS ON THE ROAD: Point to alert riders behind you.

ROAD POSITIONING

Always ride on the right side of the road and as far to the right as is safe.

Use paved shoulders where available, debris free, and of sufficient width.

Don't ride more than two abreast, and single file in traffic.

Don't swerve around potholes or debris without first checking that it is clear behind.

Pass parked cars a door width out, in case one opens.

ALERT SCANNING

Keep your head up and keep it moving while looking around you. Regularly look in your mirror. Don't have a mirror? It's highly suggested you get one.

MAKING LEFT TURNS

First, check that it is clear behind, signal and if on a two lane road, move to left side of lane. Signal again and complete the turn. If on a multi-lane or a road with a left turn lane, move across each lane in steps.

CROSSING TRACKS

Always cross railroad tracks at a right angle. Make sure the bike is perfectly upright and not tilted when crossing, especially if it is wet. If there is any doubt, get off and walk your bike across.

RIDING IN A TOUR

Stay to the right and pass only on the left. Give a warning when passing other riders. Say "Passing on your left".

Ride predictably, never more than two abreast, and single up when a car or truck needs to pass.

Call out, "Car back", "Car up", "Slowing", or "Stopping" to alert other riders as to what you see and what you are doing.

LOOSE DOGS

If chased by a dog, squirt with a water bottle, yell "GO HOME" at the dog, or try to out run it. In case of attack, use pepper spray. (Make sure younger riders know not to entice a dog to enter the roadway.)

HELMET FIT

Your helmet should sit straight on your head – not tipped toward the back of head. The chinstrap should be slightly snug – only two fingers should fit between it and your chin.

Host Sites



Each day of PALM, Sunday through Thursday, has a relatively consistent schedule. Please note the variations for Saturday and Friday.

Quiet hours are 10 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.

Saturday:

ARRIVAL:

Most riders arrive at the first site at different times throughout the day, so always be cautious in the parking lots. **No arrivals before noon.**

PARKING:

Dropoff parking, Private SAG parking, and weeklong parking details will be in your PALM email.

CAMPING:

You may set up your tent in the designated areas after 12 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION OPTION:

Please review arrival and parking details in your PALM email. You will load your bike(s) on the truck and your bags on the bus.

CHECK-IN:

Check-in at the first site is usually from 3-6 p.m.

MEETING:

Saturday's 7 p.m. meeting is mandatory for all participants. Please arrive on time.

Sunday – Thursday:

ARRIVAL:

Site coordinators arrive first and place signs for camping, restrooms, cafeteria, etc. **No participants allowed on site before noon.**

Trucks will be opened and unloaded when the site coordinator determines there are enough volunteers to unload ALL trucks. This is typically around 2 p.m. but may vary.

PRIVATE SAG:

No access to overnight parking until noon. Park only in the designated Private SAG area. This will be available at the information table. All vehicles must leave the site by 9 a.m.

CAMPING:

Camp only in the designated areas. If needed, look for the CPAP signs.

DINNER OPTION:

Cafeteria hours are 5-7 p.m. for those who purchased the **meal package** at online registration. Please take only one serving, and only take the vegetarian option if you selected this during registration.

MEETING:

All participants are encouraged to attend the 7 p.m. meetings, which may cover last-minute updates for the next day's route. At minimum, send at least one member of your group to take notes.

BREAKFAST OPTION:

Coffee is on at 6 a.m.

If you purchased the **meal package** at online registration, cafeteria hours are 6:30-8:30 a.m. Please take only one serving.

LOADING:

You may load your bags before or after breakfast, but please note that the trucks open at 7 a.m. and depart promptly at 9 a.m. You must load your own bags – volunteers are not permitted to load, only unload – so don't leave them next to the truck.

Friday:

PARADE:

On arrival at the last site, we assemble for a short parade before lunch and departure.

See your PALM email for the parade route and other details.

PALM LUNCH:

Friday's route is shorter so you can meet up at the last site for lunch. There is no watermelon stop on Friday.

TRANSPORTATION OPTION:

If you opted for transportation from the last site to the first site on Friday after lunch, please review departure details in your PALM email.

DEPARTURE:

There is **NO CAMPING** at the last site. Please depart after lunch.

Do not contact the schools directly with questions – contact a PALM staff volunteer.

We have facility use contracts with our host sites. Please arrive no earlier than noon, and depart no later than 9 a.m. Note the designated camping areas, and do not set up tents outside these areas.

PALM 101

New to Pedal Across Lower Michigan? Maybe it's your first bike tour. Here are some tips and tricks from the veterans, and important rules to follow.

WHAT IS A SAG?

Our "Support and Gear" volunteers are a valued part of our bike tour! Standard SAG service is part of your paid registration.

Mobile SAG staff monitor the route and watch for participants who need emergency assistance. Drivers carry a basic first aid kit.

DO flag down a SAG by TAPPING your helmet if you have a medical issue.

Don't hail a SAG for a ride up the next hill. SAG is not a taxi service. (If a minor requires a SAG, their sponsor **MUST** accompany them.)

DO flag down a SAG if your bike is disabled beyond roadside repair, and you require a ride to the next site.

Don't stop a SAG for a flat tire. Another participant will often help you if needed.

SAG Stops provide water to refill your bottles at set points along the route. About midway you'll find the "fruit stop" SAG which offers watermelon as a special treat!

ALWAYS hand signal "slowing/stopping" to riders behind you, and move yourself and your bike completely off the roadway when stopping for any reason.

HOW DOES ALL MY STUFF GET FROM PLACE TO PLACE?

No need to pack your tent on your bike! Standard luggage transport is part of your paid PALM registration.

You should have your ID, basic tools to fix a flat, and anything you may need before you reach the site at the route's end. Everything else is transported from one site to the next in rented trucks.

You **MUST** load your own bags on the truck in the morning. Bring multiple bags if needed, but none over 40 lb. and none that require more than one person to handle.

Once you load your bags, you will **NOT** have access to them again until they are unloaded at the next site, so plan accordingly! Bags will be unloaded at the discretion of the site coordinator once there are enough riders to help unload.

Packing each day's clothing in a resealable bag keeps it dry until you need it, and gives you storage for dirty laundry. When touring with kids, write the day of the week on the bag for easier mornings!

Duffel bags make for easier loading and unloading. Wheeled bags are discouraged.

A strip of colorful fabric or patterned duct tape can help you find your bags among the hundreds of others.

Put your sleeping bag and pillow in a waterproof bag to protect from damp tent bags.

Use a mesh shower bag and quick-drying towel.

WHAT IS A PRIVATE SAG?

Friend or family, your own private SAG can haul a small camper or drive a small motorhome, if tent camping is not feasible for you. There is limited overnight parking and no electric hookup.

If you ride with more than one young child, consider arranging a private SAG, as you must stay with all of your sponsored minors if any of them have an issue on the road.

A private SAG can also be a small car. Sometimes a couple or group will take turns being the daily driver or riding the route. Participants can even split a day by meeting at lunch, and trading wheels.

All private SAGs register as participants, and may purchase the meal plan add-on. Driving directions from site to site will be provided.

WHAT IS IT LIKE CAMPING AT A SCHOOL?

There are few facilities that can support a large group of campers like a public school.

We utilize their large open spaces for camping. Be sure to set up your tents **ONLY** in the areas marked – you don't want to wake to sprinklers on timers that come on overnight!

An area will be designated for those who need a CPAP. This is the only camping area with access to electricity. (There will be a phone/device charging station inside the school.)

Look for the water horse for bottle refills, and the e-bike charging station. Overnight parking area will be marked for any Private SAGs.

Information (usually set up just inside the main entrance) can help you locate the gym, cafeteria, showers and restrooms.

We use the gymnasium for our daily meeting. Send at least one member of your group to each meeting – this is the best way to get necessary tour updates.

We use the cafeteria for our breakfast and dinner – see optional meal plan add-on, highly recommended.

We use a classroom for Bike Ed and for most Children's Activities.

Schools cannot guarantee the shower water temperature will be pleasant for hours and hundreds of visitors. Plan for a quick, cool shower.

We cannot have a PALM without the cooperation and participation of the cafeteria and maintenance staff. Thank them daily!

PALM 101 (cont.)



IF I PARK AT THE START, HOW DO I GET BACK TO MY VEHICLE?

That's where the optional bus transportation comes in! You can park at the last site, and get a bus ride to the first site on Saturday; OR, you can park at the first site, and get a bus ride back to the first site on Friday.

Whichever option you choose, park in the designated long-term parking areas. Load your bags and bikes on the truck or bus at the time specified for your departure, and unload at the other end of the trip.

Additional details will be provided to all participants who select the optional bus transportation at registration.

DO I NEED TO BUY A FANCY NEW BIKE TO RIDE PALM?

Ride what you have – many participants have ridden inexpensive, older, or borrowed bicycles. You will see bikes of all shapes and sizes on PALM!

The most important thing is that the bike fits YOU, and is in good working order. Have your local bike shop inspect your bike, and check fit.

After a few rides on PALM, you may choose to upgrade. Strike up a conversation with another participant – we're sure they'd like to talk about their bike!

Along the same lines – no need to go out and buy a week's worth of cycling jerseys for your first PALM! Breathable layers like t-shirts and light jackets in bright colors will do for our shorter, slower routes.

However, all riders will need proper padding, unless you want a sore posterior.

WILL MY KIDS GET BORED?

Not likely! During the day, many families make their own adventures by stopping at roadside stands, parks, historic markers and other attractions. Get tips for the next day at the evening meetings.

Once in camp, there are daily volunteer-led Children's Activities where kids can meet others on the ride and make new friends! Older kids often travel with a soccer ball or basketball, and have the energy after the ride to use it.

ARE E-BIKES ALLOWED?

Human-powered e-bikes are allowed. PALM will have charging stations at sites specifically for e-bike batteries. You may wish to carry a spare battery/charger on the route.

NOTE: E-bike users may have a longer wait for an appropriate SAG. Mechanics on tour may not be equipped to handle some repairs.

Our low cost includes:

SAG (support and gear) service, overnight facility use for tent camping with showers and bathrooms, transport of luggage between sites, road markings and GPS cues for routes, daily watermelon stop, bicycle education, and children's activities!

*Optional add-ons include: transportation (for yourself and your bike) from the last site to the first site on Saturday or Friday, cafeteria meal plans, and a third-party tent set-up service.



A Day on PALM



Good morning, adventurers! You attended yesterday's meeting, camped at this host site overnight, and are ready to begin the leisurely ride to the next host site.

Remember: quiet hours are 10 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.

Get dressed and pack your waterproof clothing bag.

Coffee is on at 6 a.m. for early risers.

Take down your tent and pack.

Quietly please, especially if before 6:30 a.m.

Put your bags on a truck – and note which truck!

Trucks open at 7 a.m. and close promptly at 9 a.m.

Breakfast on your own – or enjoy the PALM meal.*

Cafeteria meal plan hours are 6:30-8:30 a.m.

Get your bike ready, if you didn't the night before.

Stretch, fill your water bottle, and hit the road!

Please depart from host site by 9 a.m.

Visit our SAG stops as needed for water and rest.

Mobile SAG service is for emergencies.

Lunch on your own – whenever you like.

You went to the meeting for options on the route, right?

VISIT THE WATERMELON STOP!

It's around midway.

Enjoy the ride to your destination.

Take your time – no access to next host site until noon.

SAG SERVICE ENDS AT 5 P.M. EXCEPT FRIDAY.

Find your bags, and set up your campsite.

Watch for "no camping" and "CPAP only" areas.

Trucks might not be unloaded before you arrive.

Shower and rinse bike shorts if needed.

Kids may wish to join the children's activities.

Dinner on your own – or enjoy the PALM meal.*

Cafeteria meal plan hours are 5-7 p.m.

Attend the evening meeting for important route news.

Prep your bike and other gear for tomorrow's ride.

Relax and get some sleep!

Quiet hours are 10 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.

Repeat through Friday, when instead of a watermelon stop, a box lunch will be provided by PALM at the end of the tour!

Our low cost includes:

SAG (support and gear) service, overnight facility use for tent camping with showers and bathrooms, transport of luggage between sites, road markings and GPS cues for routes, daily watermelon stop, bicycle education, and children's activities!

*Optional add-ons include: transportation (for yourself and your bike) from the last site to the first site on Saturday or Friday, cafeteria meal plans, and a third-party tent set-up service.

Optional ADD-ONS



What are these optional add-ons? So glad you asked!

Breakfast & Dinner

The most popular add-on is the cafeteria meal package.

MEAL PLAN: \$ _____

It's just what it sounds like – you and a few hundred new friends dine together in the school cafeteria. Dishes are prepared by school lunch staff and vary by school. Attend the evening meetings to learn what your meals will be the following day.

CAFETERIA MEAL PLAN:

BREAKFAST – Sunday through Friday

LUNCH – On your own, except Friday

DINNER – Sunday through Thursday

Please note that “seconds” are not allowed and if you have in the past found the portions too small for your appetite, you may supplement with food you bring or buy on the route, or buy an additional meal plan. Taking “seconds” means another rider may go without their paid meal.

Be sure if you select meat or vegetarian, you stick with that choice throughout the week, or you may cause another rider to not get the meal they reserved.

Camping

Another option we like to make you aware is available is a campsite setup service done entirely by Comfy Campers. They partner with PALM and other organized rides. Review the perks available and book through their website after you complete your PALM registration.

Transportation

The second most popular add-on is transportation from the end to the start.

TRANSPORTATION: \$ _____

You may park at the **last site** and get a bus ride to the **first site** on Saturday, or park at the **first site** and get a ride back on Friday.

SATURDAY BUS:

If you chose transportation from the **last site** to the **first site** on Saturday morning:

- You need to be at the **last site** by 8 a.m.
- You'll load your bike onto the trucks, and get on the bus with your luggage.
- The bus will take you to the **first site** for unloading and registration.

FRIDAY BUS:

Those who purchased transportation for Friday will load up after lunch and be bussed to the **first site**. Loading and departure times will be posted – please do not be late.

Long-term Parking

FIRST SITE:

If you're parking for the week at the **first site**, staff will direct you to the **designated long-term parking** area. It is important that you do not park in another location, as this space is designated in our site contract.

LAST SITE:

You can also park a vehicle for the week at the **last site**, for an easy departure after Friday's lunch. Please park only in the **designated long-term parking** area. All vehicles must be removed from the site by the posted time on Friday.

Sites

These are the sites for _____:

Saturday:

Sunday:

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

(No overnight camping at the last site.)



Different route each year! Browse the past routes on our website.

PALM is only possible due to the efforts of many dedicated staff volunteers. The committee meets monthly beginning in September to review the previous tour and begin planning for the next year. Each year, many volunteers return, but we also need new people as positions become available. Please consider donating a bit of your time to supporting PALM in the future!

We need SAG drivers every tour to help participants in need. We also need truck drivers every tour to drive baggage trucks from site to site. Volunteer staff SAG and truck drivers do not pay the tour fee but must register, sign the participant waiver, have a standard driver's license, and must be at least 21 years old.

To contact any staff member, please email palmbiketour@yahoo.com and your message will be forwarded to the volunteer who can best assist you.



Subscribe to our monthly email newsletter and view past issues on our website.

palmbiketour.org

MISSION STATEMENT:

Pedal Across Lower Michigan (PALM) is a non-profit group dedicated to encouraging family bicycling and the promotion of bicycling safety.