



CITY OF FAIRFAX POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

Subject RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM		Number 5-16
Effective Date June 26, 2017	Rescinds General Order 5-16, dated 11-17-10	
Accreditation Standards	Authority Colonel Carl R. Pardiny Chief of Police	

PURPOSE:

To establish a clearly defined program and procedures which specify who may accompany police officers in police vehicles as Ride-Along participants during patrol activities.

POLICY:

Officer safety and the safety of Ride-Along participants should come before other considerations or operational procedures. Ride-Along activities are only authorized in accordance with this directive.

DISCUSSION:

The Ride-Along Program is an important means for the department to enhance recruitment efforts while also providing a means for educating and exposing those deemed eligible to participate in the program to police activities and duties.

PROCEDURE:

I. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- A. Applicants for the Ride-Along Program must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - 1. Actively involved in and being processed as a police applicants for this department (must be approved by a CID Supervisor).
 - 2. Those approved at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- B. Attire for a Ride-Along shall be business casual dress, and be neat, clean and conservative. The duty supervisor judges appropriateness for attire.

II. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- A. Applications may be obtained in person, emailed, or sent U.S. mail.
- B. Applications must be filled out entirely, including an adult waiver, and submitted to the Field Operations Division Commander at least 14 work days prior to the requested Ride-Along date.
- C. The Field Operations Division Commander maintains the Ride-Along file, which contains both approved and rejected Ride-Along applications for the previous two years.
- D. Division Commanders may in the absence of the Chief of Police or Deputy Chief, in unusual circumstances, waive the advanced application requirement notice and approve a Ride-Along.

- E. The Field Operations Division Commander is the primary approving authority for Ride-Alongs. Prior to approval, the Ride-Along applicant shall be thoroughly vetted through police investigative databases to include a criminal history check, driving record check and search using LInX.
- F. Approved applications are forwarded to the appropriate duty supervisor for assignment.
- G. If approved, prior to the Ride-Along applicant participating in the program, the Field Operations Division Commander provides the applicant with a Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Awareness Acknowledgement Form and instructs the applicant to review the CJIS Security Awareness PowerPoint presentation. The Ride-Along applicant will then sign the Security Awareness Acknowledgement Form in the presence of the duty supervisor the day they report for the Ride-Along.
- H. The Field Operations Division Commander may deny any applicant due to any perceived safety concerns or where it is deemed it would not be in the best interest of the department to have the applicant participate in the Ride-Along Program.
- I. Restrictions:
 - 1. Recording devices and cameras of any type are prohibited unless pre-approved by the Field Operations Division Commander.
 - 2. No weapons are authorized to be carried by a Ride-Along. Sworn law enforcement officers/agents may have this requirement waived by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. If waived, all officers working, including overlaps and special details shall be notified that the Ride-Along is armed.
 - 3. Ride-Alongs are limited to 1 per calendar year.

III. DUTY SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Duty supervisors receive Ride-Along applications once they have been approved. After reviewing the application, the duty supervisor assigns the Ride-Along to a specific unit or to the unit designated on the application.
- B. If the duty supervisor is informed of unfavorable information regarding the applicant at the time the applicant reports, the duty supervisor may deny the Ride-Along. In such cases, the duty supervisor shall draft a written memorandum to the Field Operations Division Commander informing him/her of the reason for the denial.
- C. The presence of a Ride-Along is considered by the duty supervisor in determining how to best deploy officers. The Ride-Along should not be permitted on the scene of high risk incidents.
- D. Duty supervisors exercise the authority to revoke or terminate an approved Ride-Along, during their tour of duty if the participant's conduct, demeanor, sobriety or motives are not in the best interest of the department or interfere with operations.
- E. The Ride-Along Application Form is signed by the duty supervisor upon completion of the assignment and returned to the Field Operations Division Commander. Any problems or concerns with a specific Ride-Along shall be documented and forwarded to the Field Operations Division Commander in written memorandum form.

IV. OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Officers notify the Emergency Communications Center that they have a Ride-Along participant at the beginning of the Ride-Along and again upon termination of participation.
- B. The participation time {not to exceed four hours, unless specifically extended by a supervisor} shall be adhered to. A Ride-Along participant may terminate the Ride-Along at any time.

- C. Officers explain to the Ride-Along at the beginning of the assignment any rules they consider necessary for their mutual protection and safety.
- D. Officers responding to high risk calls are responsible for the safe positioning of the Ride-Along. A Ride-Along may be dropped off several blocks from the scene if necessary. When this is done, the Emergency Communications Center is notified so that arrangements can be made for pickup.
- E. Reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that a Ride-Along does not become an active participant in confrontational situations, and is not taken into private property areas where people have a reasonable expectation of privacy without permission.

Per General Order 4-21 I. C., No civilian should be allowed to remain in emergency vehicles during pursuits.

- F. Dialogue during Ride-Alongs should be professional.
- G. Officers shall not provide any Ride-Alongs with secure building codes or copies of departmental policies.
- H. Officers shall ensure that the Ride-Along abides by all VCIN limitations and privacy standards.
- I. Any problems occurring during a Ride-Along should be explained to the duty supervisor.
- J. The Chief of Police or Deputy Chief may make exceptions to this policy if determined to be in the best interests of the department.

Colonel Carl R. Pardiny / Chief of Police

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