

Procedure: 4.704

Title: RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

Date Issued:

Revised:

PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for the Ride-Along Program.

POLICY:

The Ride-along Program allows citizens to voluntarily accompany officers and to observe law enforcement activities to better understand the problems of policing. The observer may request to ride in any area at any time or with a particular officer. If convenient to the department and conditions permit, permission may be granted. Safety of non-law enforcement personnel shall be the primary concern. This program is intended as an educational endeavor to acquaint our citizens with the problems faced by their Law Enforcement Agency today.

PROCEDURE:

Persons wishing to ride with an officer shall pick up ride-along forms at the Cambridge Police Department supervisors office. Completed request forms and waivers must be returned at least 48 hours before the desired ride-along date.

The on-duty Supervisor shall grant permission for citizens to ride with police officers. The department should perform a criminal records check on any applicant for ride-alongs. If a criminal records check is planned, the ride-along should sign a pre-check authorization.

LIMITATIONS:

A person shall not ride unless approval has been granted and the police Supervisor have the properly completed waiver. Approval will be for one specific nine-hour period unless the Supervisor grants special limitations or extensions.

Normally, no more than one ride-along shall accompany an officer at a time.

Generally, a person wishing to take part in the ride-along program must be 18 years of age (or older). The age stipulation may be waived. Minors must provide a waiver form to be signed by a parent or guardian.

No one shall be allowed to observe the police officers activities relating to raids or ride with plain-clothes units without specific advance coordination and approval of the Supervisor.

BEGINNING TOUR:

The Administration Division will notify the Operations Lieutenant of the date and time that a ride-along person will ride.

The Operations Lieutenant or Patrol Supervisor shall decide with which officer the ride-along will ride.

When the ride-along comes in, the Operations Lieutenant or Patrol Supervisor will meet the person and introduce him/herself. The Lieutenant or supervisor should also:

1. Review the rules of the Ride-along Program with the ride-along; be sure that all rules are understood.
2. While talking with the ride-along, note whether or not the ride-along is neatly dressed and clean. If not, the ride-along should be sent home.
3. Note whether or not there is no smell of alcoholic beverages, marijuana, etc., on the breath of the ride-along or if the person is intoxicated. If he/she is, they should be sent home.
4. Note that the person is in good health and does not have a bad cold or cough. If this is the case, deny the ride-along.

CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Procedure: 4.704

5. Advise the ride-along that the officer can terminate the ride at any time if there is a violation of any rule. If this happens, the ride-along can be banned from future rides.
6. Introduce the ride-along to the officer with whom he/she will ride.

If no specific officer is requested by name by the ride-along, the on-duty Supervisor will appoint the host officer.

The ride-along should be appropriately dressed; if not, ride-along approval may be canceled by the on-duty Supervisor.

The host officer shall instruct the ride-along on the following procedures:

1. Ride-along must follow directions of the officer.
2. Ride-along may be required to appear as a witness in court.
3. Ride-along may end the ride whenever he or she wishes.

RIDE-ALONG CONDUCT:

1. Ride-alongs shall at all times remain under the complete control of the assigned officer and shall comply with all directions and requests.
2. Ride-alongs shall not interfere with investigations in any way by conversing with victims, suspects, or witnesses, handling evidence or law enforcement official's equipment, or participating in any law enforcement official's activity unless directed to do so by the assigned officer.

ARRESTS, TRANSPORTING, BOOKING:

If the host officer feels there are no hazards involved, the ride-along may accompany the officer while transporting or booking prisoners. If the officer believes a problem may arise, the ride-along should be temporarily transferred to another officer or returned to the point of origin.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES:

At no time shall an officer, while accompanied by a ride-along, engage in emergency pursuit driving, respond to a crime in progress reportedly involving violence, or perform a felony vehicle stop. At no time shall a ride-along be allowed to accompany a Law Enforcement officer(s) into a private residence, Business, or property. If officers must perform such activities, they must deposit ride-alongs at a safe location.

FAMILY MEMBER OR OTHERS:

Members of an officer's family or acquaintances will be allowed to participate in the Ride-along Program with the approval of the Administrative Section.

PROCEDURES FOR WIVES OR HUSBANDS OF OFFICERS:

1. Wives or husbands of officers will not be allowed to ride with their spouse/significant other.
2. Wives or husbands of officers will not be allowed to ride-along when their spouse is working the same shift

OFFICER'S DUTIES:

1. When the officer is assigned a ride-along, the officer should introduce him/herself to the person.
2. The officer will introduce the ride-along to other members of the shift.
3. The ride-along will attend roll call with the officer's shift.
4. The officer should explain the emergency equipment in the vehicle and the purpose it serves.
5. When entering the patrol car, the officer should stress the use of the seat belt and that it must be worn when the car is in motion.

CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Procedure: 4.704

6. The officer will explain to the ride-along that the officer will not be just riding around. The officer should explain that he/she is on patrol and what the function of the patrol is.
7. The officer will point out the areas, trouble spots and hazards of the beat.
8. If the ride-along breaks any of the rules or causes any problems while in the program, the officer should contact the patrol supervisor. The ride can be canceled at any time.
9. If the officer and ride-along are involved in an auto accident, normal departmental procedures should be followed on notifications. If the ride-along is injured, the officer should have him/her taken to the nearest hospital. The officer should get a written statement from the ride-along on what was observed about the accident and the what the ride-along believes was the cause of the accident
10. If the officer is given a felony-in-progress call and the ride-along is with him/her, it is the officer's decision if the ride-along is to go with the officer on the call or to be let out at a SAFE and SECURE location. At no time will the officer allow a ride-along to accompany the officer onto private property.

DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES:

Employees of other divisions within the department or municipality may ride-along in a training capacity. Employees of other entity departments may desire to ride-along simply for an orientation to the law enforcement official's department. Police Communication Officers (PCO's), may ride-along in a formally structured training program during an on-duty status. Employees of the law enforcement department or other local governmental departments must have the approval of their immediate supervisor before participating in the ride-along program.

PRECAUTIONS:

In any ride-along situation, the primary concern of the assigned officer is to ensure the safety of the ride-along and the secondary concern is the Training or orientation objective. Officers will restrict the exposure of the ride-along from hazardous situations such as armed subject calls, fights, etc. Normally, the ride-along will be expected to remain in the patrol car during any call unless directed otherwise by the officer. In the more hazardous situations, the officer may leave the ride-along at a restaurant, or other public place away from the situation. Due to the potential for the public to perceive that a ride-along is a law enforcement department employee, ride-alongs will **not** wear any clothing that would create a perception that he/she is a law enforcement employee. This will include baseball caps with law enforcement logo's, shirts with law enforcement logo's, flashlights, etc.

No ride-along will be allowed to participate while carrying a firearm. This includes off-duty officers from outside jurisdictions. It does not apply to officers from other agencies working an assignment in conjunction with our department.

RIDE-ALONG WAIVER:

In all categories, the Ride-Along Waiver will be read in full by the appropriate parties and will be signed at the bottom to acknowledge the restrictions and limitations.

In situations where the ride-along is a minor, his parent or guardian will sign the waiver in the presence of a sworn member of the Cambridge Police Department. This member, in turn, will sign the waiver as a witness.