

**General Order 257.00**

**Reviewed: 12/14**

**257.00 CITIZEN RIDE-ALONG**

257.01 It is the policy of this Department to encourage persons to participate in the citizen ride along program, provided those persons agree to adhere to the requirements outlined in this general order.

257.02 Waiver of Liability:

- Persons requesting to ride along should be referred to the Police Desk Officer to provide information needed to complete the ride along permit and to receive necessary instructions.
- The person receiving the ride along request will obtain necessary information from the requesting citizen in person, by mail, or via telephone; however, the waiver of liability must be signed by all persons requesting to ride along, prior to being assigned to an officer. A computer inquiry (CCIC and NCIC) will be accomplished with each request and the results noted in the remarks section of the form. The citizen need not be advised of the results of the check except in unusual circumstances.
- The NAT sergeant or designee will log the ride along and set a tentative time and date for the citizen to ride along. The ride along date will be at least 72 hours from the time of application. He will then forward the permit to that shift for an officer assignment. The date, shift, and name of the officer with whom the person rides as well as any officer comments about the citizen (for future reference) will also be noted in the remarks section and the form will be returned to the NAT Unit to be filed for a period of six months. A maximum of two citizen ride alongs will be scheduled to occur at any one time during any shift.
- Participants in continuing Department-sponsored programs will not be required to prepare a form except when the status of data required on the form changes, such as address change. Forms falling in this category will be maintained in file with the NAT for a period of six (6) months after the person ends affiliation with the program.
- Persons under the age of 18 may participate in the citizen ride along program. Generally, they must first be a member of a Department-or City-sponsored youth program. The department- or City-sponsored youth program must be in progress at the time period when the ride along is requested. They must also have written permission from a parent or a legal guardian by completing the "Parental Consent for

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Minors” section of “Forms/GPD 1031 Rev. 04/09.” Other underage ride alongs may be authorized via supervisory approval as exceptions to the general rule.

- The minimum age for ride alongs is 16 years of age. Waiver of this rule shall be approved by the chief of police or a captain.

### 257.03 Assignment Authority

- Watch commanders have full citizen ride along approval and assignment authority. All citizen ride along requests will be forwarded to the appropriate Watch Commander for approval and scheduling.
- Supervisors responsible for making assignments of citizen ride alongs should use care in selection of the officers so that the bulk of this function will not continually fall on a few officers.
- Any supervisor may approve walk-in requests for citizen ride alongs. All procedures required to be taken under GO 257.02 by the NAT Sergeant or designee will be completed by the supervisor reviewing the ride along request. Any supervisor may terminate or cause the termination of a ride along that is in progress, if the effectiveness of police operations is being or could be compromised. Should a ride along session be terminated for cause, the terminating supervisor will direct an informational e-mail to the Operations Division Commander detailing the infractions which lead to the termination of the ride along session. The ride along request form will also be routed to the Commander. If the ride along is terminated for any other safety concern, the concern will be noted on the form and returned to the NAT Unit.
- Ride along requests will be screened for frequency and suitability by NAT before being forwarded to the appropriate Watch Commander for approval and scheduling. Unless the ride along is participating in a Department/City sponsored program, the frequency of ride alongs should be restricted to once every six months.
- The duration of ride along sessions will be a maximum of four hours per session.
- The Operations Division Commander may authorize additional citizen ride along privileges beyond the six month restrictions, and four hour limitation per session.

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257.04 Authority of Officers:

- Prior to beginning the ride along session, the assigned officer will review the restrictions and regulations of ride along behavior and responsibilities listed below with the participating citizen.
  - Citizen ride alongs will not enter into any investigation or converse with any witness or prisoner concerning a police incident or investigation.
  - Citizen ride alongs will not operate any police equipment or vehicle or handle anything relating to a police investigation. In the case of an emergency, the officer may ask for assistance as authorized by law.
  - Citizen ride alongs must comply with orders from officers. Under the direction of the officer, the ride along may be required to remain in the patrol vehicle on certain calls. If a ride along fails to obey a direct order of a police officer, it may result in permanent termination of the ride along privilege.
- Officers should immediately report to their supervisors any interference with their duties or willful non-compliance with instructions, rules, or regulations on the part of the citizen ride along.
- Officers assigned ride alongs are responsible to keep the tone of the experience positive for the citizen. Should problems arise, officers should report issues to their supervisor immediately.
- Officers responding to emergency calls should remain attentive to the extra responsibility to the ride along and keep the response mode safe.
- Members of an officer's family desiring to ride along need not make advance notice. This may be handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the Watch Commander. The waiver form must still be completed and signed by that person. Family members may ride with a sworn relative, when approved by the Watch Commander.

257.05 Non-sworn employee/supervisor responsibilities when requesting a ride along:

- Non-sworn employees requesting off-duty ride along privileges are required to complete the Department's ride along request form and forward the form to their supervisor for approval. The employee may

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request the day, hours, and officer with whom the employee would like to ride. If approved by the employee's supervisor, the employee will be approved to ride on the date and time indicated. The Patrol Watch Commander will have final authority over the assignment to an officer.

- Non-sworn employees will be held to the same frequency for ride along privileges as citizens requesting the same service.

GO 257.00 CITIZEN RIDE-ALONG

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Authorized by Jerry Garner, Police Chief

Effective Date: December 5, 2014

  
Signature

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