

	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE State Form 39870 (R/S-06)	Reference Number ENF-020
	Subject Ride-Along Programs	
	Special Instructions Replaces ENF-020 dated January 15, 2015	Effective Date January 30, 2026

I. PURPOSE

Establish guidelines for a ride-along program with enforcement personnel while on patrol.

II. POLICY

Any person wanting to participate in the Department's Ride-Along Program must meet certain criteria and be willing to abide by all applicable Department policies. The appropriate commander must ensure all safety precautions (when applicable) are completed and must approve any request before a person may participate in this program.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Persons eligible to participate in the Ride-Along Program:

1. Those with career, educational, or community interests (to include but not limited to: legislators, judges, prosecutors, etc.);
2. Media representatives;
3. Department (non-enforcement personnel) in off-duty status participating for personal interest;
4. Department (non-enforcement personnel) who are present for training purposes or authorized to participate on-duty;
5. Students participating in an approved Department internship program; and
6. Current law enforcement officers.

B. Career, educational, or community interest participants must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age;
2. Possess a valid photo identification;
3. Have no record of a felony or class A or B misdemeanor arrest or conviction within five (5) years of the requested ride-along date;
4. Complete a [Ride-Along application](#) and be willing to sign a "[Waiver of Liability](#)"; and
5. If approved, the person must be willing to follow all Department rules, regulations, SOPS (to include dress codes), and reasonable/lawful orders while participating in the program.

C. Media Representative

1. Must obtain approval from the appropriate commander, sign a Waiver of Liability form prior to participating, and must possess their official/valid press credentials during the ride-along.
2. Special requests for feature stories or television programs must receive prior approval from the appropriate Deputy Superintendent through the Headquarters Public Information Office.

D. Department (non-enforcement) personnel

Note: Non-enforcement personnel who are participating in the ride-along while on-duty and as part of their official training are exempt from this section and its requirements.

1. Must receive approval from the appropriate zone, division, area, section or district commander; sign a Waiver of Liability form; and carry with them their official Department identification; and
2. Must be in an off-duty status to participate in the ride-along program.

E. Law enforcement Officers (LEO): As defined in IC 35-41-1-17, shall be permitted to participate in the Ride Along Program under the following guidelines.

1. LEOs recognized by the State of Indiana or who have Federal Authority may:
 - a. Be in uniform (with their department's permission) and assist the ISP as needed;
 - b. Carry a firearm, whether in uniform or not; and
 - c. Must sign the Waiver of Liability prior to participating in the program.
2. LEOs certified by any other state or jurisdiction (outside of Indiana):
 - a. Shall be in plain clothes and should only assist the ISP in emergency situations;
 - b. May carry a firearm (at the host trooper's discretion); and
 - c. Must sign the Waiver of Liability prior to participating in the program.

F. All non-law enforcement participants should refrain from assisting the host officer (e.g. in making an arrest, directing traffic, etc.) except for emergency situations.

G. Ride-along participants (except, law enforcement) shall not carry any type of weapon (guns, knives, etc.) while participating as a ride-along, regardless if possession of the weapon is legal.

H. ISP host officers

1. Should emphasize to ride-along participants that they are only observers (except law enforcement, as applicable) and are expected to comply with the directions of the host officer;
2. Familiarize the ride along participant with all applicable police radios, cell phones, and the location of the first aid kit, and weapons in case of an emergency;
3. Shall notify ISP dispatch of the presence of any ride-along participant; and
4. Any violation of law, Department policy, or failure to comply with the host officer's proper requests shall be cause for termination of the ride-along.

I. Commander's Responsibilities (where the ride-along will occur, shall be to ensure):

1. The Ride-Along application/Waiver of Liability are complete and accurate when received; and
2. The required security checks* are completed on the requesting party, to include:

- a. A Criminal History Records Inquiry (CHRI),
- b. A check of the State's Sex Offender Registry (<https://indianasheriffs.org/offender-watch/>); and
- c. A warrant check of any applicable local agencies (hometown, current residence, etc.).

*NOTE: Security checks are not required on elected officials or active duty law enforcement.

- 3. Any possible security risk or unacceptable conduct shall be grounds to deny a request.
- 4. An approved ride-along shall be scheduled and/or rescheduled solely at the discretion of the commander based on the needs of the department.

J. An individual ride-along may last no more than three (3) shifts per month, excluding active duty law enforcement, non-enforcement personnel during Department authorized training and Department internship participants unless approved by the applicable zone major. An accepted repeat applicant must go through the security procedures every six (6) months.

K. This procedure is to be used in conjunction with all relevant Department regulations, rules, policies, and procedures.