NC State University Police Department

Policy and Procedure

209 – Ride Along Program
Approved: August 28, 2026
Replaces Policy 209 Dated: 3/28/2025
*All revisions are in **BOLD** print.*

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for a ride-long program for the NC State University Police Department.

POLICY: Only those persons with written authorization (signed ride along waiver) shall be allowed to participate in the Department's Ride Along Program.

DEFINITIONS:

None

PROCEDURES:

A. ELIGIBILITY

To participate in the NCSU Police Ride Along Program, the applicant shall meet the following criteria

1. Review the ride along rules and complete a Ride Along request, sign a waiver of liability (Appendix 1), and provide authorization for a background check.
2. Pass the initial background check as approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
3. Be eighteen years of age or older, unless approved by the Chief of Police or their designee.
4. The Submission of false information of any type will disqualify any Ride Along from the program.
5. Must not be under investigation by any criminal justice agency.
6. Must not have been terminated or forced to resign from any criminal justice agency.
7. Must not be the subject of any Protective Order.
8. Must not be on probation or parole.
9. Must agree to follow the rules of the Program and direction of the officer to which he/she is assigned.
10. Must agree that participation is limited to those hours approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
11. The on-duty supervisor has the authority to deny an individual from participating in the ride along program if he or she determines that person's behavior is confrontational, disruptive, obscene, incoherent or otherwise inappropriate.

B. APPLICATION

Persons wishing to participate in the Ride Along Program shall:

1. Complete a Ride Along Request form (See Appendix 2), which includes a listing of the ride along rules and submit it at least two (2) working days prior to the ride along.
2. Complete a Ride-Along Release of Liability form. (See Appendix 3)
3. Complete an authorization for release of information form to facilitate a background check. (See Appendix 4)
4. Return the application and all forms to the Department 48 hours prior to the scheduled ride along.
5. The application and other documents shall be forwarded to the Career Development Unit who will be responsible for ensuring a background check is completed on the applicant.

6. The Career Development Unit shall forward completed applications to the Chief of Police or his/her designee for processing and review to determine the person's eligibility to participate in the ride-long program.

7. The person making the determination of eligibility shall note their name and date on all documents as appropriate.

8. Upon approval, the person shall be assigned specific hours to participate. These hours shall be noted on the application along with the name of the assigned officer and the date the assignment was made.

9. The assigned officer shall be given a copy of the approved application and signed waiver.

10. If the person is ineligible to participate in the Program, the Chief of Police or their designee shall notify the applicant that they are not eligible. The Career Development Unit will maintain all applications in an administrative file for a period of three years.

C. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RIDE ALONG

The opportunity to observe police patrol activities is offered to students and interested persons through the cooperation of the Chief of Police. Strict adherence to the following instructions is necessary to safeguard Ride Along participants, and to minimize the possibility of interference with normal department activities.

1. Persons riding in the capacity of ride along are always under the complete control of the officer.

2. Ride Alongs shall not leave the police vehicle at the scene of any police activity without first obtaining the permission of the officer, unless, in the absence of the officer, the person feels their safety is jeopardized.

3. All Ride Alongs shall wear their seat belts pursuant to state law.

4. Ride Alongs shall not participate in any police activity unless directly requested by the officer.

5. Ride Alongs shall not converse with prisoners, suspects, witnesses, or other parties contacted on police business unless requested by the officer.

6. Ride Alongs shall not interfere with the officer's activities at any time. Although it is desirable (and encouraged) for Ride Alongs to ask questions regarding procedures and activities, it must be done at an appropriate time.

7. Ride Alongs shall arrive at the police station fifteen minutes prior to the ride along, and will be returned at the designated time, or at the request of the ride along.

8. Recording devices, video recorders or cameras are not permitted unless approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

9. All Ride Alongs must sign a waiver of liability.

10. If the ride along is unable to keep their appointment, they must notify the on-duty supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the date and time scheduled.

D. RIDE ALONG DRESS REQUIREMENTS

1. The police department requires that police Ride Alongs be attired at a minimum in casual dress. The clothing shall be neat, clean, and presents a professional appearance.

2. Non-Sworn Ride Alongs shall not wear any clothing or items that may identify them as law enforcement.

E. POLICE OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Officers assigned a ride along should go about their routine assignment.

2. Officers shall keep the safety of the Ride Along in mind when performing assignments. Instructions shall be given to a Ride Along that is consistent with the rules of the program. It should be reinforced that unless otherwise directed by the officer, they are to remain with the patrol vehicle as an observer.

3. Officers shall familiarize a Ride Along with the equipment in the patrol vehicle and how it functions.

4. Officers are expected to answer a Ride Along's questions in a thoughtful and accurate manner. Tactical or operational information shall not be disclosed. Officers shall keep in mind the Rules of the Department concerning the release of information.

5. Officers will not engage in a vehicle pursuit while the Ride Along is with the officer. If the Officer is assigned or becomes involved in a serious felony incident or at any time the Officer feels it is necessary due to safety considerations, the Officer will drop the Ride Along off at a safe place on campus and notify ECC of the location. As soon as practically possible, the host Officer shall retrieve the Ride Along or have it done by another officer.

6. If the Ride Along wants to end the Ride Along, they are to be returned to the station as soon as practical. The on-duty supervisor shall be notified a Ride Along has chosen to terminate the ride along.

7. An Officer may request the on-duty supervisor to end the ride along based on the following circumstances:

    a. A Ride Along does not follow the rules of the Program or the directions of the Officer.

    b. A Ride Along creates conflict or an unsafe condition for the officer.

    c. Conditions exist that make it unsafe or inappropriate for the Ride Along to continue.

    d. It is determined that a Ride Along was untruthful in the application for participation in the program.

APPROVED:

Daniel L. House Jr.
Chief of Police