

## Ride-Along Program

### 405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Ride-Along Program provides an opportunity for community members to experience the law enforcement and crisis response functions firsthand. This policy provides the requirements, approval process, and hours of operation for the Ride-Along Program.

#### 405.1.1 ELIGIBILITY

The Olympia Police Department Ride-Along Program is offered to community members of Olympia, or those pre-approved by a Lieutenant or Program Manager. Every attempt will be made to accommodate interested community members; however, any applicant may be disqualified without cause.

The following factors may be considered in disqualifying an applicant and are not limited to:

- Being under 18 years of age
- Prior criminal history
- Pending criminal action
- Pending lawsuit against the Department
- Denial by any supervisor

#### 405.1.2 AVAILABILITY

The Ride-Along Program is available on most days of the week, with certain exceptions. The ride-along times are from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Exceptions to this schedule may be made as approved by the Chief of Police, or the Chief's designee.

The date and time of the ride-along will be made with consideration to staffing and other departmental factors and should not exceed 4 hours.

### 405.2 REQUESTING A RIDE-ALONG

Community members interested in participating in the Ride-Along Program need to complete a ride-along application and waiver form. Information requested will include a valid ID or Washington driver's license, address, and telephone number.

Requests will be reviewed by a Lieutenant or Program Manager. If approved, a copy will be forwarded to the respective first level supervisor as soon as possible for their scheduling considerations.

#### 405.2.1 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Olympia community members may not participate in the Ride-Along Program more than once per year, unless approval has been granted by the Chief of Police or the Chief's designee. An exception would apply to the following: OPD Explorers (must be over 16 years of age with parental signature), OPD or CAPS-TC Chaplains, OPD member's family members, non-commissioned members of the Department, City employees, employees of associated dispatch operations, and persons under active considerations for employment by the Department.

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An effort will be made to ensure that no more than one community member will participate in a ride-along during any given time. Normally, no more than one ride-along participant will be allowed in a members' vehicle at a time.

### **405.3 EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS**

#### **405.3.1 SUITABLE ATTIRE**

Ride-along participants are required to be suitably dressed in a collared shirt, blouse or jacket, slacks, and shoes. Sandals, T-shirts, tank tops, shorts, and ripped or torn blue jeans are not permitted. The first level supervisor may refuse a ride along to anyone not wearing the appropriate attire.

#### **405.3.2 RECORDING DEVICES**

Ride-along participants are not permitted to operate tape recorders, cameras or video equipment while participating in the program, with the exception of accredited media representatives who have made the necessary arrangements through the Chief of Police.

#### **405.3.3 HEALTH/PHYSICAL CONDITION**

Ride-along participants should be in good general health with no need for physical assistance. They must be able to adequately respond in emergency situations such as quickly exiting the vehicle, running, lying flat on the ground and using the radio without the safety or mission of the member being compromised. Ride-along participants are not permitted to ride if they appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

#### **405.3.4 WEAPONS**

Ride-along participants shall not under any circumstances have weapons of any type in their possession while participating in the Ride-Along Program, including but limited to guns, knives, chemical agents or batons.

### **405.4 PEACE OFFICER RIDE-ALONGS**

Off-duty members of this department or any other law enforcement agency will not be permitted to ride-along with on-duty officers without the expressed consent of the Chief of Police or the Chief's designee. If such a ride-along is permitted, the off-duty member shall not be considered on-duty and shall not represent themselves as a peace officer or participate in any law enforcement activity except as emergency circumstances may require.

### **405.5 MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY**

The member shall advise the dispatcher that a ride-along participant is present in the vehicle before going into service. Members shall consider the safety of the ride-along participant at all times. Members should use sound discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation, and if feasible, let the ride-along participant out of the vehicle in a well-lighted place of safety. The dispatcher will be advised of the situation and as soon as practical have another member

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respond to pick up the ride-along participant at that location. The ride-along may be continued or terminated at this time.

#### **405.6 CONTROL OF RIDE-ALONG**

The assigned member shall maintain control over the ride-along participant at all times and instruct them in the conditions that necessarily limit their participation. These instructions should include:

- (a) The ride-along participant will follow the directions of the member.
- (b) The ride-along participant will not become involved in any investigation, handling of evidence, discussions with victims or suspects, or handling any police equipment.
- (c) The member may terminate the ride-along at any time and the member may return the ride-along participant to their home or to the station if the ride-along participant interferes with the performance of the member's duties.
- (d) Ride-along participants may be allowed to continue riding during the transportation and booking process provided this does not jeopardize their safety.
- (e) Members will not allow any ride-along participants to be present in any residences or situations that would jeopardize their safety or cause undue stress or embarrassment to a victim or any other community member.
- (f) Under no circumstance shall a ride-along participant be permitted to enter a private residence with a member without the expressed consent of the resident or other authorized person.