



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 124

Policy Name Ride Along Program

Approved by *Dennis Larsen, Chief of Police*

Effective Date 02/06/2025

Approved Date 02/06/2025

Previous Date 05/02/2023

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

Adding Police Cadets.

POLICY:

The Tulsa Police Department encourages open and candid police operations and strives to establish a climate that allows officers to perform their duties with the acceptance, understanding, and approval of the public. Citizens are allowed to ride with officers to improve police and community interaction and to help address community perceptions and misperceptions of crime.

SUMMARY: Procedures for participating in the Ride Along Program.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel.

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURES:

1. The Operations Bureau Deputy Chief will designate a Department Ride Along Program Coordinator who will be responsible for:
 - a. Coordinating between the division commanders.
 - b. Coordinating a shift rotation schedule.
 - c. Maintaining a central network database listing participant information.
 - d. Receiving and coordinating with division coordinators when group ride alongs (e.g., Leadership Tulsa) are requested.
2. Ride alongs will be rotated monthly by shift at each uniform division. The shift/month assignment will be different at each uniform division. For example, at GID, third shift might be responsible for all ride alongs during the months of January, May, and September, while second shift might be responsible for ride alongs during February, June, and October.
3. Each division commander will designate a division program coordinator. The coordinator will be responsible for:
 - a. Receiving, processing, and maintaining program forms to include the original *Hold Harmless Agreement*.
 - b. Running criminal history checks on all applicants.
 - c. Coordinating ride along assignments with citizens. Citizen and special group requests for specific officers, areas, and times should be accommodated if possible. All other requests will be arranged within the guidelines of the shift rotation schedule.
 - d. Updating the central network database with participant information, including the date and division where they participated in the program.
 - e. Arranging to accommodate citizen requests with other division coordinators.

4. Citizens desiring to participate in the program must complete a *Hold Harmless Agreement*. Citizens must forward the completed *Hold Harmless Agreement* to the division where they desire to participate. Citizen participation will be limited to one shift per calendar year and will be scheduled within the guidelines of the shift rotation schedule.
5. The coordinator will submit all requests to the division commander, or designee, for approval.
6. Upon approval, the division coordinator or designee will contact the participant to schedule the ride along according to the participant's preferred shift, date, or division and within the guidelines of the shift rotation schedule.
7. Coordinators may schedule the participant's request through other division coordinators in an effort to grant the request for a preferred shift. If the request is scheduled through another division, the participant's paperwork will be forwarded to that division.
8. When the coordinator has scheduled the ride along, they will forward the request to the appropriate shift commander for assignment.
9. The affected shift commander, or designee, will assign the ride along to an officer. Officers will ensure that the participant is wearing a Ride Along ID card and that the ID card is returned at the end of the shift. ID cards may be checked out at each of the three uniform divisions.
10. The Chief of Police, bureau deputy chiefs, division commanders, or designees, may waive normal scheduling procedures when exigent circumstances exist.
11. Chaplains are authorized to participate in the Ride Along Program through the office of the Chief of Police and are not limited in the number of times they may participate. Chaplains possess department-issued ID cards that will be worn in place of a Ride Along ID card.
12. Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) and Alumni of the Citizens Police Academy will follow the same procedures but will be permitted to participate one shift per quarter unless the Chief of Police authorizes an exception. Exceptions will be requested in writing and addressed directly to the Chief of Police. Department-approved foreign language interpreters are not limited in the number of times they participate in the program.
13. Assistant district attorney and off-duty officers from outside law enforcement agencies will follow the same procedures and are not limited in the number of times they participate in the program.
14. Public Safety Communications (PSC) and non-sworn employees must submit an *Interoffice Correspondence* to their division commander/director, or designee requesting permission to participate in the Ride Along Program. Upon approval, the employee will forward the request to the division commander where they wish to ride.
15. Citizens between the ages of 14 and 18 may participate in the Ride Along Program if they are active members of the Tulsa Police Cadets or if they have permission of the Chief of Police.
16. Tulsa Police Cadets must have approval from Cadet Mentor and may participate in the Ride Along Program two shifts per month. If under the age of 18, Cadets must have written parental permission.

REGULATIONS:

1. Participants shall wear professional casual clothing and a Ride Along Program ID card. Shorts, sleeveless shirts, and t-shirts are not acceptable attire. Tulsa Police Cadets shall wear an official Cadet uniform. Participants shall always conduct themselves in a civil and courteous manner.

2. Participants shall be under the direct control of the police officer. Participants shall not interfere with police officers while in the performance of their duties.
3. Officers shall not allow participants to enter private homes or other areas where a citizen has a reasonable expectation of privacy without the explicit consent of the citizen. Participants shall also not be allowed to photograph and/or videotape within these same areas.
4. Participants shall not perform police duties. In an emergency, they may take appropriate action to protect themselves and/or officers.
5. Officers with passengers that are not Department employees or Reserve Police Officers, such as citizens, chaplains, interns, prisoners, witnesses, and victims will not participate in pursuits unless they are the initiating pursuit vehicle or first backing officer – even then to be relieved as the primary or backing vehicle at the first opportunity.
6. Officers with ride alongs engaged in a pursuit shall immediately notify the pursuit monitor of the presence of the ride-along and request relief from their role in the pursuit.
7. Division commanders shall have the option to deny an individual's request to participate in the program and officers may request, through their immediate supervisor, that the privileges of a participant be terminated for just cause.
8. Participants shall not carry weapons while they are participating in the Ride Along Program.
9. Officers shall list Ride Along Program participants as witnesses and submit their statements in the appropriate reports when they have witnessed a crime.

REFERENCES:

None