

Lone Star Police Department

Ride-Along Program

Chapter 22-

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Ride-Along Program provides an opportunity for citizens to experience the law enforcement function firsthand. This policy provides the requirements, approval process and hours of operation for the Ride-Along Program.

22.01 ELIGIBILITY

Attempts will be made to accommodate all interested persons, however, any applicant may be disqualified without cause.

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

- Being under 18-years of age
- Prior criminal history
- Any felony conviction
- Any misdemeanor conviction in the last 4 years
- Any drug conviction in the past 5 years
- Any offense against government or government employees (i.e., resisting arrest, interfering with an officer, false information to a police officer, etc.)
- Currently on probation or parole for a criminal offense
- Pending criminal action
- Pending lawsuit against the Department
- Denial by any supervisor

Upon a showing of good cause, the Chief of Police, or his or her designee, has the discretion to waive one or more of the above disqualifiers.

22.02 AVAILABILITY

The Ride-Along Program is available on most days of the week, with certain exceptions.

Participants must meet the officer they are riding with at a Department facility to begin their ridealong. If the officer the participant is riding with is busy on a call for service, the participant can be driven to that location by another officer at the discretion of the Chief of Police or shift Sergeant.

22.03 RELATIVES

Relatives of an officer may ride with that officer, so long as they meet all necessary guidelines set forth by the Department for the ride-along program.

22.04 PROCEDURE TO REQUEST A RIDE-ALONG

All persons requesting to ride with an officer must complete and submit a Ride-Along Request Form and Waiver. T. Information requested will include a valid ID or Texas driver's license, address, and telephone number.

Department members who receive a Ride-Along Request Form and Waiver will follow proper procedure for routing the documents for approval/denial, scheduling, and documentation. Lone Star Police Department Procedure Manual: Chapter 22 RIDE-ALONG FORM PROCEDURE

If the ride-along is denied after the request has been made, a representative of the Department will contact the applicant and advise of the denial.

22.05 PROGRAM RESTRICTIONS

Once approved, civilian ride-alongs will be allowed to ride no more than once every 4 months . An exception would apply to the following: Explorers, VIP's, Chaplains, police applicants, and all others with approval of the Chief of Police.

22.06 SUITABLE ATTIRE

Any person approved to ride-along is required to be suitably dressed in attire that appears neat and clean. Sandals, tank tops, shorts and ripped or torn blue jeans are not permitted. The Chief of Polcie or field supervisor may refuse a ride-along to anyone not properly dressed.

Civilian and non-sworn ride-along participants, with or without a concealed carry permit, shall not be armed.

22.07 ARMED PEACE OFFICER RIDE-ALONGS

A certified officer from another agency may be armed during a ride-along, but the shift Sergeant and Chief of Police must be notified of such prior to the ride-along beginning. Furthermore, a certified officer from another agency shall not represent himself or herself as a peace officer or participate in any law enforcement activity, except as emergency circumstances may require.

22.08 RIDE-ALONG CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

All ride-along applicants are subject to a criminal history check.

22.09 GENDER

When possible, riders will be assigned to an officer of the same gender.

22.10 OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY

The officer shall advise the dispatcher that a ride-along is present in the vehicle before going into service.

The assigned officer will exercise discretion to provide the highest level of protection and safety to the rider.

As soon as time and circumstances permit, the officer should brief the rider on when and how to call for help if necessary. The officer should also brief the participant on what to do and what not to do on the ride-along, which should include the following:

(a) All participants shall wear a vehicle safety belt while traveling in a vehicle which is in motion.

(b) Cameras and tape recorders are prohibited during a ride-along. Phones which are capable of audio or video recording are allowed, provided the devices are not used in such a manner.

(c) The rider may not engage in any police activities unless specifically directed by the officer.

(d) The rider must immediately follow all instructions given by officers.

(e) Safety considerations.

22.11 CONTROL OF RIDE-ALONG

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

- (a) The ride-along will follow the directions of the officer.
- (b) The ride-along will not become involved in any investigation, handling of evidence, or discussions with victims or suspects.
- (d) The ride-along may terminate the ride at any time. If the ride-along interferes with the performance of the officer's duties, the officer may terminate the ride-along and return the observer to his/her home or to the station.
- (e) Ride-alongs may be allowed to continue riding during the transportation and booking process provided this does not jeopardize their safety.
- (f) Officers will not allow any ride-alongs to be present in any residence or situation that would jeopardize their safety or cause undue stress or embarrassment to a victim or any other citizen.

22.12 INJURY TO RIDE-ALONG PARTICIPANT

Should an injury occur to a ride-along participant, appropriate medical treatment will be summoned. In addition, the assigned officer will follow proper procedure for making required notifications and completing required reports.

Steven Blythe

Chief of Police