



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedures Manual

REFERENCE:

NUMBER: 2.12
ISSUED: 10/14/2022
EFFECTIVE: 10/14/2022
 RESCINDS
 AMENDS
WILEAG 5TH EDITION
STANDARDS: N/A

PURPOSE: The Ride-Along/Intern Program of the Portage Police Department is a community relations and education opportunity. It allows citizens to learn about and observe police field operations by riding with a uniform patrol officer.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. RIDE-ALONG ELIGIBILITY
- II. APPLICATION PROCEDURE
- III. LIMITATIONS
- IV. FREQUENCY
- V. ASSIGNMENTS
- VI. CRIMINAL HISTORY/CITIZEN CONDUCT
- VII. DENIAL/TERMINATION OF OBSERVATION
- VIII. RIDE-ALONG RULES
- IX. RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

I. RIDE-ALONG ELIGIBILITY

- A. Any person wishing to ride along as an intern or observer requires the prior approval of the chief or designee. While efforts should be made to accommodate those with legitimate purposes for riding along, the supervisor should evaluate the legitimacy of the request and the applicability of any limitations listed in the

following sections.

II. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- A. A person wishing to participate in a ride-along must complete the “Ride-along Request” form and the “Release and Indemnity Agreement” forms.
- B. Together these completed documents are to be submitted to the chief or designee for review and consideration.
- C. The original, signed copies of the “Ride-Along Request” form and the “Release and Indemnity Agreement” shall be placed into the ride along binder in the Assistant Chief’s Office.

III. LIMITATIONS

- A. Release of Indemnity Agreement must be presented to the assigned Patrol Officer before the ride-along begins.
- B. Release of Indemnity Agreements for those 17 and younger must also be signed by the minor’s parent or guardian and approved by the chief or designee.
- C. Officers of other law enforcement agencies are not exempt from the Release of Indemnity Agreement form requirement.
- D. In the case of interns who will be riding for an extended, but defined period of time, one Release of Indemnity Agreement form will cover the extent of their internship.
- E. A copy of the rules, policies, and procedures for the Portage Police Department ride-along program will be provided to and signed by the ride-along candidate/participant prior to the start of a ride-along.

IV. FREQUENCY

- A. Interns may ride as frequently as necessary for completion of the requirements of their internship.
- B. Family members of Portage Police Department Members may ride upon completion of reading the “Ride-Along Rules” and signing the “Release and Indemnity Agreement” form.
- C. Members of other law enforcement agencies will not be limited in the number of shifts they may ride and only one waiver form will be required annually.
- D. Ride a longs for those 17 and younger may have restrictions placed on time and length of the observation.
- E. How frequently a person rides along is at the discretion of the chief or designee.

V. ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Only one ride-along observer may ride in a vehicle at a time. The chief or designee will assign ride-along observers only to those officers who have indicated a previous willingness to participate in the program, but when necessary, to accommodate scheduled observers; officers may be required to participate.
- B. The chief or designee shall have the final say as to the duration and scheduled time of the ride-along. The chief or designee shall also have the option of canceling previously-scheduled ride-alongs should manpower or shift activities (i.e., special events, planned training, etc.) conflict with having observers.

VI. CRIMINAL HISTORY/CITIZEN CONTACT

- A. Persons whose criminal history or past contact with law enforcement is of such nature that it may create or escalate tensions with the assigned officer or potentially inhibit the effectiveness of police operations shall be prohibited.

VII. DENIAL/TERMINATION OF RIDE ALONG

- A. A copy of the ride-along rules will be given to each rider/intern before their ride-along.

Officers shall immediately report any interference with their duties or willful non-compliance with the instructions, rules or regulations on the part of the rider. Officers may terminate any observation that they feel inhibits the effectiveness of police operations.

VIII. RIDE-ALONG RULES

A. Dress/Grooming Standards.

1. Observers in the ride-along program must dress and groom themselves in an appropriate and business-like manner. The Shift Supervisor is the final judge of the appropriateness of an observer's attire and/or grooming.
2. Suitable attire must be worn. Ripped blue jeans and/or t-shirts are not acceptable.
3. Clothing that advertises any product, business, or organization, or contains any sign or symbol that is inflammatory in nature is not permitted.
4. Males will either be clean-shaven or will have neatly-trimmed beards or mustaches and hair will be neatly groomed.
5. Certified officers from other agencies may not wear their agency uniform or firearm and must comply with the other standards of attire and grooming for observers. Firearms may be carried by a certified officer from another agency if that officer is granted off duty carry authority by their employing agency and

they are within the guidelines of that policy and authority.

B. Conduct Standards

1. Participants in the ride-along program are guests of the Police Department and must conduct themselves in an appropriately responsible manner.
2. Participants will:
 - a) Remain in the police vehicle and will not be allowed to become involved in the police officer's activities unless specifically directed to do so by the officer.
 - b) When the officer is required to enter any premise or part thereof that is not generally open to the public, the officer should, when practical and if accompanied by the ride-along observer, advise the person in control that an observer is accompanying the officer and obtain permission for the observer to enter the premise. If permission is expressly denied, the observer must remain in the police vehicle.
 - c) If the patrol officer or the participant decides that a dangerous situation exists such as a pursuit which would compromise the participant's safety, the ride along will terminate and the participant will be dropped off at a place of safety. Arrangements will be made for the participant's transportation back to the Police Department if the ride is terminated.
 - d) Riders will obey, without question.
3. Riders will not:
 - a) Be under the influence of alcohol or have the odor of an alcoholic beverage on their breath.
 - b) Use profane or abusive language or behave in any manner that would provoke or escalate tensions.
 - c) Enter into any investigation or converse with any citizen, witness, or prisoner, concerning a police incident or investigation.
 - d) Make known to unauthorized persons the identity of persons arrested, detained, confined in jail, or suspected of any offense.
 - e) Operate or use any police equipment or vehicle or any police item, except in case of emergency or when requested to do so by a police officer.

IX. RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

- A. A ride-along candidate/applicant must complete and sign a "Release and Indemnity Agreement" form provided by the department. The "Release and Indemnity

Agreement” form must include the candidate’s full name, address and date of birth.

Candidates 17 years old and younger must have a parent or legal guardian sign the “Release and Indemnity Agreement” form. Candidates under 12 years of age will generally not be allowed to participate in the Program unless approved by the Chief of Police.

Keith J. Klafke
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

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