

	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Officer Ride-Alongs</i>	Issued: <b>10/23/2014</b>	TBP:

**Citizen/Media Ride-Along Purpose**

The Department’s citizen/media ride-along program is an effort to bring the Department and the community closer. It is the Department’s goal to have our citizens understand the Department’s role in the community and to understand the needs of the Department.

**Rider Restrictions**

Generally, only persons involved in law enforcement will be allowed to ride along with the Department’s personnel. This includes, but is not limited to: college interns, students, citizens in sponsored programs of study, officers from other agencies and individuals who can exhibit a valid connection with or interest in law enforcement.

**Limitation on Number of Ride-alongs**

Due to the interest in this program and the number of students and interns participating in the program, the Department is forced to limit the number of times a person can ride along in a calendar year. Students and interns will be limited by the number of rides allocated to the program by which they are being sponsored. Individuals applying on a personal basis (including officer family members) will be limited to one (1) ride every six (6) months. Individuals may reapply after the six (6) month period and will be reviewed by the Patrol commander on an individual basis.

**Ride-along Rules**

Safety of riders is our main concern. The following rules are established to provide the optimum safety to our participants. Deviation from these rules must be approved by either police Administration or the appropriate Patrol commander.

- A. Riders must be 18 years old, unless approved by the program sponsor;
- B. Police ride-alongs will be conducted during the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. unless the program sponsor specifies otherwise;
- C. Camera or recording equipment will not be carried/used during the ride-along;
- D. Firearms will not be carried by anyone participating in a ride-along unless the rider is a certified, active-duty law enforcement officer;
- E. Riders must be clean and appropriately dressed in dark clothing. Appropriate dress consists of shirts with a collar, slacks or jeans (not faded or worn-out) and comfortable footwear (no sandals or open-toe shoes). Riders not dressed in the appropriate manner will be asked to reschedule;
- F. Riders will bring an operable flashlight;
- G. Riders will obey, without hesitation, any and all instructions/directions given by the officer;



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- H. Riders will remain in or near the patrol unit unless otherwise directed by the officer. If the officer is assigned to a dangerous call, the rider may be left at a safe location until the officer or another police unit can pick them up;
- I. Riders will not discuss names of persons involved in police cases or incidents, and will not review any official report of the Department. Riders must understand all matters pertaining to evidence or statements gathered in investigations are confidential. Riders must also understand they may be subject to subpoenas in criminal and/or civil trials and be subject to testify in any trial pertaining to the incidents they observe;
- J. Riders or officers may terminate the ride-along at any time;
- K. On-duty sworn personnel may ride along for the purpose of training the employee in the performance of their duties. Assignments will be approved by the appropriate Patrol commander;
- L. Off-duty officers from the Department or any other department may ride along with patrol officers with the approval of the appropriate Patrol commander;
- M. Media representatives must schedule ride-alongs through Administration. Recent lawsuits related to privacy issues require the media to get the permission of the owner or agent in charge of the property before entering any property. Before filming any police incident, including traffic stops or other contacts, news media representatives are required to get permission from any individual involved; and
- N. Supervisor approval must be obtained prior to allowing friends or a family member to ride-along. The supervisor will run a TCIC inquiry as well as a CCH.

## **Ride-Along Scheduling**

Request for ride-alongs must be submitted 24 hours in advance through the desk officer. A liability waiver must be signed prior to the ride. Riders must arrive for their ride-along at the LEC prior to the time of their ride-along. Riders will not be picked up at their home unless the program sponsor specifies this as a pick up location. Riders are responsible for getting an application and scheduling the ride-along.