

Ride-Along Policy

405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Ride-Along Program is designed to allow interested citizens to become familiar with the police department, its functions, and its responsibilities in the community.

405.1.1 ELIGIBILITY

The Redding Police Department Ride-Along Program is offered to all citizens meeting the program requirements of this policy. Every attempt will be made to accommodate interested citizens, however, an applicant may be disqualified without cause.

405.2 PROCEDURE TO REQUEST A RIDE-ALONG

Citizens shall be permitted to participate in the Ride-Along Program only after completion of a ride-along application/waiver and approval of the Ride-Along Coordinator and/or the shift supervisor. The signed application/waiver shall be turned into the on-duty supervisor before the participant rides.

Ride-Along participants who do not meet the criteria or follow the guidelines in this policy may not be allowed to participate in the program. The decision to allow the Ride-Along is at the discretion of the on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander.

If an officer, relative, or friend wishes to participate in the Ride-Along Program, the on-duty shift supervisor may schedule a ride-along. Riders falling under this category must complete and sign an application/waiver and may not ride more than once during a 4 month shift rotation. Previously scheduled riders shall not be canceled to accommodate an unscheduled rider. The Watch Commander or, in his absence, the on-duty supervisor shall have the final authority in canceling or discontinuing any ride-along.

405.2.1 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Any interested citizen, 16 years or older, may apply as follows:

- (a) An application/waiver may be obtained at the front counter of the Department.
- (b) Complete and submit the application/waiver, which will be forwarded to the Coordinator.
- (c) Citizens shall participate in no more than one, four-hour ride-along within a six-month period.
- (d) Citizens shall satisfactorily pass a record check and warrant check, including a criminal history via the California Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigations records.
- (e) No rider will be allowed to ride between 0200 and 0600 hours unless cleared by a Watch Commander.
- (f) Whenever possible all riders shall stay within or at the police unit until the situation is stabilized.

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- (g) Riders are prohibited from possessing any type of weapon. This includes firearms, chemical agents, knives, stun-guns, or any weapon deemed inappropriate by the on-duty supervisor (see 405.2.4 for exceptions).
- (h) Attire for riders shall conform to acceptable standards. The wearing of shorts, tank tops, or other exceptionally informal or provocative attire is prohibited. Shoes shall be worn. Reasonable dress shall be casual business attire. Acceptable personal hygiene is required. A Ride-Along who is distracting or in any way interferes with the officer may not be allowed to participate in the Ride-Along.
- (i) An officer assigned a rider has the responsibility to act with due care and shall make every effort to prevent the rider from being placed in a position of danger. In the event, the officer elects to leave the rider in an "open" public location while en route to a dangerous call, the officer is responsible for making arrangements to have the rider picked up as soon as possible.
- (j) A Ride-Along who exhibits behavior which prevents them from riding shall be documented by the Ride-Along coordinator on the Ride-Along application

All ride-along participants will be required to display a ride-along identification card. The supervisor will issue the ride-along ID card to the rider at the beginning of the ride-along and ensure the ride-along card is returned at the conclusion of the ride-along. The ride-along ID card number will be recorded on the rider application/waiver in the upper right-hand corner. The ID card is not required for Redding Police Department employees or uniformed chaplains, explorers, or volunteers.

405.2.2 RIDE-ALONG CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

All Ride-along applicants are subject to a criminal history check. The criminal history check may include a local records check and a Department of Justice Automated Criminal History System check through CLETS prior to their approval as a ride-along with a law enforcement officer (provided that the ride-along is not an employee of the Redding Police Department) (Policies, Practices CLETS and Procedures Manual § 1.6.1.F.2.).

405.2.3 RIDE ALONG COORDINATOR

A Ride-Along Coordinator will be designated by the Field Operations Division Commander. The Coordinator shall:

- (a) Strive to balance riders on shifts.
- (b) Ensure that all scheduled riders are listed on the Ride-Along calendar.
- (c) Ensure that no more than two riders will be allowed per shift unless authorized by the shift supervisor.
- (d) Ensure that the completed application/waiver is placed in the historical file for two years.
- (e) After meeting the program requirements, the Program Coordinator shall:
- (f) Contact the applicant and schedule the ride or inform the applicant he/she will not be allowed to participate.
- (g) Enter the applicant's name, assigned date, and time on the ride-along calendar.

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- (h) Enter the date and time on the application/waiver and forward it to the appropriate shift supervisor.

405.2.4 PEACE OFFICER RIDE-ALONGS

A peace officer ride-along will not be permitted with on-duty officers without supervisor approval. In the event that such a ride-along is permitted, the peace officer shall not represent themselves as a peace officer or participate in any law enforcement activity, except as emergency circumstances may require.

- (a) Only sworn peace officers authorized by their employing agency to carry firearms off-duty may possess a firearm during a ride-along.
- (b) Sworn peace officer riders will comply with the ride-along dress code and may wear concealed body armor.
- (c) Information will be given out in roll-calls and via an MDC announcement whenever there is an armed rider. This information will include which officer the rider is with, which beat he is on, and a clothing description of the rider.
- (d) Armed ride-along officers should never be assigned to cover or assist in any way unless their own safety or the safety of other officers are in jeopardy.
- (e) Armed ride-along officers should never take the place of back-up from other RPD units.
- (f) Armed ride-along officers' firearms shall be carried concealed on their person.

405.2.5 DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Redding Police Department cadets, explorers, chaplains, and employees are exempt from the requirement to complete ride-along applications/waivers.

The cadet, explorer, and chaplain supervisor shall coordinate their riders with the Ride-Along Coordinator. The frequency of ride-alongs by cadets, explorers, and chaplains shall be established by their supervisors in concurrence with the Field Operations Division Commander.

405.3 OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY

The officer shall advise the dispatcher that a ride-along is present in the vehicle before going into service. Officers shall consider the safety of the ride-along at all times. Officers should use sound discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation, and if feasible, let the 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 police unit respond to pick up the participant at that location. The ride-along may be continued or terminated at this time.

405.3.1 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, discussions with victims or suspects, or handling any police equipment;

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- (c) The ride-along may terminate the ride at any time and the officer may return the observer to their home or to the station if the ride-along interferes with the performance of the officer's duties;
- (d) Ride-alongs may be allowed to continue riding during the transportation and booking process provided this does not jeopardize their safety;
- (e) Officers will not allow any ride-alongs 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 citizen;
- (f) Under no circumstance shall a civilian ride along be permitted to enter a private residence with an officer without the expressed consent of the resident or other authorized person.

405.4 SHIFT SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The shift supervisor will assign the rider to an officer, complete the application/waiver, and forward it to the Coordinator.