

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT MANUAL OF GENERAL ORDERS		
General Order: 2.06	Effective: 01/29/2017	Number of Pages: 4
DEPARTMENTAL RULES AND REGULATIONS: RIDE-ALONGS		

With the exception of sworn members, arrested/detained persons, and transportation of those citizens who fall under the provisions of General Order [28.15 Take Home Vehicles](#) (C-4), Department policy states no one is permitted to ride or be transported in a Department-owned vehicle except for the following:

I. Ride-Alongs

A. Department members and interns (18 years of age or older) who wish to ride with on-duty police members shall be required to submit a written request, through channels, to the appropriate District/Division Commander.

1. The written request must specify the date and shift for which the ride-along is requested and must be submitted at least three (3) days prior to the date requested.
2. No more than two (2) ride-along dates per month will be permitted. Communications personnel who are in a training status (employed less than six months) may ride more often if approved by the Communications Supervisor.

B. Other public safety officials

C. Citizen's Police Academy Alumni

1. Graduates of the Citizens' Police Academy may ride along a maximum of four (4) times per year.

D. Active members of Explorer Post 1268

1. The purpose is to allow active members of Explorer Post 1268 the opportunity to observe the day-to-day operations of the Police Department.
2. Eligibility
 - a. The Explorer must be 16 years of age, or older
 - b. The Explorer must be in good standing with Explorer Post 1268, as defined in the Explorer Post 1268 Bylaws

3. Guidelines

- a. Explorers will follow the procedures set forth in the “Prince William County Explorer Post 1268 Ride-Along Guidelines” as well as all other requirements as detailed under subsection “B” for the duration of their involvement with the ride-along. The Prince William County Explorer Post 1268 Ride-Along Guidelines are attached to this General Order and should be reviewed with both the Explorer and officer prior to the start of the ride-along.
- b. All Explorers will wear civilian clothing while participating in ride-alongs so as not to be confused for a sworn, uniformed member.
- c. Explorers may ride-along a maximum of one (1) time every three months.
- d. Juvenile interns actively working with the Department are eligible for ride-alongs under the same eligibility and guidelines listed for members of Explorer Post 1268.

E. Citizens

1. Requirements and Application Process

- a. Applicant must be eighteen (18) years of age or older to participate in the program.
- b. Citizens requesting to ride-along will be directed to the appropriate District Commander or Watch Commander for approval.
- c. The application and waiver for the Ride-along Program must be completed and submitted to the District Commander or Watch Commander, who will verify the applicants qualify for the program.
- d. The District Commander or Watch Commander will run a local history status check, an NCIC check, and a CCH request. The results will be noted on the application/waiver. Hard copies of the CCH will be destroyed and so noted on the application/waiver.
- e. If the application is approved, the District Commander or Watch Commander will sign and date the form.
- f. If the application is denied, the form will also be signed and the reason for denial be listed under “*comments.*”
- g. The applicant will be notified of approval/denial by the District/Division Commander or Watch Commander.

- h. When an applicant appears to ride on the requested date, the shift supervisor involved is required to complete the application by documenting the officer with whom the citizen is assigned to ride, indicating the date the citizen rode, and signing the application.
- i. As a general rule, citizens will not be assigned to ride with an officer on probation.

F. Spouse/Significant Other

- 1. Those persons married to, or who represent a significant influence on the member's life (e.g. a parent), may ride-along up to a maximum of four 10-hour shifts per calendar year to observe the day-to-day operation of the Police Department.
- 2. These significant others may not ride with the member who sponsors them; however, they may ride with another member on the same shift.
- 3. A Waiver of Liability form will be executed prior to the ride-along.

II. Ride Along Guidelines

- A. The citizen observer will not be armed.
- B. Where possible, citizens shall ride with a member of the same gender.
- C. The member will not intentionally involve the citizen in a dangerous situation.
- D. On routine calls, it is discretionary whether the citizen observer should or should not accompany the member into a complainant's home. Good judgment should be exercised in cases where the member knows or suspects the complainant may be hostile, i.e., a domestic or family dispute.
- E. If a call is inherently dangerous, the member may order the citizen observer to remain with the police vehicle upon arrival, or they may leave them at a safe place prior to arrival. Another unit should be requested to pick up any citizen observer left at a safe place by a member responding to calls of this nature.
- F. The citizen observer may not photograph or record (audio or video) activities during any phase of the ride-along.
- G. The citizen observer is not to be permitted in the booking area when prisoners are being processed.
- H. The member may request the termination of the ride-along if the citizen observer hampers, interferes, or otherwise hinders the performance and efficiency of the member.

In the event this occurs, such information will be noted on the ride-along application form.

- I. Applicants whose applications are approved are limited to one (1) ride per year.
 - 1. A member of a certified Neighborhood/Business/Worship Watch group within Prince William County, is permitted one (1) ride per six (6) months.
 - 2. This does not pertain to police applicants with the Prince William County Police Department. Applicants may be permitted additional ride alongs on a case by case basis.
 - 3. The District Commander may authorize additional rides at their discretion.
- J. Approved applicants shall be required to sign a Ride-Along Liability Release form.
- K. The respective District Commander will maintain a file for all ride-along applications.
- L. Appropriate business attire shall be worn. Suggested attire is: slacks, shirt/blouse with collar, shoes, and a conservative coat or jacket if necessary. No blue jeans, crew neck type shirts, sandals or sneakers will be permitted. Female citizen observers should refrain from wearing a skirt or dress.

III. Transportation of Citizens

- A. In carrying out their assigned duties, members may transport citizens in a police vehicle. If the transport requires traveling outside of the County, a supervisor's approval is required. Examples of situations permitting the transportation of citizens are as follows:
 - 1. Victim of crimes
 - 2. Crash victims
 - 3. Witnesses
 - 4. Stranded motorists
 - 5. County officials
- B. Because of the County's self-insurance program and the possibility of liability on the Department's part in the event of a crash, discretion must be utilized.
- C. When a member transports a citizen under this section, they must advise Communications they have a 'visitor present' and update Communications when that status changes. When transporting a citizen of the opposite gender or a juvenile, the member shall also advise Communications of the transport destination, including the vehicle's starting and ending mileage.