

## Ride-Alongs

### 405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for a ride-along with members of the Easton Police Department. This policy provides the requirements, approval process, riding restrictions and member responsibilities for ride-alongs.

### 405.2 POLICY

The term "ride-along" includes riding as a passenger with an officer on patrol or observing the work day of members engaged in other functions within the Department. The Department does not generally permit ride-alongs, nor does it have an official "ride-a-long" program available to the public.

The Chief or Deputy Chief may approve a ride-along request depending on the circumstances. Upon approval, the Deputy Chief will schedule the ride-along and notify the individual of the date.

### 405.3 ELIGIBILITY

Individual requests may be considered for approval on a case by case basis by the Chief or Deputy Chief of Police.

EPD civilian members, off-duty EPD officers, and police officers of other agencies may be permitted with prior approval by the shift supervisor. In the event that such participation is permitted, the off-duty department member or other law enforcement agency personnel shall not:

- (a) Be considered on-duty.
- (b) Represent him/herself as a member of this department or any other law enforcement agency.
- (c) Participate in any law enforcement activity except as emergency circumstances may require.

Factors that may be considered in disqualifying a ride-along applicant include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Being under 15 years of age.
- (b) Prior criminal history.
- (c) Pending criminal action.
- (d) Pending lawsuit against this department or the Town.

### 405.4 PROCEDURES

#### 405.4.1 CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

It is preferred that all ride-along applicants have completed a fingerprint background check and have completed Security Awareness Training prior to approval of the ride-along. If the ride a-long

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has not completed the finger print check and Security Awareness Training, the officer may not leave the ride-along unattended in the vehicle if the ride-along has potential access to criminal justice information.

#### 405.4.2 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

The assigned department member shall consider the safety of the ride-along participant at all times. The member shall maintain control over the participant and shall instruct the individual about the conditions that necessarily limit his/her participation.

- (a) The participant will follow the directions of the department member.
- (b) The participant will not become involved in any investigation, handling of evidence, discussions with victims or suspects, reading an individual's criminal history or other protected information, or handling any police department equipment.
- (c) Participation may be terminated at any time by the department member if the participant interferes with the performance of the member's duties.
- (d) Members will not allow participants to be present in any location or situation that would jeopardize the participant's safety or cause undue stress or embarrassment to a victim or any other member of the public.
- (e) Participants who are not law enforcement officers shall not be permitted outside the patrol vehicle on any call for service or traffic stop.
- (f) Officers shall not engage in vehicular pursuits or initiate any actions that may jeopardize the safety of the participant.
- (g) Prisoners will not be transported in the police car with a participant

The member assigned to provide a ride-along shall advise the dispatcher that a ride-along participant is present in the vehicle before going into service. An officer with a ride-along participant should use sound discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation and if feasible, let the participant out of the vehicle in a well-lit public place. The dispatcher will be advised of the situation and as soon as practicable have another department member respond to pick up the participant at that location. The ride-along may be continued or terminated at this time.

Conduct by a person participating in a ride-along that results in termination of the ride, or is otherwise inappropriate, should be immediately reported to the Shift Supervisor. The member should enter comments regarding the reasons for terminating the ride-along.

#### 405.4.3 MEDIA RIDE ALONGS

No media ride-along including reporters, film crews, or photographers, will be allowed to accompany police activities without permission from the Chief of Police.