JOPLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT	11-02 STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE
SUBJECT: Ride-Along	**REVIEW DATE: Annually - November**
EFFECTIVE DATE: November 25, 2008	**ACTION DATE:**
AMENDS/SUPERSEDES: 11-02 May 2, 2008	**AMEND DATE: November 25, 2008**
ACCREDITATION INDEX: 45.2.1 c, f	**APPROVED:** Richard A. Pearson **Chief of Police**

I. POLICY

The Ride-Along program allows citizens to voluntarily accompany officers and to observe law-enforcement activities to better understand the problems of policing. The observer may request to ride in any area at any time or with a specific officer. If convenient to the department and conditions permit, permission may be granted. The department's community-oriented policing goals include a commitment to work with the community to solve neighborhood problems and to operate an open, accessible, accountable agency. The Ride-Along program is consistent with these goals. Safety of law-enforcement personnel shall be the primary concern. (45.2.1 C, F)

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this general order is to establish procedures for the Ride-Along program.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Ride-Along request

1. Persons wishing to ride with an officer shall pick up Ride-Along forms at the police department's designated "front desk". Completed request forms and liability waivers should be returned to the front desk at least five working days before the desired ride-along date. The forms referred to herein are found at the end of this order.

2. The employee assigned to the front desk shall be responsible for completing a record check on the individual who is requesting a ride-along. The front desk employee shall send the results of the records check along with the request and liability waiver form to the Patrol Bureau lieutenant or his designee.

3. The Uniformed Operations Bureau Commander or his designee shall grant or deny permission for citizens to ride with officers. The Commander, or his designee, will be responsible for informing the citizen of the approval or disapproval and will schedule the time of the ride-along.

B. Limitations

1. A person shall not ride unless approval has been granted and the patrol lieutenant has the properly completed waiver. Approval will be for one specific ten-hour period unless the Uniformed Operations Bureau Commander grants special limitations or extensions.

a. Exception: If business related then there is no need to fill out a form. Examples are DFS workers or School Administrators. Dispatch should still be advised.

2. Normally, observers will be allowed to ride three (3) times a year and cannot ride more than one (1) time in one month. The following are exempt from this regulation:

   a. Citizen Academy Graduate

   b. Active police officers from other jurisdictions

   c. Police officer's spouse

   d. Joplin Police Chaplains

   e. City officials

   f. Explorer Post members

3. No more than one observer shall accompany an officer at a time unless approved by the shift supervisor.

4. Persons under the age of 18 must have the request and waiver forms signed by their parent or guardian.

5. No one shall be allowed to ride with plain-clothes units without specific, advance coordination and approval of the chief.

C. Beginning tour

1. If no specific officer is requested by name by the observer, the on-duty supervisor shall appoint the host officer.

2. The on-duty supervisor may approve a ride-along when an officer requests that a person ride with them. The on-duty supervisor shall ensure that the ride along form is filled out completely and forwarded to the Administrative Sergeant. The supervisor should also ensure that a criminal history is conducted on the person requesting to ride unless the supervisor personally knows the person.

3. The observer should be appropriately dressed in either business attire or casual wear in good taste. No blue jeans, t-shirts, or tennis shoes are allowed. If the on-duty supervisor does not feel that the observer is appropriately dressed, the Ride-Along approval may be cancelled.

4. The on-duty shift supervisor may cancel the Ride-Along if they have a justifiable reason. The observer should be notified as soon as possible of the cancellation. If the Ride-Along is cancelled by the on-duty supervisor, written notice shall be given to the Patrol Bureau Lieutenant or his designee as to why the Ride-Along was cancelled.

5. The host officer shall instruct the observer on the following procedures:

   a. Always follow the officer's directions. Observers shall always remain under the complete control of the assigned officer and shall comply with all directions and requests.

   b. The observer may end the ride whenever he or she wishes.

   c. The officer may end the ride if safety circumstances dictate.

d. The observer must wear a seat belt and shoulder strap when riding in the vehicle.

e. Observers shall identify themselves, if asked, as an authorized citizen observer or Ride-Along.

f. Observers shall not be permitted to carry any flashlight, camera, radio of any type, tape recorder/player, or binoculars unless authorized by the chief. Observers shall not carry weapons or restraining devices of any kind. Exceptions may be granted to law-enforcement personnel, explorers, auxiliary officers, or media by the on-duty supervisor.

g. Observers shall not smoke during the Ride-Along.

h. Observers shall not leave the police car at the scene of any police activity or participate at any police activity unless directly requested by the officer.

i. Observers shall not interfere with investigations in any way by conversing with victims, suspects, prisoners, or witnesses, handling evidence or equipment, or participating in any enforcement activity unless directed to do so by the host officer per *Joplin City Code* Sec. 70-31 (aid to officers).

j. Observers shall not interfere with the officer's activities at any time. Observers are encouraged to ask questions regarding procedures and activities, but it must be done at the appropriate time.

D. Arrests, transporting, booking

1. If the host officer feels that there are no hazards involved, the observer may accompany the officer while transporting or booking prisoners. If the officer believes a problem may arise, the observer should be temporarily transferred to another officer or returned to the point of origin. Juvenile riders will not be allowed into the city jail facility at any time.

2. Observers shall not be permitted to remain with prisoners in the absence of officers.

E. Ending tour

1. Upon completion of the ride, the officer will return the observer to the department and thank him/her for his/her interest.

2. The host officer will ensure that the on-duty supervisor is aware that the observer's ride-along has ended, and that the observer was safely returned to the station.

3. The on-duty supervisor will complete the verification section of the Ride-Along form and return it to the Patrol Bureau lieutenant.

IV. COMPLIANCE

Violations of this policy, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action as described in the City of Joplin's Personnel Rules or the Joplin Police Department's Rules and Regulations and General Orders. Members of the Joplin Police Department, while assigned to or assisting other agencies shall comply with this policy.

V. APPLICATION

This document constitutes department policy, is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims insofar as the employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form a basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.