



TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

 Proudly Policing Since 1841	SUBJECT Patrol Ride-Along Program		 Nationally Accredited 1986
	CHIEF OF POLICE <i>Signature on File</i>		
NUMBER 44	ORIGINAL ISSUE 07/15/1985	CURRENT REVISION 12/28/2018	TOTAL PAGES 11

AUTHORITY/RELATED REFERENCES

Florida General Records Schedule GS-2
 General Order 46, Rules of Conduct
 General Order 77, Computer, Cellular Telephone, and Data Utilization
 PTL-29, Cadet Post

ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

CFA Chapter 14

KEY WORD INDEX

Approval Guidelines	Procedure II
General Information	Procedure I
Member Responsibilities	Procedure V
Records Security and Retention of the PD 104	Procedure VI
Rider/Observer Responsibilities	Procedure IV
Scheduling Protocols	Procedure III

POLICY

The Department shall establish procedures for citizen participation in the Patrol Ride-Along Program. Members are responsible for adhering to the protocols of this written directive in facilitating a person accompanying a patrol officer during their tour of duty.

DEFINITIONS

Applicant: A person who has submitted an application for employment with the Department.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Casual Business Attire: Any clothing considered acceptable for wear in a public business setting (e.g., slacks, khakis, dress shirt or blouse, open-collar or polo shirt, dress or skirt at knee-length or below).

Immediate Family: For the purpose of this policy, a person related by blood or marriage, or a person who shares the same household.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Data which alone can be used to distinguish or trace a person's identity, or when combined with other personal or identifying information which is linked or linkable to a specific person, can distinguish or trace a person's identity.

Ride-along: The activity of a rider/observer accompanying a patrol officer during their tour of duty by participating in the Patrol Ride-Along Program.

Rider/Observer: A person who is approved to participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program.

PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. This written directive is applicable to any person accompanying a patrol officer during their tour of duty by participating in the Patrol Ride-Along Program.
 - 1. The written directive is equally applicable to applicants, the immediate family of the officer, and law enforcement officers from other agencies.
 - 2. This written directive does not apply to ride-alongs by members of the Cadet Post (PTL-29 [Cadet Post] is applicable for ride-alongs by cadets).
- B. This written directive is applicable to citizens who ride with a patrol sergeant or the Watch Commander.
- C. The Patrol Operations Bureau Commander is authorized to create and implement a feedback/survey mechanism to solicit information from riders/observers after their ride-along.

II. RIDE-ALONG APPROVAL GUIDELINES

The Patrol Ride-Along Request form –

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- A. The Patrol Ride-Along Request form (PD 104) must be completed for any person wanting to participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program.
1. The person's biographical data and other information provided on the PD 104 are used to conduct a criminal history check.
 2. The results of the criminal history check, approval status, and the person's squad assignment are noted on the PD 104.
 3. The release and waiver portion of the PD 104 requires the person to read and acknowledge certain aspects of the ride-along.
 4. A parent or guardian signature is required in situations where a person under the age of 18 is permitted to participate in a ride-along (see subsection F below).
 5. The approval or disapproval of a PD 104 shall not be based upon a person's age, race, ethnic background, religion, gender or gender identification, sexual orientation, religion, or economic status.

Processing of the PD 104 –

- B. Members shall forward each PD 104 to the designated Watch Commander with oversight of the Patrol Ride-Along Program.
- C. In processing each PD 104, the designated Watch Commander is responsible for:
1. Ensuring the form is complete and requesting clarification as needed,
 2. Ensuring the criminal history checks are completed,
 3. Making the decision on approval or disapproval of the request, and
 4. Communicating with the person regarding approval or disapproval of the request.
- D. For approved ride-along requests, the designated Watch Commander is responsible for communicating with the person regarding:
1. The required Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) Security and Awareness Training, and
 2. Scheduling the ride-along.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- E. A person cannot participate in a ride-along until all criminal history checks are completed and the CJIS Security and Awareness Training is successfully completed.
- F. The designated Watch Commander is responsible for ensuring the PD 104 and a copy of the person's CJIS Security and Awareness Training certificate are properly filed and maintained in the manner directed by the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander. Also see section VI below.
- G. For ride-alongs involving *applicants* and the *immediate family of the officer* the PD 104 may be processed by another Watch Commander (or acting Watch Commander), but the protocols of this section are still applicable.

Approval Criteria –

- H. Except as noted below, a rider/observer must be at least eighteen (18) years of age to participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program. This age limitation is not applicable to persons participating in:
 - 1. The Department's Cadet Program,
 - 2. The Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce's Youth Leadership Tallahassee, or
 - 3. The Department's TAC Students Program.
- I. The following persons are not allowed to participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program:
 - 1. Persons who are the subject of active criminal intelligence, and
 - 2. Persons under criminal investigation or being criminally prosecuted.
- J. A person with an arrest history, regardless of the outcome or disposition, may participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program at the discretion of the Watch Commander.
 - 1. If the arrest history reveals a sealed or expunged record, the following protocols are applicable:
 - a. For a non-applicant, no inquiry shall be made regarding the sealed/expunged record.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- b. For an applicant, an inquiry shall be made regarding the criminal charges which were sealed or expunged and considered a factor in deciding approval or disapproval of the PD 104.
- 2. Factors for the Watch Commander to consider in deciding to approve or not approve the PD 104 include the:
 - a. Crime type(s),
 - b. Number of arrests/charges, and
 - c. Time elapsed from last arrest.
- K. A ride-along request from a person with a physical disability which would present a safety issue for the officer or the person (e.g., person confined to wheelchair, person with a portable oxygen tank) should not be approved.

Approval for Being Armed –

- L. Riders/observers are prohibited from carrying any firearm or weapon (other than a common pocketknife) unless the person:
 - 1. Is a law enforcement officer with a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency within the United States of America, and
 - 2. Has received approval to be armed during the ride-along from the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, or the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander.
- M. If the law enforcement officer is not personally known by the designated Watch Commander, the approving member, or the officer with whom they are riding, the officer must present their agency identification or credentials during the approval process.
- N. If the rider/observer has received approval to be armed during the ride-along, the designated Watch Commander is responsible for obtaining the appropriate acknowledgment and signature on the PD 104. See subsection IV D below.

Successive Ride-alongs –

- O. Except as noted in subsection P below, a person must complete the entire PD 104 each time they participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

P. On successive ride-alongs by *applicants, immediate family of the officer and CDA employees*, the rider/observer does not need to undergo a criminal history check, but the PD 104 must be completed as described below.

1. The rider/observer must write their name in the appropriate area on page one and sign/date the release and waiver portion on page two.
2. The affected Watch Commander is responsible for signing and dating the appropriate area on page one.
3. The witness officer is responsible for signing and dating the appropriate area on page two.

III. SCHEDULING PROTOCOLS

- A. Each Watch Commander is responsible for working cooperatively in the scheduling of large groups of riders/observers (e.g., Citizen Police Academy), and advance scheduling is recommended.
- B. Except as noted in subsection C below, riders/observers are limited to participating in the Patrol Ride-Along Program once a quarter.
- C. Applicants, Citizens' Police Academy members, and the immediate family of the officer may, at the discretion of the Watch Commander, ride more often than once per quarter.
- D. Watch Commanders and sergeants shall strive to schedule riders/observers:
 1. Equally among shifts, squads, and officers, and
 2. Not more than one rider/observer per squad.
- E. Any Watch Commander may suspend participation in the Patrol Ride-Along Program because of operational issues (e.g., critical incidents, natural disasters/weather emergencies, riots).

IV. RIDER/OBSERVER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. It is the responsibility of the affected Watch Commander, sergeant, and officer to ensure a rider/observer understands and adheres to the protocols of this section.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Attire and Weapons –

- B. Riders/observers must be clean and neat in appearance and dressed in casual business attire (see definition). Additionally, the attire must not:
1. Be offensive, or advocate/disparage any religion, political party, sports team, or country (or political division thereof),
 2. Promote any political candidate/cause, or any type of product or service, or
 3. Bear any resemblance to a police uniform or contain any law enforcement related images or insignia.
- C. Other prohibited rider/observer attire includes the following:
1. Shorts,
 2. Flip flops, sandals, open-toed or stiletto-heeled shoes, and
 3. Any attire, by its design or how it is worn, deemed revealing (i.e., allowing more of the wearer's body to be seen than is usual).
- D. Riders/observers are prohibited from carrying any firearm or weapon (other than a common pocketknife) unless otherwise approved as described in subsection II L and M above.
- E. When a rider/observer is armed during the ride-along, the following mandates are applicable:
1. The person must be in plain clothes (uniform attire prohibited).
 2. The firearm must be securely concealed (open-carry prohibited).
 3. The only firearm type permitted is a handgun.
 4. The display and/or utilization of the firearm must only occur in situations where the display/utilization is needed to protect themselves or another person.

Reporting for the Ride-along –

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- F. Riders/observers are to report to the Department lobby and check-in with the Duty Officer prior to beginning their ride-along.
 - 1. Unless approved otherwise by the affected sergeant or Watch Commander, the rider/observer must remain in the lobby until beginning the ride-along.
 - 2. Exceptions to this protocol may occur for immediate family of the officer.

During the Ride-along –

- G. Riders/observers are responsible for following the instructions and obeying the commands of officers and supervisors at all times.
- H. Riders/observers are encouraged to ask questions of the officer pertaining to the policing profession and the particulars of the calls for service and other activities occurring during a ride-along.
- I. Riders/observers may take notes of their observations and conversations during a ride-along.
- J. While audio/video recording of police officers engaged in their duties is not a crime or otherwise prohibited by law, riders/observers are not allowed to audio/video events, persons, or activities during a ride-along.
- K. Riders/observers are prohibited from using tobacco products or devices designed to closely resemble or mimic the act of smoking (e.g., electronic cigarettes) during a ride-along.
- L. Riders/observers must not represent themselves as a police officer to others during a ride-along.
- M. Riders/observers must not handle evidence or discuss a case with victims, witnesses, or suspects.
- N. Riders/observers must not intentionally engage in any action during the ride-along which interferes with Department operations.

After the Ride-along –

- O. Riders/observers are encouraged to provide feedback on the ride-along process to the officer, affected supervisors, or the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander.

V. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

All Members –

- A. Confidential information shall not be discussed in the presence of a rider/observer.
- B. If, because of some articulable reason, a member believes the rider/observer is not suitable to participate in a ride-along, the member is responsible for bringing the situation to the attention of their supervisor for prompt action. Examples of rider/observer behavior or actions include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Failure to follow instructions of the officer or supervisor,
 - 2. Failure to abide by the instructions on the PD 104,
 - 3. Indications of mental illness or a mental health crisis, or
 - 4. Indications of intoxication.

Duty Officer –

- C. Duty Officers who receive a PD 104 are responsible for submitting it for processing to the Watch Commander designated with oversight responsibility for the Patrol Ride-Along Program.
- D. Duty Officers are responsible for the security of the PD 104s (approved and disapproved) maintained in the Duty Office.

Supervisors –

- E. Sergeants who have a rider/observer assigned to their squad should write the person's name in the Watch Commander's calendar on the appropriate date.
- F. Sergeants and the Watch Commander shall resolve problems and make decisions regarding appropriate rider/observer attire and other issues which may arise from the ride-along.
- G. The Watch Commander is responsible for adhering to the approval guidelines of this written directive.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- H. The Watch Commander is authorized to deny, delay, or terminate a person's participation in a ride-along for reasons outlined in this written directive (e.g., incomplete application, failure to comply with the PD 104 instructions, critical incident).
- I. The immediate supervisor of the officer assigned a rider/observer is responsible for debriefing the officer at the conclusion of the ride-along.

Officers Assigned a Rider/observer –

- J. Prior to beginning the ride-along, officers shall ensure participants are made aware of their responsibilities as outlined on the PD 104 and in section IV above.
- K. The officer is responsible for ensuring the rider/observer's name is provided to their assigned CDA dispatcher to be recorded in the CAD notes.
- L. Except under extreme exigent circumstances (i.e., an officer's safety is in jeopardy), officers shall not permit riders/observers to handle police equipment.
- M. While enroute to a call for service or preparing to engage in self-initiated or crime prevention activity, the officer should communicate to the rider/observer:
 - 1. The nature of the call or activity,
 - 2. Any applicable legal or technical police procedures which may apply, and
 - 3. Directions for the rider/observer to follow (e.g., stay in the vehicle, remain behind the vehicle, approach together on foot).
- N. The rider/observer shall be permitted to observe as much activity as possible and should not be restricted to the patrol vehicle unless the officer reasonably believes the rider/observer may be subject to serious danger or may interfere with the investigation or activity.
- O. Riders/observers are not permitted inside secure institutions (e.g., Leon County Jail, Juvenile Assessment Center, Tallahassee Memorial Psychological Center, Apalachee Center for Human Services).
- P. If, in the judgment of the officer, a call for service is exceedingly dangerous (e.g., active shooter) the officer may leave the

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

rider/observer in a safe place before proceeding to the incident scene. In such an incident, the officer shall make transportation arrangements for the rider/observer as soon as possible.

- Q. If the rider/observer desires to return to the Department prior to the end of the shift, the officer shall comply with the request as soon as possible.
- R. The officer is responsible for participating in a debriefing with their immediate supervisor at the conclusion of the ride-along.

VI. RECORDS SECURITY AND RETENTION OF THE PD 104

- A. The PD 104 contains data which is considered personally identifiable information (PII), and members shall adhere to the PII security protocols of General Order 77 (Computer, Cellular Telephone, and Data Utilization) in the handling of each PD 104.
- B. In compliance with the State of Florida *General Records Schedule GS-2 for Law Enforcement, Correctional Facilities, and District Medical Examiners*, the Department shall maintain a record of each PD 104 for at least four (4) years.
 - 1. The retention is applicable to approved and disapproved PD 104s.
 - 2. The Legal Advisor, Patrol Operations Bureau Commander, Deputy Chief of Police, or Chief of Police may direct longer retention periods for PD 104s.
 - 3. The Watch Commander with oversight of the Patrol Ride-Along Program is responsible for ensuring the Department complies with the retention schedule.

History: previous title (*ride along procedures*) – issued 07/15/1985, revised 08/01/1993 (*title change – citizen observer ride-along program*), 11/25/2002, and 07/10/2009 (*title change – patrol ride-along program*).