



# PHILLIPS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Subject: Citizen Ride Along Program

Policy No: 517

Effective Date: 01/01/2018

## **POLICY:**

In the interest of promoting communication and demonstrating transparency to the public, it is the policy of the Phillips County Sheriff's Office to permit interested citizens to participate in ride-alongs with uniformed deputies.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

[None]

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **I. Requirements**

- a. All citizens, cadets, victim advocates, chaplains, and other office volunteers who plan to participate in a ride-along must complete and sign a *Waiver of Liability* form.
  - i. Candidates between the ages of sixteen and eighteen may ride with the permission of a parent or guardian; the parent or guardian must sign a Waiver of Liability. The Waiver form is available for pick up at the Sheriff's Office.
  - ii. Citizens must complete a new *Waiver of Liability* form each time they make a ride-along request.
  - iii. Cadets, victim advocates, chaplains, department volunteers, and family members of deputies who ride-along only need to complete the *Waiver of Liability* form once, as the form will be retained on file.
- b. Riders under the age of sixteen are not typically permitted to participate in ride-alongs; however, a supervisor may make an exception for cause.
- c. Upon receipt of the completed *Waiver of Liability* form, and prior to the ride-along being scheduled, a routine background check and criminal history shall be completed.
  - i. For general citizen ride-along requests, this is most frequently completed by the Administrative Division.
  - ii. The routine background check shall include, at a minimum, a check of wants/warrants, criminal history, and driver's license check.



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- d. The Undersheriff is responsible to schedule ride-alongs and his/her discretion, disqualify applicants with a criminal history, or who are deemed to pose a potential hazard to the deputy, the public, or themselves.
- e. Citizens are limited to one ride-along every six months.
- f. Citizens under the age of eighteen are not permitted to ride-along between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

## II. Scheduling

- a. Upon the receipt and review of the signed *Waiver of Liability*, along with the completed background check, the Undersheriff will contact the requestor and schedule the ride-along or inform them why the request was denied.
  - i. If the ride-along request is denied, the Undersheriff will note the reason for the denial on the waiver form along with the date and time the requestor was notified of the denial. The waiver form is retained as outlined in Section IV.
- b. The Undersheriff is responsible for scheduling the ride-along shall complete the following steps:
  - i. Inform the citizen the name of the deputy they are assigned to ride with, the location of where they are to meet, and the date and time(s) of the scheduled ride-along.
  - ii. Enter "Rider" on the master schedule by the assigned deputy's name on the date the ride-along is scheduled. The rider's name and contact phone number should be entered on the daily schedule under the "Notes" section, along with the coordinating supervisor's number, in the event a last-minute change must be made.
  - iii. Notify the assigned deputy of the citizen rider assignment and provide the citizen's contact information.
- c. The Undersheriff should be cognizant of deputies other assigned duties (i.e. FTO obligations, number of recent riders and trainees assigned to the deputy, etc.) and the number of assigned civilian riders on any given shift.
  - i. Absent unusual or extenuating circumstances, there should be no more than three ride-alongs on any given shift, including citizen riders, cadets, chaplains, victim advocates, and department volunteers.
- d. Cadets, volunteers, victim advocates, chaplains, and other internal members of the sheriff's office may coordinate their own ride-along arrangements with a specific deputy, but must still



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receive supervisory approval and have the ride-along denoted on the schedule prior to the ride-along occurring.

### III. Discretion

- a. The Undersheriff is given broad discretion in permitting or restricting personal friends and family members the opportunity to ride-along with a particular deputy.

### IV. Record-Keeping

- a. After the ride-along is completed, the deputy notifies the Undersheriff that the scheduled ride-along was completed. The deputy may provide any comments or feedback for future consideration in the event the individual requests another ride-along or applies, or has applied, for employment.
- b. The Undersheriff notes on the *Waiver of Liability* form the date the ride-along occurred, along with any comments or feedback provided by the assigned deputy and files the form.
  - i. The *Waiver of Liability* form for completed ride-along is held for a minimum of three years in accordance with the office's retention schedule.