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## Ride-Along Policy

### 435.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Ride-Along Program provides an opportunity for citizens to experience the law enforcement function first hand. This policy provides the requirements, approval process, and hours of operation for the Ride-Along Program.

#### 435.1.1 ELIGIBILITY

The Irvine Police Department Ride-Along Program is offered to IPD applicants, IPD Cadets, IPD Explorers, and those employed within the City of Irvine. However, at the discretion of the Scheduling Lieutenant, an exception may be made for Irvine residents and others deemed appropriate. Every attempt will be made to accommodate interested persons however, any applicant may be disqualified without cause.

The following factors may be considered in disqualifying an applicant and are not limited to:

- Being under 15 years of age
- Prior criminal history
- Pending criminal action
- Pending lawsuit against the Department
- Denial by any supervisor

#### 435.1.2 AVAILABILITY

The Ride-Along Program is available on most days of the week, with certain exceptions. The ride-along times are from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. With the exception of department personnel, ride-alongs will not attend patrol briefing and will wait in the IPD front lobby area until the assigned officer is ready for them. Exceptions to this schedule may be approved by the Chief of Police, Scheduling Lieutenant, or staff in the Office of Professional Development.

### 435.2 PROCEDURE TO REQUEST A RIDE-ALONG

Generally, ride-along requests will be scheduled with the designated ride-along civilian coordinator. The applicant will complete a ride-along waiver form and supply this form to the civilian ride-along coordinator. Information requested will include a valid ID or California driver's license, address, and telephone number. If the participant is under 18 years of age, a parent/guardian must be present to complete the Ride-Along Form.

The civilian ride-along coordinator will complete a preliminary examination of the ride-along applicant's supplied information to ensure they do not possess a disqualifying factor prior to placing the applicant on the ride-along calendar. If the ride-along is denied during this initial examination phase, the civilian ride-along coordinator will contact the applicant and advise him/her of the denial.

The civilian ride-along coordinator will schedule a date and shift, based on availability, at least two weeks after the date of application. The selected date and shift will be inputted onto the "Ride-

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Along” public folder calendar. Next, the civilian ride-along coordinator will notify the Scheduling Lieutenant of this calendar update as soon as possible for his/her considerations. The Scheduling Lieutenant will be responsible for reviewing the ride-along entries on the calendar and notifying the Patrol Sergeant(s) on the applicable shift.

The Scheduling Lieutenant retains overall supervision of the ride-along program. He/she may designate an alternative person (civilian or sworn) to assist them in their scheduling duties whenever appropriate.

On the date of the ride-along, the assigned patrol officer will re-verify the information on the participant’s ride-along application and complete a criminal history check on the ride-along prior to allowing the ride-along to enter into department restricted space(s) and/or enter into the officer’s patrol vehicle. If the ride-along is denied (due to disqualifying factors) during this secondary verification phase, the patrol officer’s supervisor will notify the applicant of his/her denial.

#### 435.2.1 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Once approved, civilian ride-alongs will be allowed to ride no more than once every six months. An exception would apply to the following: Explorers, RSVP, Chaplains, Reserves, police applicants, and all others with approval of the watch commander.

An effort will be made to ensure that no more than one citizen will participate in a ride-along during any given time period. Normally, no more than one ride-along will be allowed in the officer’s vehicle at a given time.

Ride-along requirements for police explorers are covered in the Police Explorer Policy.

#### 435.2.2 SUITABLE ATTIRE

Any person approved to ride along is required to be suitably dressed in collared shirt, blouse or jacket, slacks and shoes. Sandals, T-shirts, tank tops, shorts and ripped or torn blue jeans are not permitted. Hats and ball caps will not be worn in the police vehicle. The watch commander or field supervisor may refuse a ride along to anyone not properly dressed.

#### 435.2.3 PEACE OFFICER RIDE-ALONGS

Off-duty members of this department or any other law enforcement agency will not be permitted to ride-along with on-duty officers without the expressed consent of the watch commander. In the event that such a ride-along is permitted, the off-duty employee shall not be considered on-duty and shall not represent themselves as a peace officer or participate in any law enforcement activity except as emergency circumstances may require.

#### 435.2.4 RIDE-ALONG CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

Ride-along applicants are subject to a criminal history check. The criminal history check may include a local records check and a Department of Justice Automated Criminal History System check through CLETS prior to their approval as a ride-along with a law enforcement officer (provided that the ride-along is not an employee of the Irvine Police Department).

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### **435.3 OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY**

The officer shall advise the dispatcher that a ride-along is present in the vehicle before going into service. Officers shall consider the safety of the ride-along at all times. Officers should use sound discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation, and if feasible, let the participant out of the vehicle in a well-lighted place of safety. The dispatcher will be advised of the situation and as soon as practical have another police unit respond to pick up the participant at that location. The ride-along may be continued or terminated at this time.

### **435.4 CONTROL OF RIDE-ALONG**

The assigned employee shall maintain control over the ride-along at all times and instruct him/her in the conditions that necessarily limit their participation. These instructions should include:

- (a) The ride-along will follow the directions of the officer.
- (b) The ride-along will not become involved in any investigation, handling of evidence, discussions with victims or suspects, or handling any police equipment.
- (c) The ride-along may terminate the ride at any time and the officer may return the observer to their home or to the station if the ride-along interferes with the performance of the officer's duties.
- (d) The officer may terminate the ride-along at any time and return to the ride-along to the station if they interfere with the officer's duties.
- (e) Ride-alongs may be allowed to continue riding during the transportation and booking process provided this does not jeopardize their safety.
- (f) Officers will not allow any ride-alongs to be present in any residences or situations that would jeopardize their safety or cause undue stress or embarrassment to a victim or any other citizen.
- (g) Under no circumstance shall a civilian ride along be permitted to enter a private residence with an officer without the expressed consent of the resident or other authorized person.