

Ride-Along

405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The ride-along program provides an opportunity for persons to experience the law enforcement function firsthand. This policy provides the requirements, approval process and hours of operation for the ride-along program.

405.1.1 ELIGIBILITY

The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office ride-along program is offered to interns, select members of the media, and other individuals, as determined by the Sheriff or the authorized designee. Reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate interested persons. Any applicant may be disqualified without cause from participating in the program.

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

- Prior criminal history
- Pending criminal action
- Pending lawsuit against the Agency
- Denial by any supervisor

405.2 PROCEDURE TO REQUEST A RIDE-ALONG

Generally, ride-along requests will be scheduled by the Intern Coordinator. The participant will complete and sign a ride-along waiver form. Interns shall complete paperwork necessary for a background check. Information requested will include a valid driver's license, address and telephone number.

The Intern Coordinator will schedule a date, based on availability, at least one week after the date of application. If approved, a copy of the ride-along waiver form will be forwarded to the respective Divisional Commander as soon as possible for his/her scheduling considerations.

If the ride-along is denied after the request has been made, a representative of the Agency will contact the applicant and advise him/her of the denial.

405.2.1 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Normally, no more than one ride-along will be allowed in the deputy's vehicle at a given time (unless the ride along is the media).

Ride-along participants may not carry firearms.

405.2.2 SUITABLE ATTIRE

Any person approved to ride-along is required to be suitably dressed. Sandals, T-shirts, tank tops, shorts and ripped or torn blue jeans are not permitted. Ball caps will not be worn in the Sheriff's vehicle. The Shift Commander or field supervisor may refuse a ride-along to anyone not properly dressed.

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405.2.3 PEACE OFFICER RIDE-ALONGS

Off-duty members of any other law enforcement agency will not be permitted to ride-along with on-duty deputies without the express consent of the Divisional Commander.

405.2.4 RIDE-ALONG CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

All ride-along applicants are subject to a criminal history check. The criminal history check may include a local records check and a Wisconsin Department of Justice (WisDOJ) Criminal History System check prior to approval as a ride-along with a law enforcement officer (provided that the ride-along is not an employee of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office).

405.3 DEPUTY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The deputy shall advise the dispatcher that a ride-along is present in the vehicle before going into service. Deputies shall consider the safety of the ride-along at all times.

Deputies should use sound discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation, such as a high-speed pursuit. The ride-along may be 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 on-duty supervisor.

A copy of the ride-along waiver form shall be returned to the on-duty supervisor and/or Intern Coordinator with any comments that may be offered by the deputy.

405.4 CONTROL OF RIDE-ALONG

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

- (a) The ride-along will follow the directions of the deputy.
- (b) The ride-along shall wear the provided body armor and reflective vest.
- (c) The ride-along will not become involved in any investigation, handling of evidence, discussions with victims or suspects or handling any sheriff's equipment.
- (d) The ride-along may terminate the ride at any time and the deputy may return the observer to his/her home, the place of the ride origin or to the station if the ride-along interferes with the performance of the deputy'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) Ride-alongs shall stay in the vehicle at all times.