

## Ride-Alongs

### **405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for a ride-along with members of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department. This policy provides the requirements, approval process, hours of operation and member responsibilities for ride-alongs.

### **405.2 POLICY**

Ride-along opportunities will be provided to the members of the public, students, faculty and staff members of the UMB and members of this department to observe and experience first-hand various functions of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department. The term "ride-along" includes riding as a passenger with an officer on patrol or observing the work day of members engaged in other functions within the Department such as Communications.

### **405.3 ELIGIBILITY**

A ride-along is available to community residents, business owners, students, faculty, staff members of UMB and those employed within the Department. Efforts will be made to accommodate all interested persons. However, any applicant may be disqualified without cause from participating.

Factors that may be considered in disqualifying an applicant include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being under 18 years of age, unless specifically authorized by the Chief of Police
- Prior criminal history and probation/parole status (persons on active probation or parole, or persons who have been convicted of a felony crime are not eligible for ride-along)
- Pending criminal action
- Pending lawsuit against this Department
- Denial by any supervisor
- Evidence of alcohol or drug use

### **405.4 AVAILABILITY**

A ride-along is available most days of the week, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Exceptions to this schedule may be made as approved by the Commander of the Operations Bureau or designee.

### **405.5 REQUESTS TO PARTICIPATE**

Generally, ride-along requests will be maintained and scheduled by the Shift Commander. The applicant will complete and sign a ride-along waiver form (Form 17-008 - Release and Indemnity Agreement). If the applicant is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must be present to

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complete the waiver form. Information requested will include a valid state-issued identification card or driver's license number, birthdate, address and telephone number.

The Shift Commander will schedule a date, based on availability, generally one week after the date of application. If approved, a copy of the waiver form will be forwarded to the appropriate bureau commander as soon as possible for scheduling considerations.

If the request is denied, a representative of this department will advise the applicant of the denial.

**405.6 PROCEDURES**

Once approved, ride-along applicants will be allowed to participate no more than once every three months. An exception may apply to the following law enforcement-involved participants:

- Volunteers
- Chaplains
- University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department applicants
- Any others with approval of the Bureau Commander or designee
- Students enrolled in any department-approved dispatcher training course

An effort will be made to ensure that no more than one member of the public will participate in a ride-along during any given time period. Normally, no more than one ride-along participant will be allowed in department vehicles at a given time.

**405.6.1 OFF-DUTY PARTICIPATION**

Off-duty members of this department or any other law enforcement agency, will not be permitted to participate in a ride-along with on-duty members of this department without the express consent of the Shift Commander.

In the event that such participation is permitted, the off-duty department member or other law enforcement agency personnel or District employee shall not:

- (a) Be considered on-duty.
- (b) Represent him/herself as a member of this department or any other law enforcement agency.
- (c) Participate in any law enforcement activity except as emergency circumstances may require.

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#### 405.6.2 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 Maryland Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) check prior to approval of the ride-along.

#### 405.6.3 SUITABLE ATTIRE

Any person approved to participate in a ride-along is required to be suitably dressed in a collared shirt, blouse or jacket, slacks and shoes. Sandals, t-shirts, tank tops, shorts and ripped or torn pants are not permitted. Hats and ball caps will not be worn without the express consent of the Shift Commander. The Shift Commander or a supervisor may refuse a ride-along to anyone who is not dressed appropriately.

### **405.7 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The assigned department member shall consider the safety of the ride-along participant at all times. The member shall maintain control over the participant and shall instruct the individual about the conditions that necessarily limit his/her participation. Instructions should include:

- (a) The participant will follow the directions of the department member.
- (b) Ensure the participant wears a seatbelt.
- (c) The participant will not become involved in any investigation, handling of evidence, discussions with victims or suspects, reading an individual's criminal history or other protected information, or handling any police department equipment.
- (d) Participation may be terminated at any time by the department member if the participant interferes with the performance of the member's duties.
  - 1. If the participant is on a ride-along, the member may return the participant to the point the ride originated.
- (e) Participants shall not be allowed to continue a ride-along during the transportation and booking process of an arrestee.
- (f) Members will not allow participants to be present in any location or situation that would jeopardize the participant's safety or cause undue stress or embarrassment to a victim or any other member of the public.
- (g) Participants who are not law enforcement officers shall not be permitted to accompany the department member into a private residence without the express consent of the resident or other authorized person.

The member assigned to provide a ride-along shall advise the police communications operator that a ride-along participant is present in the vehicle before going into service. An officer with a ride-along participant should use sound discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation, such as a high speed pursuit, and if feasible, let the participant out of the vehicle in a well-lit public place. The police communications operator will be advised of the situation and as soon as practicable have another department member respond to pick up the participant at that location. The ride-along may be continued or terminated at this time.

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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 Shift Supervisor. The member should enter comments regarding the reasons for terminating the ride-along on the waiver form.

Upon completion of the ride-along, the member shall return the waiver form to the Shift Commander.

**405.8 SHIFT SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- (a) Forward all ride-along requests to the Shift Commander for review.
- (b) Ensure proper approvals have been obtained before allowing an individual to participate in the ride-along.
- (c) Ensure a Release and Indemnity Agreement is completed, signed by the ride-along participant, and is in the supervisor's possession before the participant enters the vehicle.
- (d) Ensure the Release and Indemnity Agreement specifically states the date and time the participant will be accompanying the member.
- (e) Select the officer from his/her shift to transport the ride-along participant. When feasible, have members accompany the ride-along participant of the same gender.
- (f) Forward the signed Release and Indemnity Agreement to the Commander of the Operations Bureau for review and retention.

**405.9 COMMANDER OF THE OPERATIONS BUREAU**

- (a) Shall approve or disapprove all ride-along requests.
- (b) Shall ensure the documents related to each ride-along is maintained for one (1) year after the date of the event.