Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

GENERAL ORDER NUMBER	TOTAL PAGES	EFFECTIVE DATE	ANNUAL REVIEW DATE
1-107	6	01/29/2008	01/29/2009

SUBJECT
RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

CANCELLATION

V.L.E.P.S.C. STANDARD

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY
Elmer H. Tippett Jr.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Stephen L. Holl

1-107.00 PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines and procedures for participation in the Ride-Along program.

1-107.01 POLICY

The Ride-Along program provides an opportunity for citizens or personnel from other agencies to observe police activities in order to further their understanding of the functions, operations, and challenges undertaken by this Department.

1-107.02 PROCEDURES

A. Eligibility - In order to participate in the ride-along program, a person must be at least 15 years old and fall into one of the classifications.

- a college student of law enforcement or criminal justice
- a police applicant
- an Authority employee who requires knowledge of police operations
- a visiting guest of this Department
- a member of a federal, state, or local law enforcement agency
- a relative or friend of an officer in this Department
- a student of a high school participating in an intern program supported by the Airports Authority

1. Citizens

   a. Any citizens wishing to participate in the program must submit their request in writing and complete the Waiver of Liability form. These forms shall be available at each police station (See Appendix 1-107-1). The request letter must include the date and time desired, name of the host officer requested (if applicable), the requester's name and contact information, and acknowledgement that they have read and accept the conditions listed in the Waiver of Liability form. The request letter and waiver form must be submitted at least 5 business days in advance of the requested date of

participation, to the Station Commander of the involved station. Exceptions to this time requirement may be granted at the discretion of the Shift Commander under whom the ride-along will occur with concurrence of the Station Commander.

b. A criminal history and NCIC check will be performed on the applicant. Disqualification of an applicant will be based on the type and seriousness of any charges found in the applicant's record.

c. A citizen may request a specific date, time, or host officer; however, assignment will be made by the Shift Commander in accordance with operational necessity.

2. Department Personnel

a. A completed waiver is required for any civilian personnel who will be riding for an extended period of time for training purposes.

b. The Shift Commander will determine the officer who will host the ride-along and their duty assignment for that shift.

3. Personnel from Other Law Enforcement Agencies

Law enforcement officers from outside agencies may ride with Authority officers; however, if riding in an off-duty capacity, the visiting officer must complete the same forms as citizens, and comply with the same requirements and restrictions.

B. General Restrictions

1. Frequency of participation is limited to once in a six-month period, except for training purposes. The approval and waiver are good for one eight-hour tour of duty, unless a special extension is granted in writing by the Chief of Police, or designee.

2. Copies of the approved request and waiver form will be kept on file at the station involved for at least one year from the date of the ride-along.

3. Specialized units will not serve as hosts for ride-alongs without advance written approval from the Chief of Police.

4. If a call's response will put an observer in a dangerous situation; the observer may be left temporarily in a safe location. The host officer will advise Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) if this action is taken, and if he/she will be occupied for an extended period of time, request that another unit be dispatched to retrieve the observer and serve as an alternate host.

5. Normally, no more than one observer shall be assigned to an officer or a shift.

6. Student Interns will not be permitted to participate in an independent ride along with officers of the opposite sex.

C. Participant Requirements and Restrictions

1. Ride-along participants must be dressed in appropriate casual business attire, which is both neat and clean. Clothing which is immodest, reflects negatively on the department i.e. containing offensive wording or pictures, and jeans are not permitted.

2. All participating law enforcement officers in non-duty status will be dressed in civilian attire as described above and must comply with all rules and regulations as mandated by a supervisor or the officer responsible for the participant. All law enforcement officers must also comply with their own agency policies while participating in the ride-along. Non-duty ride-along participants may not wear a uniform of any type, regardless of their law enforcement status.

3. Ride-along participants may not carry any weapons, regardless of their law enforcement status; unless they are Virginia State certified or federally certified law enforcement officers and are authorized to carry that weapon by their agency.

4. Spouses of sworn personnel may participate in the Ride-Along program. If the Station Commander approves, the spouse may accompany husband/wife for a limited period of time.

D. Specific Responsibilities During the Ride

The host officer will read and explain the rules and regulations governing the Ride-Along Program to the observer prior to leaving the police station. During the ride, the host officer will instruct the observer on procedures required while riding in the police vehicle, and possible consequences resulting from the observer's participation in the program.

1. Both the officer and the ride-along observer(s) must wear seat belts while the vehicle is in motion in conformance with G.O. 4-100 and State law.

2. Before the ride, the on-duty supervisor shall provide an observer's comment form to the observer and ask that the form be completed and turned in at the end of the ride (See appendix 1-107-2).

3. When commencing his/her tour of duty, the host officer will notify the PSCC that there is an accompanying ride-along observer (if possible, a tour of the PSCC may be given to the observer before starting patrol). If the ride-along is terminated before conclusion of duty tour, the host officer will advise the PSCC of the termination.

4. The host officer will respond to calls in a safe manner and, while enroute, explain to the observer the radio transmissions and procedures applicable to that call. The officer may allow the observer, under his/her direct supervision, to leave the police vehicle in order to observe the nature and progress of the call. The officer will direct the observer's activities during the call.

5. Observers will not be allowed into any scene that is considered volatile. If a host officer must respond to such a situation, the observer may be left at a safe public location until the host officer, or another officer, can return for the observer.

6. The observer is prohibited from becoming involved in any investigation, touching evidence, handling police equipment, or engaging in conversation with victims, suspects, or witnesses.

7. The observer will be subpoenaed and required to appear in court as a witness if the observer has personal knowledge of facts in a particular crime and the host officer believes the observer is needed as a witness.

8. The observer may terminate the ride-along at any time, and will be returned to Police Station as soon as practical.

9. The host officer will inform the Shift Commander of any circumstances causing a ride-along to be altered or terminated.

If a host officer observes comments or conduct during a ride-along by the participant which is noteworthy, whether positive or negative, he/she should put in writing his/her observations and attach it to the observer's Ride-Along paperwork.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY
POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

For and in consideration of the MWAA Police Department's granting of permission to _____ (*insert name)* (hereinafter the "Participant") to observe the operation and activities of the MWAA Police Department (i.e., the "Ride Along Program"), the Participant hereby provides this general release ("Release"). By this Release, Participant waives all rights to file claims, administrative charges, lawsuits, etc., of any kind against the Airports Authority, its Directors, agents, and employees, and the MWAA Police Department, for any loss or injury (including death) related to his/her observation of the MWAA Police Department pursuant to this Release. Participant also hereby assumes any and all risk and liability for damage, loss, personal injury (including death) that Participant may suffer or sustain while observing the operation and activities of the MWAA Police Department.

Participant avers that he/she is at least 18 years old and executes this Release knowingly and voluntarily, on behalf of him/herself, his/her agents, assigns and heirs. If Participant is younger than 18 years old, this Release must be signed by a custodial parent or lawful guardian.

The MWAA Police Department's grant of permission to participate in this Program is contingent upon the operating conditions of the MWAA Police Department, and such permission may be restricted to specified periods of time, and/or specified locations, and may be revoked entirely solely at the discretion of the MWAA Police Department.

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date Airports Authority Representative Date

_____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date

RIDE-ALONG COMMENT FORM

Participant Name _____ Officer Name _____

Date _____

Time _____

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