

# SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Standard Operating Guideline

<b>Effective Date:</b> 01/23/2020	<b>Supersedes Policy Dated:</b> 10/06/2015	<b>Rescinds:</b>	<b>SOG Number:</b>  <b>302.7</b>
<b>Accreditation Index:</b> 54.1.3 <sup>1</sup>			
<b>Part Title:</b> Support Services		<b>Chapter Title:</b> Community Relations	
<b>Chief of Police:</b>			

## Ride-Along Program

### I Policy

It is the policy of the Uniform Operations Bureau to allow non-department personnel to accompany police officers during their tour of duty on a limited basis.

### II Definitions

### III Procedure

#### 1 APPLICATION / APPROVAL PROCESS

- 1.1 Non-department personnel may accompany sworn officers in the performance of official police business with prior approval by the Uniform Operations Bureau Commander or, in their absence, any UOB Captain or Lieutenant.
- 1.2 A Ride-Along Request, SPD Form # 94-OP-0097 must be completed and signed by the person making the request prior to accompanying the officer.
  - 1.2.1 These forms are available at the front desk of Headquarters and the South District Station, on the Springfield Police Department's website, from the UOB Administration Office or may be found in the SPD Forms folder on the Police N Drive;
  - 1.2.2 The request should be made ten days in advance of the date of the ride, whenever practical;
    - 1.2.2(a) Host Officer sponsored riders must first submit a Ride-Along Request, SPD Form # 94-OP-0097 to their supervisor for approval. The supervisor will

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<sup>1</sup> Accreditation index, removed reference to 5<sup>th</sup> Edition throughout the entire document, per Policy Change Order 19-020

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then forward to the Uniform Operations Bureau Administration Office.

- 1.2.2(b) Non-Host Officer sponsored riders, will submit the Ride-Along Request, SPD Form # 94-OP-0097 to the Uniform Operations Bureau Administration Office.
- 1.2.2(c) The UOB Office Administrator or their designee will ensure the following checks are conducted on the rider:
  - 1.2.2(c.1) Records Management System
  - 1.2.2(c.2) Criminal History
  - 1.2.2(c.3) Wants and Warrants
  - 1.2.2(c.4) Check scheduling for other ride-alongs. No squad will have more than two civilian riders on a shift without the squad supervisor's approval. If not approved by the supervisor, the UOB Office Administrator or their designee will contact the rider to schedule them to ride another day.
  - 1.2.2(c.5) Once all checks are made and the rider is given a scheduled date, the UOB Office Administrator or their designee will forward the Ride-Along Request form to the UOB Commander or their designee for approval.
- 1.2.3 Once the Ride-Along Request has been completed and approved, the UOB Office Administrator or designee shall route the form to the squad supervisor for the date and shift of the ride-along.
- 1.3 The squad supervisor on the date of the ride-along shall be responsible for the following:
  - 1.3.1 Notify the On-Duty Watch Commander of any/all ride-alongs;
  - 1.3.2 Ensure there is a properly completed, signed, and approved Ride-Along Request/Release form;
  - 1.3.3 Ensure the rider is appropriately attired;
  - 1.3.4 Assign a host officer for the escort;
  - 1.3.5 Ensure the rider is transported back to HQ/SDS once the shift ends, or if the rider decides to end the ride-along prior to the end of the host officer's shift.
  - 1.3.6 Monitor the ride-along to ensure that if the host officer receives an assignment of extended duration the rider is reassigned to allow the rider to observe a variety of police activities;
    - 1.3.6(a) Securing a prisoner at a hospital;
    - 1.3.6(b) Extradition from another jurisdiction;
    - 1.3.6(c) Officer becomes injured;
    - 1.3.6(d) Officer becomes involved in a lengthy reporting/investigative process;
  - 1.3.7 Complete the host officer's information at the bottom of the form and route the completed Ride-Along Request back to the Uniform Operations Division Officer Administrator, after the ride-along is concluded.

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## **2 OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 Officers on probationary status shall not be allowed to host a guest rider.
- 2.2 The host officer will be cognizant of the safety of the rider for the duration of the ride-along and will ensure that the rider complies with Springfield Police Department guidelines for the ride-along.
  - 2.2.1 When the officer knows or reasonably believes there is a significant risk of serious physical injury to the rider, the rider should be instructed to stay in the patrol vehicle, or be left at a location of safety.
  - 2.2.2 The rider shall obey all instructions from the officer at all times. If a rider refuses to follow the instructions of the officer, the officer should immediately notify the field supervisor and transport the rider back to Headquarters or the South District Station for termination of the ride-along.
  - 2.2.3 The officer has the authority to suspend the ride at any time, after notification is given to their supervisor.
    - 2.2.3(a) At the field supervisor's discretion, the remainder of the ride-along may be continued with another host officer;
  - 2.2.4 The officer should make every attempt to answer questions, and explain to the rider what actions are being taken and the reasons for such actions.
  - 2.2.5 Any injury of a rider, however slight, shall be immediately reported to the supervisor.
  - 2.2.6 The rider should not represent themselves as police personnel.
  - 2.2.7 The rider may not accompany an officer on private property, or to any location not open to the public.

## **3 GENERAL GUIDELINES <sup>2</sup>**

- 3.1 Riders shall be authorized to attend the pre-shift briefing unless excluded by a Supervisor/Commander.
- 3.2 Ride-Alongs will be authorized for the entire patrol shift.
- 3.3 Riders shall wear appropriate attire for the duration of the ride-along. Appropriate attire shall consist of casual skirts or slacks for women and casual slacks and shirts for men. Shirts shall have collars (no t-shirts). Blue jeans, sweats, shorts, or anything with vulgar, rude or offensive logos are prohibited.
- 3.4 All riders must be 16 years of age or older, unless otherwise approved by the UOB Commander.
- 3.5 A person may ride no more than once in a twelve month period.
  - 3.5.1 Exceptions: Officers from other jurisdictions, officers' family members, Cadets,

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<sup>2</sup> Section 3 previously was a list of eligible riders that was redundant information. That section was deleted and all subsequent sections were re-numbered, per Policy Change Order 19-020.

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Chaplains, Springfield Police Department interns when ride-alongs are a requirement of their internship, or when approved by the UOB Commander.

- 3.5.2 Exceptions: Citizens Police Academy Alumni are authorized to ride once per every six month period.<sup>3</sup>
  - 3.6 A rider shall not become involved in the officer's activities in any manner, unless at the express direction of the officer.
  - 3.7 Persons who have been arrested for a felony crime or convicted of a serious misdemeanor, are prohibited from riding. Any documented negative contacts with police may be grounds for denial of a ride-along request.
  - 3.8 All misdemeanor arrests/convictions will be considered, but are not automatic grounds for denial. The UOB Commander or their designee will have the overall authority to approve or deny a ride-along request.
  - 3.9 Non-Media riders are prohibited from using any type of recording device while on the ride-along. Use of such devices is grounds for immediate termination of the ride-along, after the notification is given to the host officer's supervisor.
  - 3.10 Possession of weapons by riders are prohibited unless allowed by RSMO 571-030, subdivision 2, subsections 1,3,4,5,6,7, to include sworn commissioned officers, on-duty members of the armed forces, judges, commissioned process servers, and federal or state probation or parole officers.
    - 3.10.1 Civilian persons authorized to carry concealed weapons pursuant to Subdivision 4 (referencing RSMO 571.101 and 571.121) are *not authorized* to carry weapons while on a ride-along.
- 4 MEDIA RIDE-ALONGS (CALEA 54.1.3)
- 4.1 Application Process
    - 4.1.1 All media outlets requesting a ride-along will provide the PAO with a completed ride-along request form 72 hours prior to the requested ride-along date. An individual form will be completed for every rider – i.e. reporter and camera operator.
      - 4.1.1(a) Media ride-along requests under 72 hours will be accepted on a case by case basis only in extreme circumstances.
    - 4.1.2 The PAO (or designee) will review the submitted form and determine if the ride-along is warranted and will approve or disapprove the request.
    - 4.1.3 If the ride-along request is approved, the PAO will submit the approved request to the UOB Office Administrator for a routine background check. Once complete, the UOB Office Administrator will forward the request to the Chief of Police.
      - 4.1.3(a) The Chief of Police shall have the final approval authority on all media ride-alongs.

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<sup>3</sup> Section 3.5.2 was added to define additional opportunities for Citizen Police Academy Alumni to ride along, Per Policy Change Order 19-020.

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4.1.4 Upon rider approval by the Chief, the PAO will coordinate with the watch commander for selection of the officer to host the media ride-along.

4.1.5 The PAO is responsible for coordinating with the media outlet what information is releasable after the completion of the ride-along.

#### **4.2 HOST OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.2.1 The host officer will make reasonable room in their patrol vehicle to accommodate the reporter and/or camera operator.

4.2.2 The host officer will answer calls for service and will respond to questions given to them by the media.

4.2.3

4.2.3(a) The host officer will turn off all media recording devices attached to their uniform before entering any private dwelling.

4.2.4 The host officer will never speak “off the record” to the media.

4.2.5 The host officer will allow the media to record at any public location.

4.2.5(a) The host officer does not have the right to tell the media they cannot record in any public location but can request recording devices be turned off if such recording could jeopardize an investigation or the safety of an officer if publicly aired.

4.2.6 The host officer will not allow the media to enter a private home for any reason and will ask the media to either wait in their patrol vehicle or on public property while the officer conducts the call.

4.2.6(a) If the media refuse to comply with the officer’s request to stay in their patrol vehicle or on public property, the ride-along will be terminated instantly and the media returned to the police station.

4.2.6(b) Notification to the watch commander and PAO will be made as soon as is practical (but before the end of the shift) as to why the ride-along was terminated.

#### **4.3 General Guidelines**

4.3.1 The host officer will ensure the appropriate attire is worn by all reporters in accordance with section 4.3 of this guideline.

4.3.1(a) The only exception to this attire guideline shall be given to camera operators as they routinely wear blue jeans as a part of their normal dress code while working in the field.

## **IV Attachments**