

CITIZEN OBSERVER (RIDE-ALONG) PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Citizen Observer (Ride-Along) Program follows established guidelines for the protection of the observer. Deviation from these guidelines without the expressed consent of the host officer is cause for immediate termination of the ride-along.

RULES OF CONDUCT

1. All information and observations acquired by the citizen observer during the ride-along shall be considered strictly confidential unless otherwise stated by the host officer.
2. The citizen observer must realize that any action he/she witnesses during the ride-along may require a court appearance at a later date.
3. Under no circumstances shall a citizen observer:
 - a. Be permitted to carry any weapon unless authorized and approved by the shift supervisor.
 - b. Operate the patrol vehicle or any other equipment.
 - c. Act as an agent for the Department or otherwise perform any police-related duty.
 - d. Approach any vehicle on a traffic stop or approach any residence, building, or other situation where the potential for violence exists or a crime is in progress.
 - e. Enter any crime scene of a serious nature (such as a homicide) and/or touch, possess, tamper with, or otherwise have contact with any evidence.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

The physical safety of the citizen observer is of the utmost importance, therefore, host officers shall weigh situations for potential hazards when responding to calls.

In cases of possible extreme danger (i.e. person with gun), the citizen observer may be let out of the patrol vehicle at a safe distance from the area unless qualified to assist. In situations with a potential for violence (fights, family disturbances, etc.), the citizen observer shall remain in the patrol vehicle unless qualified to assist.

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