

# RIDE-ALONG POLICY

## GENERAL

1. Ride-Along is an event where a person can apply and be approved to ride in a Halifax Regional Police vehicle with an officer while on duty for a period of 1- 4 hours. A Ride-Along provides an educational opportunity for individuals interested in a career in law enforcement or persons who would otherwise benefit from a better understanding of the role of a police officer.
2. Community Relations Crime Prevention (CRCP) Ride-Along Coordinator is the staff person designated to administer and manage the Ride-Along Program.
3. Policy applies to all members and those requesting Ride-Along. The Watch Commander and the Ride-Along Coordinator have specific additional responsibilities.

## POLICY

4. Ride-Along will take place between 0700-2300 hours, Sunday through Wednesday, inclusive during non-peak periods. A Ride-Along will last no longer than four (4) hours. (Peak periods are June – Sept)
5. No more than one Ride-Along shall be scheduled per shift, per division. Further limits may be considered by the duty Watch Commander during peak hours. A Ride-Along may be cancelled or terminated at any time due to operational needs and/or safety concerns.
6. The following persons are eligible to participate in a Ride-Along:
  - a. Must be a resident on Halifax Regional Municipality
  - b. Must be 16 years of age or over
  - c. Persons under 19 must have parental permission
  - d. Must have a recognized interest in learning about law enforcement. (IE: people who are interested in pursuing a career and students currently enrolled in a recognized police foundation program)
  - e. Visiting police officers from another police agency.
  - f. Civilian HRP staff and Volunteers as part of an approved training or orientation program.
  - g. Students taking part in the Halifax Regional Police-Halifax Regional Centre of Education cooperative education program
  - h. Any person specifically approved by the Chief of Police or HRP Ride-Along Coordinator.

7. Family members, common-law spouses and anyone engaged in a personal relationship (i.e., boyfriend/girlfriend, neighbor, relative, etc.) with a police officer may participate in a Ride-Along but must be assigned to another police officer who does not have a personal relationship with the participant. If the Ride-Along is approved for a shift during which the police officer with whom the participant has a personal relationship is on duty, the Ride-Along participant shall be assigned to a different division than the one in which the on-duty police officer is assigned.

## PROCEDURE

8. A Ride-Along request can be made through the HRP Ride-Along Coordinator in the Community Relations Crime Prevention Section at least two (2) weeks in advance to the actual Ride-Along date.

9. The following steps must be followed:

- a. Ride-Along applicants must complete and sign a release form to authorize HRP to perform a criminal record and other police database checks.
- b. Once fully completed, signed and submitted to CRCP, the background checks will be performed by the Background and Security Clearance Unit. This includes a criminal record check of local RMS and CPIC databases and verification with outside police services if required. To be accepted, applicants must have no criminal record, no outstanding charges, a good driving record, no outstanding fines and present no concerns to HRP. This can also include any conflict interaction with police, public safety or security agencies.
- c. The applicant will be contacted to inform them if their application has been approved/not approved.
- d. Once the request is approved, the participant must sign a liability waiver provided by the CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator or designate prior to taking part in the Ride-Along. Waivers need to be forwarded to and kept on file by CRCP.
- e. Approved participants must arrive at HRP headquarters 30 minutes before the agreed time for the Ride-Along and shall meet with the duty Watch Commander or designate.

10. Exceptions:

- a. The Chief of Police or designate may request that a participant be accommodated at any time.
- b. A police officer from another agency after having completed the required Ride-Along waiver, HRP22, and Information Form, HRP23, may be accommodated at any time.
- c. A Watch Commander may accommodate an applicant for their watch on short notice upon contacting the CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator and ensuring all policy requirements including background checks are met before approval is granted.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES****11. The Ride-Along participant will NOT:**

- a) Be permitted to participate in a Ride-Along without prior advance approval from the CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator and has completed and signed the mandatory forms.
- b) Be permitted to participate in more than two (2) Ride-Along per calendar year. (Exceptions to students in accepted partner education facilities)
- c) Be approved to participate in a division in which another Ride-Along has already been approved for the same shift.
- d) Be permitted to exit the police vehicle at any calls relating where there may be risk to the safety of the participant.
- e) Be assigned to a two-member unit that is equipped with a silent partner.

**12. Instructions to be provided to Ride-Along Participants:**

- a) Do not wear clothing like that worn by a police officer (i.e., dark clothes combat pants. etc.)
- b) Do not sit with prisoners or be present during the taking of a statement.
- c) Never intervene in any police action unless directed to do so by the accompanying officer and must obey immediately all instructions of the accompanying officer.
- d) Do not engage in conversation with any person detained or arrested.

**13. There is to be no deviation from this policy unless authorized by the Chief of Police or designate.****14. The CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator or designate will:**

- a. Review all application requests for Ride-Along
- b. Ensure the liability waiver form is signed prior to completing a background check
- c. Request all required background checks on applicants be completed by the Background and Security Clearance Unit.
- d. Notify applicants of the status of their applications.
- e. If the applicant is accepted, the coordinator will create a proactive GO and route it to the watch working on the date of the Ride-Along
- f. Receive completed Ride-Along forms, HRP 22 and HRP23, from Watch Commanders after a Ride-Along has taken place.

- g. Maintain a database of all applicants and retain signed application forms for record purposes via a proactive GO number and Versadex report.
- h. Prepare and submit to the Chief of HRP a report on the last day of each month containing the names of Ride-Along participants, including affiliation or interest.

**15. The Watch Commanders:**

- a. Shall consider all application requests received from the CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator.
- b. May consider and approve short notice requests when deemed feasible after ensuring all policy requirements are met. If approved, the Watch Commander shall ensure the CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator is advised promptly and forwards all necessary paperwork to him/her before the end of the shift in which a Ride-Along has taken place.
- c. Shall identify volunteers from his/her Watch and confirm each volunteer's availability for each request. Whenever possible, ensure a Ride-Along participant is assigned to a volunteer. If a volunteer is unavailable to be assigned to a participant, the Watch Commander reserves the right to assign the Ride-Along as a special duty assignment to another duty member.
- d. Shall ensure prior to the commencement of each Ride-Along that:
  - i. a Ride-Along participant's photo ID is checked, and the Ride-Along participant is briefed of the roles and responsibilities of the participant and accompanying officer during the Ride-Along
  - ii. a Ride-Along participant does not have a personal relationship with the accompanying police officer
  - iii. that a soft body armor vest is available for the Ride-Along participant to wear
  - iv. operational needs and officer safety are not compromised by permitting a Ride-Along to take place
  - v. if a Ride-Along request cannot be accommodated or must be cancelled/terminated for any reason that the participant is advised promptly.
  - vi. a proactive GO report has been opened and assigned to the officer providing the Ride-Along
  - vii. Shall ensure Ride-Along participants are aware that they are not authorized to post any information/pictures on social media.
- e. At the end of each shift in which a Ride-Along has taken place, the Watch Commander is responsible to ensure all signed HRP22 and HRP23 forms are forwarded to the CRCP Ride-Along Coordinator promptly

**16. Officers and Sworn Members** who have volunteered or have been assigned a special duty task to accompany a Ride-Along participant shall:

- a. Brief a participant on his/her roles and responsibilities and advise the Dispatcher of the presence of a Ride-Along participant at the beginning of the Ride-Along.

- b. ensure the Ride-Along participant wears a soft body armor vest for the duration of the Ride-Along
- c. Except for civilian staff and visiting police officers, do not allow participants access to a briefing room or any other area where confidential information is posted or made available.
- d. Monitor the conduct of the participant and immediately terminate the Ride-Along if problems or concerns arise. Advise the Watch Commander immediately and note the reasons in the officer's issued notebook.
- e. Not involve Ride-Along participants in high-risk calls (i.e., suspect apprehension, pursuits, etc.).
- f. Be aware of the safety of the participant always.
- g. If required to terminate a Ride-Along, ensure the participant is dropped off at a safe place or other arrangements are made to return the participant to an HRP facility.
- h. Prohibit participants from engaging in conversation with any person detained or arrested, or with anyone else involved in a police operation.
- i. Prohibit participants from using any HRP equipment unless specifically directed to do so by the accompanying officer.
- j. Not disclose or discuss any CPIC information with a participant.
- k. Protect the confidentiality of information on CAD by locking the laptop monitor screen if leaving the participant in the vehicle for any length of time.
- l. Complete the proactive GO report, including any pertinent information about the participant and the interactions on the Ride-Along. This information will be used by the CRCP office to determine any future Ride-Along requests.

## ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A Ride-Along request memo

Appendix B Ride-Along waiver form

Appendix C Ride-Along consent form

**By Order Of:**



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**Don MacLean**  
**Chief of Police**