5-09/250.05 - Responsibility of Observers

Ride-Along observers shall be governed by the following rules and regulations:

- Waiver - Observers shall be required to submit a Ride-Along Waiver (SH-AD-173), signed by the observer if he or she is 18 years of age or older. The minimum age for observers shall be 16 years of age (explorers excluded), and those between 16 and 18 years of age must have the waiver signed by a parent or guardian. The signature must be witnessed by a member of this Department. The original Waiver and Release shall be retained in the unit file. Persons under the age of 18 years, including explorers, will not, under any conditions, be assigned for ride-alongs after 2300 hours.
- Dress and Appearance - Observers should be reasonably clean and neat in appearance and attire. Beards and long hair shall be allowed if other criteria are met and extremes are avoided. If a question arises as to whether an observer's attire meets reasonable standards, the watch commander shall make the decision as to whether or not an observer will be permitted to ride.

  NOTE: Explorers may ride in their explorer uniform, but they will be expected to observe Department uniform and personal appearance standards.

- Identification - Observers shall be issued a pin-on type of plastic badge on which shall be printed in large letters the words "Observer" or "Student Observer." The badge shall be worn in plain view on the outer garment during the time spent on the ride-along.
- Females - Females under 18 years of age shall ride with a sergeant or in a two-person car.

  NOTE: Female explorers may ride in a one-person car on day or p.m. shift with the prior approval of their Post Advisor and concurrence of the station/unit commander.

- Arrests / Transportation / Booking - Observers may accompany a deputy during the transportation and booking process of an arrestee only if, in the opinion of the deputy, it would not constitute a hazard to the observer or interfere with the investigation. When the observer is allowed to remain during transporting in a one-person car with a security screen, the observer shall ride in the front seat and the arrestee shall be placed in the rear.

  NOTE: If the transporting car does not have a security screen, the arrestee shall be placed in the front seat and the observer in the rear. In two-person cars, the observer shall ride in the front, with one deputy in the rear with the arrestee.

- Observer's Ride-Along Comments – At the conclusion of the ride-along, the observer shall be given an Observer's Ride-Along Comments form (SH-AD-543). The observer shall be asked to complete this form and submit/mail it to the station/unit commander.