

City of Allentown Police Department Citizen Observer Instructions and Rules

The City of Allentown Police Department welcomes you to ride, as an observer, with one of our officers. As a professional law enforcement organization, we constantly strive to improve the level of service to our community. To that end, it is necessary to establish and maintain certain rules that govern the conduct and activities of citizens who ride with our officers to ensure the integrity of our Department is protected. In order for a citizen to ride, as an observer, with the City of Allentown Police Department, he/she:

1. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
2. Must complete and submit the Rider Information Form and the Release of Claims Form to the Chief of Police, during normal office hours, a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
3. Must be willing to undergo a background check, by the Department, to ensure the rider does not have an unacceptable criminal record and/or outstanding warrants.
 - a. Must never have been convicted of a felony or any criminal offense involving moral turpitude.
 - b. This background check is voluntary. If you refuse to the criminal background check, you will not be eligible for the Ride Along program.
4. The approved rider must present their own copy of the written request form and a picture I.D. to the on-duty supervisor that accommodates the rider's request for an observation ride.
5. Observers in the Ride Along Program are guests of the Police Department and shall conduct themselves in an appropriate responsible manner. Observers will:
 - a. Not use alcoholic beverages immediately prior to or during the watch that they are to ride;

- b. Not use profane or abusive language or behave in any manner that would provoke or escalate tension;
- c. Not enter into any investigation or converse with any citizen, witness, or prisoner concerning a police incident or investigation;
- d. Not make known to unauthorized persons the identity of persons arrested, detained, confined in jail or suspected of an offense;
- e. Not operate or use any police equipment or vehicle or any item in police custody or control except in case of an extreme emergency when instructed to do so by a police officer;
- f. Not carry a firearm (unless they are commissioned peace officers) or convey the impression or state to anyone that they are police officers;
- g. Remain in the police car during routine traffic stops and disturbance calls of a serious nature and they shall not enter a house, building, or other property, public or private, from which the public would be excluded because of a police incident or by the owner of the property; and
- h. Obey without question any instructions in the furtherance of the police mission given by a police officer.
- i. Observers will not be permitted to operate any audio, video or photography equipment during the ride along.

6. Dress and Grooming Standards:

- a. Observers in the Ride Along Program must dress and groom themselves in an appropriate and businesslike manner. The on duty supervisor or his designee, will be the final judge of whether or not an observer's attire and/or grooming is appropriate for riding in a police car.
- b. Minimum requirements are slacks or dress jeans and a shirt with a collar for males, slacks or dress jeans and a blouse for females. T-shirts and worn or unsightly blue jeans are not acceptable attire.
- c. Riders will be clean and neat in appearance, hair will be groomed in such a manner that it can be maintained under all but the most adverse conditions and does not present a ragged, unkempt, bushy or extreme appearance.

- d. No observer shall wear, on his/her clothing, anything that advertises any product, business, or organization, or any sign, symbol, or word(s) that are inflammatory in nature.
- 7. Citizen observers will be allowed to ride for a four (4) hour period, unless circumstances justify otherwise. Additional time must be approved by a supervisor.

I hope that you find your ride along an enjoyable experience which serves to provide you with a better understanding of the law enforcement profession.

Tony Alsleben
Chief of Police

Signature of Applicant

Date

Printed Name of Applicant