

# WEST PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## I-16 RIDE ALONG PROGRAM

**EFFECTIVE: 01/01/2005**

CALEA Standards: N/A

CFA Standards: N/A

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**I. POLICY:** The West Palm Beach Police Department has approved a Ride Along Program to permit citizens to accompany a police officer in a police vehicle as observers. The assignments and activities of citizens authorized to participate in this program will be limited to, and conform with, the conditions and regulations set forth in this procedure.

### **II. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM:**

A. Individual Shift Commanders are responsible for administering the Department's Ride Along Program and maintaining all pertinent records.

B. Requests to participate in the program will be handled by the on-duty Shift Commander. The person handling the request is responsible for evaluating and approving the request.

C. Assignments are made by the on-duty Shift Commander in coordination with the affected patrol supervisors.

D. The Shift Commander will ensure that a COVENANT NOT TO SUE, RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT form (Appendix A) is completed by the participant prior to participation in the program.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS:**

A. All participants must be at least 18 years of age.

B. Each participant is under the direct and complete control of the officer to whom he or she is assigned.

1. No training is required to participate in this program.

C. Participants are not permitted to operate any police vehicle, handle or possess firearms or weapons, or use any police equipment. Participants may use the communications system at the discretion of the officer.

1. Participants are not permitted to take part in any police action, assist in conducting investigations, or perform any other police task or function. Participants may act as observers only.

D. An officer experiencing difficulty with a participant has the option of discharging the rider at the office of the Shift Commander. In such cases, the officer will forward a report explaining the circumstances to his or her supervisor. An individual may be barred from future participation in the program if it would be in the best interest of the Department.

E. Assignments will be for a specified period of time. Hours of participation will be determined by the Shift Commander. Requests for multiple assignments will be forwarded to the Chief of Police for review and approval.

F. Whenever possible, participants will be assigned to officers of the same gender. Spouses or fiancées of sworn personnel will not be assigned to the same shift as their spouse or fiancée.

G. Situations may arise that could expose the participant to undue danger, violence, or other hazardous conditions. In such cases, the officer will exercise discretion and will have the prerogative to temporarily discharge the observer at a suitable, safe location while responding to and handling the call.

H. Any person submitting a Citizens Ride-Along Program Application (Appendix B) request may be rejected if such participation would not serve the best interest of the Department.

1. Any officer having knowledge of facts or circumstances that would demonstrate the person to be unsuitable for participation in the program should make this knowledge known to the Shift Commander.

**IV. PRIVATE CITIZENS:**

A. Four (4) positions will be allocated for participants, two (2) in District I and two (2) in District II. No more than four (4) private citizens may be assigned at any one time. Requests will be handled on a first come, first served basis.

B. A signed Liability Release Form is required for all participants in this category.

C. All private citizens must submit a driver=s license or other valid photo I.D. card prior to participating in the program. The on-duty Shift Commander will photocopy the means of identification and request a criminal history of the participant be made in NCIC/ FCIC. The photocopied I.D. will be placed in the file with the application and the signed liability form.

1. Any private citizen found to have a past felony criminal conviction will be barred from participating in the Ride Along Program.

2. Any private citizen found to have a past misdemeanor criminal conviction may be permitted to participate in the Ride Along Program at the discretion of the on-duty Shift Commander.

3. No one will be allowed to participate while they are the subject of a criminal investigation or have pending felony or misdemeanor charges against them.

4. Participation will be limited to one (1) Ride Along per 60 day period.

D. Private citizens will not wear any type of uniform or apparel which may cause them to be misidentified as police officer.

**V. NON-SWORN CITY PERSONNEL:**

A. This category includes persons employed in a non-sworn capacity by the City of West Palm Beach and to interns assigned to the Department.

1. Interns may participate in the Ride Along Program as frequently as necessary to satisfy the requirements of his or her internship, at the direction of the Staff Services Division.

B. Request to Participate forms (Appendix C) for non-sworn police personnel and interns must be approved by the person's supervisor. The on-duty Shift Commander will then review and approve or reject the request.

C. A signed Liability Release Form will be required for all interns and City employees.

**VI. LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL/NON- W.P.B.P.D.:**

A. This category includes sworn law enforcement personnel from other jurisdictions who are not involved in an investigation or otherwise acting in an official capacity.

B. A Liability Release Form must be signed prior to the assignment.

C. Florida certified police officers participating in the Ride Along Program may carry a firearm as permitted in F.S.S. Florida officers must adhere to the guidelines of their department policy when carrying a firearm outside of their jurisdiction.

D. Police officers who are not certified in the State of Florida may not carry a firearm while participating in the Ride Along Program.

E. Police officers from other jurisdictions may not wear a uniform or clothing that indicates they are police officers while participating in the Ride Along Program.

**VII. MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA:**

A. This category is limited to full time, bonafide members of a news media organization.

B. A Liability Release Form must be signed prior to assignment.

C. No restrictions are placed on the number, times, or duration of a Ride Along in this category. However, if the ride along becomes a distraction or problem, the officer has the option of discharging the rider at the on-duty Shift Commander=s office.

**VIII. REFERENCE:**

- F.S.S. 790.052 Carrying concealed firearms; off-duty law enforcement officers.
- SOP # I-13 Citizen Observer Patrol.

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**Delsa R. Bush, Chief of Police**

Original issue: 05/03/88  
Revised: 01/01/2005  
I.D. # 1491

History: SOP # changed to I-16 on 01/01/2005  
Old SOP #: 6.05, 6.210.005  
Revision Dates: 06/01/1999, 01/01/2005

Appendix A

WEST PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT
RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM
COVENANT NOT TO SUE, RELEASE
AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, residing at \_\_\_\_\_, City of \_\_\_\_\_,
County of \_\_\_\_\_ State of \_\_\_\_\_, for myself and for my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns, in
consideration of the permission granted to me by the City of West Palm Beach, Florida, acting through its Police
Department, to participate in the Police Department=s Ride-Along Program including, but not limited to riding in a
patrol vehicle with a sworn officer, covenant with the City of West Palm Beach, Florida, its departments, officers,
officials, employees, and legal representatives, to never institute any suit or action at law or equity against the City of
West Palm Beach, Florida, its departments, officers, officials, employees, and legal representatives, by reason of any
claim I now have or may hereafter acquire relating to any present or future accidents or injuries occurring to me as a
result of my participation in the Ride-Along Program.

I hereby expressly release for myself and for my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns, and agree to
save, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of West Palm Beach, Florida, its departments,
officers, officials, employees, agents and legal representatives, from any and all claims, demands, suits,
loss, cost or expense, actions, judgments, and against the City of West Palm Beach, Florida, its
Departments, officers, officials, employees, agents, and legal representatives, by reason of any damage
to property or personal injury, including death, sustained by myself or any person whatsoever, which
arises out of or is incidental to or in any way connected to my participation in the Ride-Along Program,
regardless of whether such claim, demand, suit, loss, cost, or expense, action, judgment, or execution is
caused in whole or in part by any negligent act or omission of the City of West Palm Beach or its
departments, officers, officials, employees, agents, and legal representatives.

I hereby understand that the dissemination of any information, written or verbal, I may see or hear during
my participation in the Ride-Along program is a violation of State and Federal laws.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(APPLICANT SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I, \_\_\_\_\_, HAVE EXECUTED THIS
(WITNESS NAME)
RELEASE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE at the City of West Palm Beach, Florida this \_\_\_\_day of
\_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(WITNESS SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

Appendix B
WEST PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITIZENS RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_
Please print

Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: \_\_\_\_\_
Number, Street, City, State, Zip Code

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date requested to ride: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours preferred: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant=s Signature

Date

Rules and General Information:

- 1. Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age.
2. A minimum of 3 days advance notice prior to the requested ride-a-long date is required to allow for application processing and scheduling.
3. Participation is limited to four (4) hour sessions between the hours of 7 AM to 2 AM, seven days a week, except in special circumstances as specified in S.O.P. I-16.
4. Participation is limited to one ride-along per sixty days period, except in special circumstances as specified in S.O.P. I-16.
5. Applicants are required to sign a liability release and covenant not to sue agreement prior to the ride along.
6. The applicant must provide photo identification (i.e., driver's license or other acceptable I.D.).
7. A maximum of four citizen participants can be permitted to ride during a given four hour session.
8. Attire is casual, reflecting good taste and conservatism.

Police use only NCIC/FCIC + Palms printout attached \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of I.D. attached \_\_\_\_\_

Application received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Shift Commander or Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Table with 4 columns: Officer, I.D.#, Zone, Date. Row 1: Rode with: \_\_\_\_\_

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Officer	I.D. #	Zone	Date
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APPENDIX C

This form is for non-sworn and interns who are employee of the police department.

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RIDE-A-LONG PROGRAM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DIVISION: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE REQUESTED: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR=S APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_