

	<b>Panama City Fire Department – Standard Operating Guidelines &amp; Policies</b>		
	<b>Subject:</b> Ride Along Guidelines		
	<b>Division:</b> Training / Safety	<b>Effective Date:</b> March 6, 2015	
	<b>Policy:</b> III-002	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 2	<b>Revised Date:</b> May 29, 2025
<b>Approved by:</b> David Jernigan, Division Chief of Training / Safety		<b>Review Date:</b> January 1, 2028	

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for non-members of the Panama City Fire Department who wish to ride in fire department vehicles and observe daily training, fire prevention and public education activities, community events and emergency incidents. This allows the community to observe the day-to-day routine of a firefighter.

**SCOPE:** This guideline applies to any member of the public or other City personnel who wish to participate in the Ride Along program.

**ENFORCEMENT:** All personnel are responsible for adhering to this guideline and assuring that the citizen participating in this program follow this guideline. Authority to deviate from this guideline rests with the Fire Chief or their designee. Failure to adhere to this guideline may result in progressive disciplinary action.

## **APPLICATION:**

### **A. Ride Along Program**

1. The Panama City Fire Department will allow citizens or other City personnel to participate in the Ride Along program. Citizens and / or city personnel **MUST** meet the following criteria:
  - a. Be 18 years of age or older
  - b. Must have scheduled the event at least 24 hours in advance through the Administrative Offices
  - c. Have a completed Ride Along waiver on file which has been completed within the last 12 months (Form is located on PowerDMS)
  - d. Must wear appropriate attire (long, dark colored pants, no open-toed shoes). Shirts shall not have obscene language or graphics, nor shall they advertise anything that may bring discredit to the Panama City Fire Department or City of Panama City
2. The Ride Along program is designed to be primarily observational. The citizen can participate in supervised activities of a non-emergent nature. Activities to include physical fitness, training events, and any other activity the Company Officer deems appropriate. This includes members of other fire departments who may choose to participate in the Ride Along program.
3. When on an emergency scene, it is imperative that the citizen follow **ALL** instructions given by the crew concerning where to stand and what to do. In most cases the Fire Apparatus Operator / Engineer will direct the citizen as to where they should be. In certain circumstances, they may be told to remain in the apparatus.
4. When on an emergency scene, the citizen shall wear a reflective vest, protective helmet, and eye protection **AT ALL TIMES**.

5. The citizen may not have visitors at the station.
6. At no time shall the citizen run down the stairs or slide the fire pole when in the upstairs areas of Station 1.
7. Citizens may participate between the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. unless prior approval is granted by the Fire Chief or designee for special events (media events, etc....).

**B. Parades**

1. Citizens who wish to ride on an apparatus for any parade event **MUST** meet the following criteria:
  - a. Be 18 years of age or older
  - b. If under 18 years old, the minor must always have an accompanying adult, both shall have a signed waiver on file
  - c. Sign a Ride Along waiver before boarding the apparatus (Form is located on PowerDMS)
  - d. Follow all directions given by Fire Department crew members
  - e. If riding on top of the apparatus, they must be secured to the apparatus via straps / harnesses that will be provided