



WINDSOR SEVERANCE FIRE RESCUE

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Policy: Ride Along Program	Effective Date: 05/01/2023	Revised:
Policy Number: AD019	Section: Administration	Prior Policy Number:
Department: Administration	Initial Policy Date: 05/01/2023	Prior Effective Date:
Accreditation:	KPI(s):	

PURPOSE:

This policy establishes the requirements for approved individuals to experience fire service functions firsthand. Windsor Severance Fire Rescue provides a ride-along program for qualified adults and students over the age of 16 when specific criteria are met. The student portion of the program is designed to help build career paths into the public service and medical fields. Citizens may request a ride-along out of interest or awareness of local government services. Media requested ride-alongs will be handled separately through the Fire Chief.

SCOPE:

This regulation applies to all persons participating in or guiding portions of the ride-along.

DEFINITIONS:

Ride Along: An opportunity for students and interested citizens to experience fire service functions firsthand by being assigned to a station, officer, and apparatus for a designated period of time.

POLICY:

Eligibility: The ride-along program is offered to community members and to individuals involved with a recognized program who have demonstrated a desire for a career path in public safety. Every attempt will be made to accommodate interested persons; however, any applicant may be disqualified without cause.

Factors that may be considered in disqualifying an applicant include but are not limited to:

- Being under 18 years of age, unless approved by a Chief Officer
- Incomplete forms or background check
- Prior criminal history
 - Any felony arrests
 - Any misdemeanor within the last 12 months
 - Registered sex offenders or unlawful sexual behavior
- Pending criminal action

- Pending lawsuit against the department
- Denial by any supervisor
- Poor health or other condition that may negatively impact response
- Currently participating in an active WSFR hiring process
- Any other basis that WSFR deems appropriate in order to protect the integrity, safety, or security of WSFR, its programs, personnel, or the community.

Citizen Ride-Alongs

Citizen ride-along requests will be reviewed and scheduled by the Administration team. Requests may be made via the WSFR website, email, or phone and must allow for at least 1 week of review and scheduling if approved. Once approved by Administration, a copy of the request will be forwarded to the respective Battalion Chief for scheduling consideration. The applicant will then be contacted with a date, time slot, required forms, and an assigned station and apparatus. If denied, a representative from WSFR will contact the applicant and advise them of the denial. No more than one ride-along will be allowed in a given day unless authorized by a Chief Officer. Citizen observers will be required to submit background check information, HIPAA nondisclosure agreement, release of liability, participant guideline agreement, and emergency contact information. Upon receipt, applications will be screened for suitability and frequency. Individuals shall be limited to one ride every six months. WSFR will offer up to 8-hour rides to citizens during normal business hours 0800-1700. Rides will be scheduled in accordance with WSFR Ride-Along Rules and Guidelines. The ride-along may be terminated at any time prior to the expiration of time by either the Company Officer or observer.

Note: Fire Academy and EMS recruits are typically required to do ride-alongs as part of their training. These riders will take priority over community member riders in our scheduling process.

School Sponsored Ride-Alongs

Persons enrolled in Fire Science or EMS programs with affiliated colleges will coordinate rides through the school staff and WSFR Training Chief. All riders must be 18 years of age. A Chief Officer has discretion to allow high school students concurrently enrolled in a college program who are not 18 to participate. Once a tentative schedule has been created, the Training Chief will contact the shift Battalion Chiefs to determine any conflicting days that would not be appropriate for an observer. WSFR will offer up to 10-hour rides for students between the hours of 0800-1800. All School sponsored rides will also follow WSFR Ride-Along Rules and Guidelines.

The college shall conduct criminal background checks on each participating student. A review of the background checks will be made available to the Training Chief to determine if any individuals shall be disqualified based on the listed factors. Once background checks have been reviewed and the calendar finalized, the schedule will be sent to the shift Battalion Chiefs to be disseminated to the Company Officers.

Each student from an affiliated program will present the Company Officer with an evaluation to provide back to the student at the end of the day. Students who are not engaged in activities, show no interest, or are not professional in either dress or demeanor may be immediately terminated from the ride. The Training Chief will be notified of any terminated ride, along with the reason, students name, and date. The Training Chief will notify the coordinator of the affiliated program.

Cancellations

Citizen and student ride alongs must follow the cancellation steps found in the WSFR Ride-Along Rules and Guidelines document. The shift Battalion Chief must be notified prior to 0700 the day

of the scheduled ride along. They will then notify the Training Chief and respective Company Officer. Citizens may re-schedule for a later date, students must work through the affiliated program to re-schedule.

Additional Documentation (Found in Emergency Reporting Library)

- Observer/Student Release of Liability
- HIPAA Agreement
- Ride-Along Rules and Guidelines