



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: RIDE ALONG PROGRAM		NO: J-1200	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: August 1, 1990	REVIEWED: 5/15/2024	REVISED: 5/18/2004	UPDATED: 5/15/2024

POLICY

The Kern County Sheriff's Office will provide certain individuals the opportunity to observe the operation of the Sheriff's Office through the Ride-Along Program. The level or type of observation allowed will be defined by the approving authority. Participation in this program is a privilege. Persons who have provided compensation, as consideration or preference for a ride along, to any charity, event, or entity, public or private are ineligible to participate in the Ride-Along Program. A supervisor may terminate an individual's participation at any time for inappropriate behavior on the part of the participant or for operational requirements of the Sheriff's Office. Individuals accepted for this program will only be allowed to observe and will not perform tasks or otherwise involve themselves in any activity, nor will they possess any firearm, weapon, or other device which is used to incapacitate (i.e., pepper spray, mace, etc.). Peace officers as defined by Penal Code Section 830.1 are exempted from the weapon prohibition.

DIRECTIVE A

The Sheriff, Undersheriff, Chief Deputies, Commanders (for their division), Lieutenants (for their section), Air Support Unit Sergeant (for aircraft observation), or Sheriff's Office Watch Lieutenants / Commanders are designated as approving authorities for this program.

DIRECTIVE B

Participants in the program must be at least 18 years old and/or fall under one of the following:

- Members of the Sheriff's Office
 - Members of the Sheriff's Office Explorer Post must be at least 16 years old to participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program and must be at least 18 years old to participate in the Air Support Unit Ride-Along Program.
- Members of the Regional Occupational Center (ROC) or The Career Technical Education Center (CTEC)

- Members of ROC or CTEC must be at least 16 years old to participate in the Patrol Ride-Along Program and must be at least 18 years old to participate in the Air Support Unit Ride-Along Program.
- Parent/ Guardian permission is required.
- Other Government, Business, Media, or Sheriff's Office related personnel
 - Personnel from governmental agencies;
 - Individuals requiring orientation to law enforcement when fulfilling the needs of the Sheriff's Office or the county;
 - Visiting law enforcement officers;
 - Spouse or relative of a member of the Sheriff's Office;
 - Members of the news media;
- Civilian personnel
 - General public with a reason for participation.

DIRECTIVE B-1

Generally civilian personnel will be limited to one (1) Patrol ride along per calendar year and/or one (1) Air Support ride along every three (3) calendar years. Exceptions will be approved and noted by the approval authority. Circumstances regarding a ride along not addressed in this policy will be reviewed and evaluated for approval at the sole discretion of the Sheriff.

DIRECTIVE C

Special flights will not be arranged for the news media. News gathering activity will be limited to regularly scheduled Air Support Unit activity. News coverage is the responsibility of the news organization member. Sheriff's Office personnel shall not interfere in the news coverage as long as the coverage does not alter or endanger aircraft operations or the law enforcement mission. Members of the news media will adhere to all flight related directives issued by the flight crew.

DIRECTIVE D

Requests for this program from the general public will require that individuals to be checked through C.J.I.S., C.L.E.T.S. Criminal History System, or other information sources to evaluate their suitability for the program. Individuals will not be allowed to participate in the program if they have a criminal history involving any felony, narcotic offenses, crimes of violence, sexual assault or abuse, or any other offense or activity deemed disqualifying by the approving authority.

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DIRECTIVE E

Program waiver forms will be retained within the affected division for five years and will be destroyed in accordance with state law and county ordinance.

PROCEDURE A: Program Requests

Sheriff’s Office members receiving a program request will:

- Determine eligibility to participate in the program based on the provisions of Directive B and B-1.
- Ensure a photocopy of a governmental picture identification card of the requestor is attached to the request form.
- Forward the request to an approving authority with any pertinent information attached.
 - The request may be made verbally if authorized by the approving authority.

The approving authority will:

- Review the request to ensure compliance with this policy;
- Conduct a check of the requesting individual as outlined in Directive D.
 - Denied requests will be sent back to the Sheriff’s Office member who received the request and they will notify the requesting individual of the denial.
- Route the request to the affected Division Commander or work unit supervisor.

The Division Commander, work unit supervisor, or their designee will:

- Notify the requesting individual of the program request approval.
- Schedule a time and place for participation in the program;
- Ensure the program participant completes and signs the appropriate program waiver form prior to the participation.

DIRECTIVE F

The program request form asks for weight and height information that is necessary for the safe operation of aircraft. Refusal to provide this information will result in denial of the request. A requesting individual will complete the top portion of the form. Prior to participation, the remainder of the form will be completed and signed.

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DIRECTIVE G

Program participants will adhere to a dress code policy because they have an impact upon our image. If improperly dressed, they may be mistaken by other citizens and/or officers for other than program participants. All clothing worn must be clean and in good condition. Supervisors may reject participants that are improperly dressed or require inappropriate apparel items (i.e., jewelry, chains, etc.) be removed. The dress code is:

- Button front shirt with collar. No logos or printed wording of any kind.
- Dress pants. No jeans, baggy pants, skirts or dresses.
- Dress or casual shoes. No sandals or athletic footwear.
- Jackets or sweaters may be worn but must be free of logos or printed wording.
- No hats.
- Members of the Sheriff's Office Citizen Service Unit and Explorer Post will wear their appropriate uniform.

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KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE RIDE ALONG PROGRAM

This document contains instructions for submitting a request to participate in the Ride Along Program with a deputy or with our Air Support Unit. You may keep this cover sheet following the completion of the Request/Agreement form (attached).

Attached is a copy of the Request for Ride Along Program form.

REQUEST SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

You may pick up a Ride Along Program Request/Agreement from the Kern County Sheriff's Office, 1350 Norris Road, Bakersfield, California during regular office hours (Mon-Fri, 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.). Once you have completed the attached form, return the completed form to the Sheriff's Office. Information about your height and weight is only required for requests to ride in one of our aircraft and is necessary for the safe operation of the aircraft, so please be accurate. Due to the volume of requests we receive, we will only make a limited number of attempts to contact you for your ride along, so make sure you leave us a telephone number where we can reach you. A photocopy of your governmental identification must be attached to your ride along request form. Generally civilian personnel will be limited to one (1) Patrol ride along per calendar year and/or one (1) Air Support ride along every three (3) calendar years.

RIDE ALONG SCHEDULING

Once you have submitted the Ride Along Request/Agreement and it has been approved, you will be scheduled for a ride along. Due to a number of factors, there may be a substantial waiting period. For aircraft ride alongs, weather, temperature, and qualified aircraft availability impact our ability to carry passengers. For these reasons, you may be "bumped" at the last minute. In these cases, you will be re-scheduled without having to submit another request.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE RIDE ALONG POLICY

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Program participants will adhere to a dress code policy because they have an impact upon our image. If improperly dressed, they may be mistaken by other citizens and/or officers for other than program participants. All clothing worn must be clean and in good condition. Supervisors may reject participants who are improperly dressed or require inappropriate apparel items (i.e., jewelry, chains, etc.) be removed. The dress code is button front shirt with collar with no logos or printed wording of any kind. Dress pants. No jeans, baggy pants, skirts or dresses. Dress or casual shoes. No sandals or athletic footwear. Jackets or sweaters may be worn but must be free of logos or printed

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