

OLATHE FIRE DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY GUIDE

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Original Policy Issuance Date:	04/10/2003	Date of last review:	07/21/2016
Subject: Ride-along Policy			
Summary: Procedure approving ride-along requests. Conditions for approval.		Approved by: Signed on 08/02/2016 Jeff DeGraffenreid, Fire Chief	
Self-Assessment References: 9C.5			

I. SCOPE / PURPOSE

This procedure is to set standards for civilians who want to observe Olathe Fire Department operations by riding along with on-duty crews. The policy recognizes that certain civilians have a bona fide reason for observing the fire department operations and should be allowed to do so within reasonable limits.

II. PERSONNEL AUTHORIZED TO RIDE ON FIRE DEPARTMENT APPARATUS

The following persons may be authorized to ride on fire department apparatus:

- Career or volunteer personnel from other fire departments who want to observe Olathe Fire Department operations.
- Students who are enrolled in a fire science curriculum, fire suppression, or EMS training.
- Participants in the Olathe Fire Department Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Others that are granted special permission by a Chief Officer.

III. AGE RESTRICTION

Other than Olathe Fire Explorers, all ride along participants must be at least 18 years of age unless special approval is given by the Fire Chief or his designate.

IV. ROLE / RESPONSIBILITY

Requests for authorizing a ride-along shall be submitted on the fire department ride-along request form to the Battalion Chief of Training for approval. Once approved notification will be made by the Training Division to the requester, the officer of the apparatus assigned, and the shift Battalion Chiefs by email. The ride will then be placed on the Activity Calendar. In his absence, the on-duty Battalion Chief or another Chief Officer may approve the request and forward a copy to the Battalion Chief of Training. A copy of the approved request shall be kept on file in the fire administration building.

V. CONDITIONS FOR RIDE-ALONG

Anyone who is authorized to ride along must meet the following conditions:

- The person must sign the ride-along release form.
- The person shall be restricted to ride on an apparatus that is under the direct supervision of a Company or Chief Officer. Any ride-along under 18 years of age must have parental release to ride.
- The person must be physically capable of mounting and dismounting apparatus without delay and without assistance as to not interfere with the timely response and/or movement of the fire unit or fire company.
- Proper attire is required. Dark dress or uniform pants, solid color shirt, and black or brown leather footwear are appropriate. Blue jeans, tennis shoes, or sloppy appearance will not be allowed. Because the ride-along is accompanying fire department personnel, they are expected to wear modest clothing that is maintained to the same standards as the fire department personnel. Any Chief Officer or Company Officer shall not authorize a civilian to ride along if he determines that their clothing does not meet this policy.
- The person must remain outside of the emergency scene limits that are established by the incident commander or the safety officer.
- The person shall not perform any tasks unless specifically authorized by the IC. The IC shall not authorize a ride-along to take any action that would place them within the perimeter of the emergency scene, a hazardous area or that would require personal protective gear.
- The general ride-along period is from 0800 to 1700. A Chief Officer or Company Officer may reduce this time if necessary.
- The ride-along shall wear the “observer” vest at any time that they are on an emergency scene or at any other time as directed by the Company Officer or the Battalion Chief.
- An individual is limited to three ride-alongs each calendar year.

Note: All forms are located on the Network in the [OFD Forms folder](#).