



Ride-Along Program

Rules of Conduct

The Ride-Along program is offered as a community engagement activity for the purpose of giving Williamsburg citizens an opportunity to interact with the Police Department's officers and observe those officers engaged in public and community safety efforts. While the Department is pleased to offer this opportunity, please be aware that the primary responsibility of officers participating in this program is ensuring the safety of our community, citizens and visitors. To that end, while ride-along activities are good opportunity for such community engagement, these activities are subordinate to the primary mission of the Department and its personnel while on duty.

To that end, the following rules of conduct will be observed:

1. You will be assigned to ride with a police officer of this Department. Requests for assignment with a specific officer will be at the discretion of the on-duty supervisor. You must have your approved ride-along application with you at the time you ride with the officer, as well as the required ID.
2. The police officer with whom you ride are encouraged discuss duties and responsibilities insofar as time permits. In the event of an emergency you must immediately and without question comply with any order or directions given to you by the officer or any other member of the Department.
3. You are not to leave the patrol car at the scene of any police activity without first obtaining permission from the officer.
4. The duration of the ride is at the discretion of the officer. Any officer having difficulty with a ride along participant will immediately notify a supervisor. The supervisor will decide if the ride along participant can be assigned to another officer to complete the ride along or if the ride along should be terminated.

5. You may NOT use cameras or tape recorders.
6. You will be required to present a neat and clean appearance and wear appropriate business-like attire. Casual clothing such as jeans, shorts, T-shirts, and sneakers are not acceptable.
7. Participants in the Ride-Along Program will not enter any residence or structure during the execution of a search or arrest warrant or any forced entry into a structure. The ride along participant will remain in the police vehicle during any such entry. This does not prohibit the participant from accompanying the officer on calls when the officer is invited into a residence. Probation Officers and Commonwealth Attorneys may enter with the police in such instances if their presence is to aid in the execution of the warrant or search.
8. Officers will use discretion, while in the company of a ride along participant, when responding to a call for service involving the presence of violence, to ensure the safety thus not placing the ride along participant in a situation which may compromise the participant and/or officer's safety. If officers must engage in such activities, they will leave the ride along participant at a safe location.
9. Ride along participants will not interfere with investigations in any way by conversing with victims, suspects, or witnesses, handling evidence or equipment, or participating in any enforcement activity unless directed to do so by the officer per section §18.2-463 Code of Virginia, Refusal to Aid Officer in the Execution of his Office.
10. The ride along will not reveal to anyone any information that is heard or observed while riding in a police vehicle or in the presence of police officers.
11. Any law enforcement personnel approved as a ride along participant will be treated as a civilian, and all procedures governing the program will apply.
12. No ride along participant will be allowed to carry any weapons of any kind during the ride-along. The exception to this limitation is that a certified law enforcement officer or Virginia Probation and Parole Officer may carry a weapon while in the performance of their official duties.