

# THURMONT POLICE DEPARTMENT

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|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>GENERAL ORDER</b>                                 | Date Issued: October 8, 2015 | Effective Date: October 8, 2015 | Order No: Chapter 30.0 |
| Authority: Chief of Police<br><i>Gregory L. Eyer</i> |                              | Manual                          |                        |
| Subject: <b>RIDE-A-LONG PROGRAM</b>                  |                              | Replaces Page No:               |                        |
| CALEA Standard: Chapter 45                           | Distribution: <b>ALL</b>     | Amends: Previous Order          | Number Of Pages: 7     |
| Related Documents:                                   |                              | Rescinds:                       |                        |

## I. PURPOSE:

To describe the Department’s Ride-A-Long Program and the guidelines both officers and citizens must adhere to while participating in the program.

## II. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Thurmont Police Department to promote trust and improve communications between the police and community by educating the public about its duties and responsibilities by use of the ride-a-long program. Officers will participate in the program with the intent to foster positive relationships and to fulfill the mission of the Department.

## III. DEFINITIONS:

N/A

## IV. PROCEDURES:

### A. Categories of Participants:

1. Members of the general public. (Participants must be 18 years of age or older. Age requirement may be waived by the Chief of Police upon special request.)
2. Family members of departmental employees.
3. Visiting law enforcement personnel.

4. Police volunteers such as Departmental Chaplains, Auxiliary members, Explorers, Student Interns. (Age requirement may be waived for Explorers and Student Interns by the Chief of Police).
5. Non-sworn members of the Department.
6. Members of the news media and officials of the Town Government.

B. Administrative Procedures:

1. Any persons interested in participating in the program must complete a Ride-A-Long application before taking part in the program. Whenever possible, this should be done at least two weeks in advance.
2. The Department reserves the right to limit participation in the program if it is being abused by anyone or to refuse permission to anyone to participate in the program.
3. A ride-a-long participant is limited to two (2) tours of duties per person within a calendar year, unless otherwise authorized by the Deputy Chief of Police.
4. All completed applications for this program will be forwarded to the Patrol Supervisor who will:
  - a. Check the Ride-A-Long Book to ascertain if the person has ridden before. If the applicant has ridden before, the Supervisor will check Section I of the application to verify that the date(s) are written on the form.
  - b. Log the Ride-A-Long application into the Ride-A-Long Log book and indicate the log number on the top of the Ride-A-Long application.
  - c. If an applicant is eligible to Ride-A-Long, the Supervisor will run a criminal wanted check through MILES/NCIC, and check the applicant in ILEADS records. Any criminal involvement determined by these checks will prohibit the applicant from participating.

- d. If approved, the applicant will be assigned to an officer by the Supervisor to participant on an assigned date for a maximum of five (5) hours.
- e. The Supervisor will then notify the ride-a-long applicant that his/her application is approved. The supervisor will also inform the applicant whom he/she will be riding with and confirm the date and time of the Ride-A-Long. This will be noted in Section II of the application.
- f. The Supervisor will forward all approved ride-a-long applications to the assigned officer.
- g. Upon completion of the ride-a-long, the assigned officer will complete Section III of the application, and return the application to the Supervisor.

C. The Supervisor will:

1. Maintain a master ride-a-long application book to ensure an applicant does not participant in a ride-a-long more than twice a year, and to ensure the applicant completed the ride-a-long in good standing.

D. Guidelines for Participants:

The following guidelines have been established in an effort to assure complete understanding as to the purpose, respective role, dangers involved, and personal responsibilities of each ride-a-long participant. The safety of the participant is of utmost importance.

1. Proper “casual” attire is required. All clothing will be clean, in good repair, and worn as designed. No suggestive or inappropriate clothing is allowed.
2. Participants will not appear for their ride-a-long, nor be on a ride-a-long, while intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol, nor with the odor of alcoholic beverages on their breath or about their person. They will not report while under the influence of any medication or other substance that would affect their ability to properly conduct themselves.
3. Other than Maryland and Federal law enforcement officers, no Ride-A-

Long participant is to carry or use any firearm of any kind, even if the participant possesses a concealed weapons permit. If a law enforcement officer is armed while riding with an officer, the officer must display a badge or other identification at all times.

4. A participant is not expected to be, and will not conduct himself as, having any affiliation with the Department.
5. A participant does not have, nor will he/she attempt to exercise, any police authority to affect an arrest.
6. A participant will not conduct himself in any manner that could cause personal danger to him, the officer, or to members of the community.
7. A participant will not be expected, or called upon, to render first aid or medical assistance.
8. If injured during a ride-a-long, the participant will report the injury to the host officer immediately, who will document it in an administrative report (memorandum) that will be submitted, via the chain of command, to the Chief of Police. The Thurmont Police Department will not be responsible for any injuries to participants. Participants will be responsible for their own treatment.
9. A participant may be called upon to testify in a court of law due to their presence at any alleged law or ordinance violation; however, this will be avoided whenever possible.
10. Participants will avoid conversation with any prisoner, suspects, witnesses, or others contacted on police business unless permission has been granted by the host officer.
11. Ride-A-Long participants must use seat belts at all times.

E. Guidelines for Participating Officers:

Officers selected to participate in the ride-a-long program will adhere to the following:

1. Review of the guideline sheet.

2. The basic operation of the vehicle.
3. The proper operation of the police radio should an emergency arise and the ride-a-long participant needs to call for assistance.
4. Advise their supervisor when any circumstances arise which they feel may warrant the removal of the participant from the program. If the participant becomes a hindrance to the officer's performance of duties, he/she will be returned to the supervisor who will decide whether to terminate their participation. All cases of improper behavior or unusual incidents involving a participant will be documented in memo form and reported via the chain of command.
5. Apprise the participant of various dangers involved as specific situations are encountered.
6. Will not permit the participant to enter any premises or leave the departmental vehicle when there is any apparent danger. Should hazardous circumstances arise and the opportunity to leave the participant at a safe location is available, this will be done after notifying Communications of the location of the participant. If the host officer will be busy for an extended period of time, arrangements will be made to have another officer pick up the participant.
7. Ensure that they do not become engaged in a vehicle pursuit whenever a ride-a-long is present in the departmental vehicle.
8. Will not allow the participant to enter any private dwelling without permission of the property owner even if there is no threat of danger.
9. Explain that the participant should hold all questions and comments concerning the manner in which a call or incident is handled until the assignment is completed and the officer and participant are away from the incident.
10. During the ride-a-long, officers will answer any questions truthfully, courteously, and to the best of their ability. However, care should be taken not to violate the privacy rights of any person or to pass on any information confidential to the agency.

F. Exceptions:

1. Non-sworn members of the department, family members, Police Volunteers, (Except Uniformed Auxiliary), and visiting law enforcement personnel are subject to all guidelines specified in the program with the following exceptions:
  - a. They are not required to schedule their ride-a-long two (2) weeks in advance.
  - b. No Criminal history/motor vehicle records checks, etc. is required.
  - c. Police officers certified may carry their authorized weapon if their agency operates under the “Limited Statewide Jurisdiction.”
2. Supervisors may authorize the above stated exceptions for members of the general public if it is determined that participation in the program would benefit both the individual and the department.

G. Sworn Members of the Department:

Sworn members of the Department may ride along; non-compensated, unless an emergency arises requiring their involvement, at which time they will place themselves “on-duty” and subsequently receive payment for services.

H. Student Officers/New Sworn Hires:

Student Officers or new sworn hires waiting to go into the academy will not be allowed to participate in the Ride-A-Long Program until they have graduated from the academy and successfully completed their field training.

***ATTACHMENTS:***

Appendix 30.0A – Guidelines for Ride-A-Long Participants  
Appendix 30.0B – Ride-A-Long Application

*Amended Date: October 8, 2015*

*Review Date:*

*Review Date:*

*Review Date:*

*Rescinds:*

*Order Written By: Chief Gregory L. Eyer*

*Order Edited and Approved by: Chief of Police*

*CALEA Standards Included in this Order  
Chapter 45.0*