

PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT
Volume 1 – Management Procedures
RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

M.P. 107.02	Date Revised: 07/24 Implemented: 12/19
This policy is for internal use only and does not expand an employee’s legal duty or civil liability in any way. This policy should not be construed as creating a duty to act or a higher duty of care with respect to third-party civil claims against employees, the Phoenix Fire Department (PFD) or the City of Phoenix. A violation of this policy, if proven, may form the basis for non-judicial administrative action by the employer in accordance with the laws and rules governing employee discipline.	
Related Policies: Fire Station Use and Function (M.P. 107.01)	

INTRODUCTION:

The Ride-Along Program provides interested citizens an insight into fire department activities and functions. It is a vital part of service excellence, employee retention, and department recruitment. Many, if not most, of the department membership got their start by networking through the Ride-Along Program. The program is open to family members of Fire Department personnel, City officials, members of the press, visiting fire personnel from other cities, strategic partners, qualified Phoenix Fire Cadets, individuals in the process of becoming a Phoenix Fire Firefighter, members of PFD affinity groups, and on a limited basis, the general public. Licensed or certified medical professionals whose sponsoring entity has a written agreement with the PFD will accompany PFD members on a Ride-Along under the terms of the sponsoring entities’ agreement, rather than this policy. If no agreement exists, the requirements of this policy shall be met before any person participates in a Ride-Along with the Phoenix Fire Department.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS:

Due to Operational and Security Requirements Ride-Along participants must meet the following baseline criteria:

1. At least 18 years of age or a qualified member of the Phoenix Fire Department Cadet Program or Firefighter Development Program with parental/guardian permission or a family member of a current or retired PFD employee.
2. Have a completed and current background check, liability waiver and HIPAA Observer Agreement on file with Fire Investigations Unit.
3. If riding as a member of the General Public, observer must not have participated in a department ride along in any one of the preceding six months prior to the scheduled date.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS: BACKGROUND CHECK, HIPAA OBSERVER AGREEMENT AND LIABILITY WIAVER:

It is critical for the safety of PFD Members and for liability purposes that anyone who is not an employee has completed the background check, HIPAA Observer Agreement and liability waiver. Therefore, those wishing to participate in the Ride-Along Program must first be referred

to the background, HIPAA Observer Agreement and liability forms available online at the Phoenix Fire Department's website or in hard copy form at the Administrative Building. It is the responsibility of the Ride-Along participant, not PFD Members, to complete these forms and this process.

1. Participant completes background form, HIPAA Observer Agreement and Liability Waiver
2. Fire Investigations administrative staff completes background check and, if approved, logs the individual as an approved Ride-Along participant.
3. Those approved participants with a pre-existing department relationship may request dates and times through their point of contact or the shift Company Officer.
4. Interested citizens with no prior point of contact with the PFD shall arrange a ride-along thru the PFD Recruitment Officer.
5. Company Officers have the final say on whether a Ride-Along participant will ride on his/her apparatus during the scheduled shift.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Ride-Along participants are required to:

1. Dress in an appropriate and conservative manner for the current activity. When riding on apparatus, this includes long or short sleeved shirts, long pants, and closed toes shoes. Phoenix Fire Cadets should wear the appropriate uniform.
 - a. Any participant failing to meet the appropriate dress and hygiene requirements, or failing to conduct themselves appropriately, will be asked to leave the station by the Company Officer and be excluded from any future ride along programs.
 - b. If the participant is directed to leave the station, the Company Officer will notify Fire Investigations Unit to be noted in the Ride-Along Program database.
2. Wear Fire Department safety vest when observing City operations.
3. Ride-Along participants will be scheduled to ride at a time determined by the Company Officer.
4. Participants must conform to all City policies regarding a smoke and drug free workplace.

Ride-Along participants are restricted from the following:

1. Riding in the front or back of a rescue apparatus, utility vehicle, etc.
2. Entering any Hazard zone that requires different levels of personal protective equipment.
3. Wearing a PFD Uniform other than a safety vest.
4. Participating in patient assessment and/or have any physical contact with the patient

The Company Officer will brief the Ride-Along participant on the Fire Department's expectations for riding period and assure that the participant is aware of all safety requirements (seat belts, vests, etc.). The Company Officer will explain to the participant the appropriate

action to follow should the entire crew be away from the apparatus during a major incident, or an incident in which the participant is prohibited from being in the immediate area (hazardous or potentially hazardous areas).

Due to the sensitive nature of some EMS calls, the participant may be required to stay with the apparatus. It is the Company Officer's responsibility to ensure that the Ride-Along participant has the opportunity to observe the incident where possible but must not allow the participant access to a sensitive EMS situation that could embarrass the participant, the patient or the patient's family.

Under no circumstance will fire personnel (or anyone else) ride in an unsafe position on any apparatus to accommodate a Ride-Along participant.

It is the Company Officer's responsibility to assure that all requirements of this Management Procedure are strictly followed.

Company Officers have the final say on whether a Ride-Along participant will ride on his/her apparatus during the scheduled shift.