

GLASGOW FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

GUIDELINE: RIDE-A-LONG CO-OP POLICY			SECTION: 307
WRITTEN 04/23/2014	REVIEWED	REVISED 08/25/2021	Page 123

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the department's mandates with respect to the citizen ride-along, and CO-OP program.

POLICY

In an effort to enhance the mutual understanding and respect between firefighters and the community we serve, this department has established a citizen ride-along program. This program will provide participants with a greater understanding of the fire department. At the same time, through interaction between our personnel and members of the community, lines of communication will be established.

PROCEDURE

Participation is open to those persons who are at least 21 years of age for the ride-along and, if under 18 for the CO-OP program must have a signature of the parent or guardian and have an affiliation with a local school system and fill out a Glasgow Fire Department ride along application form or CO-OP program application and are:

1. Student doctors, nurses, EMTs, and paramedics, firefighters who need ride-along credit as part of their course of study.
2. Community members who are interested in broadening their knowledge of the fire and emergency services within the City/Town. This would include members of civic organizations, college students who are interested in the field, and any other person authorized by the Fire Chief (or person designated by the Fire Chief)
3. Media representatives who wish to conduct a ride-along for purposes of developing a news story or other documentary. This category includes the print and electronic media. Media representatives must complete all documents required of any other participant. In addition, members of the media must have express written authorization from the Fire Chief before recording, by any means (audio, video, film, and photo), any portion of the ride-along.
4. For those that are doing the CO-OP program it will be an opportunity to observe and assist in tasks and training as it relates to the Glasgow Fire Department.
5. There can only be one student doing a CO-OP at any given time.
6. The member will receive a CO-OP selection rules and agree to abide such rules and sign and date and return the Chief's office before a date for the CO-OP is set up.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Applications for a ride-along or CO-OP will be available at Glasgow Fire Department Station #1. Personnel assigned to Glasgow Fire Department Station #1 should advise anyone who receives a ride-along or CO-OP application that they must return the application to the department once it is completed.

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Applicants must provide a photo-identification for verification when they return their completed application.

2. Completed applications shall be forwarded to the Fire Chief for review.
3. Once approved, the applicant shall be notified (phone, mail, or email option) and assigned a date for the ride-along.

REPORTING FOR RIDE-ALONG OR CO-OP

1. The ride-along and CO-OP program shall be scheduled between the hours of 0800-1700 hours, unless otherwise approved by the Fire Chief or his/her designee.
2. Participants should report to Station #1 15 minutes prior to their scheduled participation.
3. The participant shall be assigned to a supervising chief or company officer.
4. The supervising officer shall meet with the ride-along participant. The ride-along participant and the supervising officer shall review and sign the Fire Department Liability Waiver form. The supervising officer must sign as a witness. Any participant who decides not to sign the liability waiver form shall not be allowed to participate in the program.
5. The supervising officer shall review the rules of the ride-along program, and or the CO-OP program with the participant. In this review, the participant should be reminded that they may be called as a witness in court if they observe an event which becomes subject to court action.
6. The supervising officer shall issue the participant a "ride-along" participant identification tag that the participant shall be required to wear on his or her outermost clothing.

DUTIES OF THE PARTICIPANT

1. Participants shall play no active role at incident scenes. They must only act as an observer. The only exception to this rule and only under the direction of the incident commander a participant may be asked for their assistance if the response is within their scope of practice, and incident command deem it to be of value to have the participant's use of skills...
2. Participants shall not be allowed to operate any equipment unless directed to do so by the Incident Commander in an extreme emergency.
3. Participants must always remain with their assigned fire vehicle until directed otherwise by the supervising officer.
4. Participants must not speak to victims, witnesses, or other persons associated with an incident. Should a witness, victim or other person speak to the participant, the participant should politely direct the person to speak to one of the firefighters present.
5. Participants shall not bring cameras or any recording devices without the express written permission of the Fire Chief.
6. Participants shall not enter any person's home while participating in the ride-along unless the supervising officer has asked and has been granted express

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permission from the homeowner/occupant to allow the ride-along participant entry.

7. Participants shall always follow the instructions of the supervising officer during the ride-along and CO-OP event.
8. Participants should be dressed in comfortable, casual but conservative clothing during the ride-along. (Pants and shirt/jacket for men and pants and blouse/jacket for women). Participants who are inappropriately dressed, as determined by the supervising officer, shall not be allowed to participate in the program on the assigned date.
9. Supervising officers and the participant have an obligation to the welfare and safety of the ride-along or CO-OP participant.
10. Supervising officers may allow the participant to leave the apparatus in order to better observe the incident activity. However, a participant shall not be allowed to enter a hazardous area. Supervising officers shall maintain close supervision of the participant and not allow the participant to involve him or herself in the incident scene activity.