

WOLFEBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT

SOP 4.12

Date Issued: 12/27/2019

Review: 03/05/2021

[Note: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Wolfeboro Police Department and, as provided by RSA 516:36, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.]

By Order of:
Dean J. Rondeau, Chief of Police

CIVILIAN PASSENGERS IN POLICE VEHICLES

Policy The Wolfeboro Police Department shall give Supervisors discretionary authority to allow civilians to ride as observers in police vehicles and to allow officers under certain situations to give courtesy rides to civilians.

Purpose To provide citizens with an opportunity to experience the Wolfeboro Police Department's operations and gain a better understanding of the law enforcement profession. The purpose of this directive is to cover the following:

- Participants Requests
- Officer's Responsibility

Participants Shall meet one of the following criteria:

Student in an accredited law enforcement program or related field.

Law enforcement personnel from another department.

Other persons as determined by the Chief that would be of interest to the department.

Individuals do not have an unqualified right or privilege to participate as a civilian observer. The Supervisor has discretionary authority to approve or deny each request based on the needs of the department and the desire of the applicant.

Minors (under 18 years old), mentally incompetent persons, convicted felons, persons with medical conditions that could create hazards.

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Action

The Supervisor shall select Patrol Officers to escort Civilian observers. It is understood that a certain degree of danger is inherent with law enforcement duties, but the escorting Officer shall show due regard in the performance of those duties.

Supervisors shall maintain a supply of civilian observer identification cards. Civilian observers must wear the identification card on the upper left side of their outer garment. The escorting officer shall return the card to their Supervisor at the end of the observation ride.

If a civilian observer interferes with police operations, the escorting Officer shall notify their Supervisor and return the civilian observer to the place of departure. A written report shall be completed, and the Supervisor shall conduct an investigation. The civilian observer's privileges may be suspended pending a review by the approving authority.

Members of the news media must submit their applications to the Chief of Police for approval. They shall wear their media identification card and comply with all other provisions of this written directive.

Request

All requests by non-law enforcement personnel shall be in writing and submitted at least 48 hours prior to the date requested.

- Addressed to the Chief.
- Reason for the request.
- Background information on the subject making the request

Applicants must have the following forms filled out:

- Application & authorization for the Ride Along Program.
- Adult or Juvenile Waiver.

Officers may recommend a person; guest to participate in the program.

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Responsibilities Supervisors may approve applications for civilian observers, except for news media representative, who must submit their applications to the Chief of Police for Approval.

Supervisors shall ensure that officers and civilian observers comply with this directive.

Escorting Police Officers shall be responsible for the general safety of the observer, and that they follow reasonable orders designed to keep them safe and prevent interference with police operations.

Civilian observers shall be responsible for complying with this procedure and following appropriate directions of the escorting Police Officer.

Operators of vehicles with riders shall:

- Allow only authorized participants that have the signed documents.
- Limit participants to a maximum of 4-6 hours.
- Not participate in any pursuits or take an emergency run with a rider aboard. (rider may be dropped off in an emergency)
- Operate during the tour of duty with the utmost caution.

Courtesy Rides

Determining the Need for a Courtesy Ride.

Courtesy rides are appropriate when a citizen is a victim of a crime or involved in a motor vehicle accident and has no reasonable transportation available.

Courtesy rides may be appropriate when a citizen is found stranded without money for transportation and no other reasonable transportation is available.

Generally courtesy rides shall be limited to the officer's sectors if assigned. Travel outside the zone is not desirable. Travel outside the Town is not authorized, except to meet an officer from another jurisdiction who shall continue the courtesy ride.

Officers will give Wolfeboro Central Dispatch the name, date of birth, sex and mileage before transporting any individual. The officer will give the mileage to Wolfeboro Central Dispatch once arrived at his/her destination.