

Ride-Along Program

364.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Ride-Along Program provides an opportunity for citizens to experience fire service functions first hand. This policy provides the requirements, approval process and hours of operation for the Ride-Along Program.

364.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the French Camp McKinley Rural Fire Protection District to provide an opportunity for citizens to experience fire service functions when specific criteria are met.

364.3 PROCEDURE TO REQUEST A RIDE-ALONG

Generally, ride-along requests will be reviewed and scheduled by the Fire Chief or authorized designee.

The Fire Chief or the authorized designee will schedule a date, based on availability, generally at least one week after the date of application. If approved, a copy will be forwarded to the respective Company Officer as soon as possible for his/her scheduling considerations.

If the ride-along is denied, a representative of the District will contact the applicant and advise him/her of the denial.

Once approved, civilian ride-alongs will be allowed to ride no more than once every six months. An exception may be made for the following: students, Explorers, chaplains, Reserves, applicants, and others with approval of the Fire Chief or Other Designee.

An effort will be made to ensure that no more than one citizen will participate in a ride-along during any given time period. Normally, no more than one ride-along will be allowed in the fire apparatus at a given time.

364.3.1 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Prior to participating in a ride-along, every participant who may come into contact with private health-related information will be required to complete HIPAA training and sign a non-disclosure agreement to keep all confidential information learned during the ride-along confidential.

Participants must be at least 18 years old. Prior to participating in a ride-along, every person must acknowledge the risks and sign a written waiver of claims and release of liability.

The participant must be in good health and must not be suffering from any illness or injury, including cold, flu or respiratory infection on the day of the ride along.

364.3.2 ELIGIBILITY

The French Camp McKinley Rural Fire Protection District ride-along program is offered to residents, students and those employed within the District. Every attempt will be made to accommodate interested persons; however, any applicant may be disqualified without cause.

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The following factors may be considered in disqualifying an applicant and are not limited to:

- Being under 18 years of age.
- Prior criminal history.
- Pending criminal action.
- Pending lawsuit against the District.
- Denial by any supervisor.
- Poor health or other condition that cannot be reasonably accommodated.

364.3.3 AVAILABILITY

The ride-along program is available on most days of the week, with certain exceptions. The ride-along times are established by the Fire Chief or Other Designee. Exceptions to this schedule may be made as approved by the Fire Chief, Fire Marshal or Other Designee.

364.3.4 SUITABLE ATTIRE

Any person approved to ride along is required to be suitably dressed in collared shirt, blouse or jacket, slacks and shoes. Sandals, T-shirts, tank tops, shorts and ripped or torn blue jeans are not permitted. Hats and ball caps will not be worn in the fire apparatus. The Duty Chief, Fire Chief, Company Officer or other designee may refuse a ride-along to anyone not properly dressed.

364.4 FIREFIGHTER RIDE-ALONGS

Any other fire service agency will not be permitted to ride-along with on-duty firefighters without the express consent of the Fire Chief or the authorized designee. In the event that such a ride-along is permitted, the other agency Firefighter shall not participate in any fire service activity except as emergency circumstances may require.

364.5 COMPANY OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Company Officer shall advise the on-duty Duty Officer that a ride-along is present in the fire apparatus before going into service. Company Officers shall consider the safety of the ride-along at all times. Company Officers should use discretion when encountering a potentially dangerous situation, and if feasible, require the participant to remain in the fire apparatus.

364.6 CONTROL OF RIDE-ALONG

The Company Officer shall maintain control over the ride-along at all times and instruct him/her in the conditions that necessarily limit their participation. These instructions should include:

- (a) The ride-along will follow the lawful directions of any district member.
- (b) The ride-along will not become involved in any investigation, discussions with victims or handling any fire equipment.

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- (c) Either the ride-along or the Company Officer may terminate the ride at any time. Reasonable effort will be made to return the observer to his/her home or to the fire station if the ride is terminated.
- (d) Company Officers will not allow ride-alongs to be present in any residence or situation that would jeopardize their safety or cause undue stress or embarrassment to a victim or any other citizen.
- (e) Under no circumstance shall a civilian ride-along be permitted to enter a private residence with the fire crew without the express consent of the resident or other authorized person.