

**COLUMBIA HEIGHTS POLICE DEPARTMENT
CIVILIAN RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM
INSTRUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW**

RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

To promote trust between the police and the community, the Columbia Heights Police Department encourages open and candid police operations. Citizens of the community are therefore encouraged to ride with officers during a four-hour tour of duty.

The ride-along program is one of the most effective programs the police department uses to help citizens become aware of police roles and functions.

If you are interested in participating in the ride-along program, please read the following instructions and overview.

INSTRUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW

Dear Citizen:

As a courtesy to the citizens of the community, the Columbia Heights Police Department has established a policy of allowing a limited number of persons to observe patrol operations of the police department.

We are pleased to be able to extend this courtesy to you. Please keep in mind that while participating as an observer, you will be under the direct control of your host officer at all times.

Due to our concerns for your safety, the safety of our officers, and to assure that we can continue to deliver effective service to all of our citizens, we must place certain restrictions on this privilege.

These restrictions are as follows:

- With a few exceptions, you must be eighteen (18) years of age or older to participate in the program.
- Prior to your ride, you will be required to sign a waiver of liability form. The form is intended to release the City of Columbia Heights, the Columbia Heights Police Department, and any individual officer from civil liability for any and all injuries suffered by you as a result of your association with the department as an observer. In the case of persons between the ages of 16-18 years, this waiver must be signed by both the individual wishing to ride and their parent or legal guardian.
- The police department requires that you be physically able to perform the observation function without assistance from the host officer.
- You will be required to maintain a neat, clean, and businesslike appearance. Please keep in mind that your appearance while in the company of our officers will be a reflection upon the police department. If a question arises about the suitability of your appearance, the supervisor will make a final decision about your continuation in the program. **THIS DECISION WILL BE FINAL.**

- Under no circumstances may you be armed with a weapon.
- The United States Supreme Court has ruled that under most circumstances civilian observers may not accompany police officers into private residences or businesses without the permission of the occupant(s). When circumstances permit, your host officer will introduce you to the occupants and ask for permission; however, you may not enter the premises until it is granted. When it is not, you will be asked to remain in the patrol car or at a safe location.
- You may accompany the officer during prisoner transport and booking process if in the officer's opinion it would not constitute a hazard to any of the persons involved or interfere with an investigation.
- You shall not participate in any police activity or converse with any prisoner, suspect, witness, or any other person contacted on police business unless your host officer has granted permission.
- You shall not inquire as to why an officer handled a complaint as he/she did until completion of the call.
- You shall not make any audio or video recordings during your tour.

Now that we have discussed the restrictions placed upon the riders, we would like to familiarize you with certain procedures, which may help keep you safe and may assist the officer with whom you are riding.

- Become familiar with the operation of the radio linking you with dispatch—IT IS YOUR LIFELINE! Know your officer's unit designation number (i.e., 1H11)—or at the very least—his name. In case the officer is incapacitated, you need to know how to use the radio to call for help.
- Know where you are by street name and approximate hundred block. This could be crucial should you need to call for help. Be aware of the street signs as you turn from one street to another and watch for landmarks, such as major businesses, which will pinpoint your location.
- Be self-sufficient. Do not become a liability to the officer with whom you are riding. Keep in mind that they have important duties and should not have to be constantly concerned with your welfare.
- Establish a rapport with your host officer. Make sure that you both understand what is and what is not expected of you. Know ahead of time if you are expected to stay in the car on particular calls or incidents.
- Think ahead. Your host officer might like you to jot down the license number, time, and other pertinent details while he/she is making the initial contact on traffic stops. Double check the license number for accuracy. This small contribution might help all concerned if something unexpected happens.
- Enjoy yourself. We hope this will be a learning experience for you and give you an insight into the duties of police officers.

We wish to thank you for giving us the opportunity to demonstrate the services performed by our police department.

DATA PRACTICES RIGHTS ADVISORY

As an applicant for ride-along with the police department or the City of Columbia Heights, you are being asked to provide information about yourself, which will be used in consideration of your application. The purpose of this request for information is to obtain information about you to permit the police department to complete local and State of Minnesota background check(s), outstanding warrant(s) checks, and when applicable, to ensure that you possess a valid Minnesota driver's license. Applicants under consideration for a ride-along must have no misdemeanor arrests in the past three years; in addition, no felony convictions in the past ten years. You are being requested to sign these documents and complete the information in order to be considered for a ride-along. The Columbia Heights Police Department Policy requires the information contained in the Ride-Along Release and the Non-Disclosure and Indemnity Agreement. If the information is not furnished, processing of your application will not proceed and the ride-along will not be permitted.

The data you are being asked to provide is defined under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Under the Data Practices Act, some of this data is classified public data and the remaining information is classified as private data or confidential. As a result of the classification of this data, the Columbia Heights Police Department will not release to any person other than public officers and agencies who have a need to know such information in order to process and make a decision on the approval of your application. The purpose and intended use of the information provided to the Police Department is to determine whether authorization for your ride-along should be approved.

If a ride-along is granted, the data supplied by the ride-along applicant will become public. Public data is data that is available to any person upon request.

The release of information that you have signed and the data you provide may be conveyed to third parties. To the extent they reveal private information, they will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary to complete the required application processing.

I have read and understand the above:

Signature of Applicant

Date

**CIVILIAN RIDE-ALONG RELEASE, NON-DISCLOSURE
AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

WHEREAS the undersigned has voluntarily elected to ride as a passenger in the police department vehicles of the City of Columbia Heights, Anoka County, Minnesota and to accompany police officers of said city while engaged in the performance of their duties, to study and observe his/her own benefit the functions and operations of the Columbia Heights Police Department and its personnel; and

WHEREAS the undersigned desires to do so at his/her own risk and recognizing the possible and inherent danger to his/her person and property resulting therefrom; and

WHEREAS in connection with this observation of the Police Department, the undersigned may become privy to certain information that should not be disclosed to other individuals and which may include data which is classified as private, confidential, or non-public under State and Federal law; and

WHEREAS the City of Columbia Heights does not wish to be liable for any damages arising from personal injuries and/or property damage sustained;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises and other good and valuable consideration, the undersigned does hereby for himself/herself, his/her wife/husband, heirs, executor or administrator and personal representatives:

- A. Agree to refrain from disclosing to a spouse, parent, friend, or any other individual information of any nature that the undersigned may obtain through his/her observation of the Police Department;
- B. Assume full responsibility for any personal injury or damage to his/her person or property which may occur—directly or indirectly—while in, on, or about such police department vehicle, the police department premises or any part thereof, at the Columbia Heights City Hall, the Columbia Heights City Garage, and all other City-owned property, or while accompanying any police officers of the City of Columbia Heights while in the performance of their duties;
- C. Fully and forever release and discharge the City of Columbia Heights, its agents and employees from any and all claims, demands, damages, rights of action or causes of action, present or future, whether the same be known, anticipated or unanticipated, resulting from or arising out of the undersigned's being in, on, or about such police department vehicle or at any or all of the premises and places aforesaid or while accompanying any police officers of the City of Columbia Heights as aforesaid;
- D. Indemnify and hold harmless the City of Columbia Heights, its agents and employees for any acts or conduct of the undersigned of whatever kind of nature whatsoever while in, on, or about any such police department vehicle or at any or all of the premises and places aforesaid

or while accompanying any such police officer as aforesaid or disclosing at any time or place information learned while observing the operation of the Columbia Heights Police Department;

- E. Agree to defend and to pay any costs or attorney's fees as a result of any action brought by or against the City of Columbia Heights, its agents and employees for any acts or conduct of the undersigned of whatever kind of nature whatsoever while in, on, or about any such police department vehicle, or at any or all of the premises and places aforesaid, or while accompanying any such police officer as aforesaid or disclosing at any time or place information learned while observing the operation of the Columbia Heights Police Department;
- F. State that he/she is as of the date of the execution hereof, the age of eighteen (18) years or older, or that he/she is under eighteen (18) years of age and that his/her parent/guardian has agreed and explained the terms of this agreement to him/her; and
- G. Agree that it is the intent of the undersigned that this Ride-Along Release, Non-Disclosure and Indemnity Agreement be in full force and effect at any time after the execution hereof.

CIVILIAN RIDE-ALONG RELEASE, NON-DISCLOSURE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

FULL NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____
FIRST MIDDLE LAST

ADDRESS _____ RACE _____ SEX _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ OCCUPATION _____

HOME PHONE # _____ WORK PHONE # _____

DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER _____

DATE/TIME REQUESTED FOR RIDE-ALONG _____

I certify that the foregoing information that I have provided is true and correct:

DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____

*******IF UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST COMPLETE BELOW*******

As parent/guardian of _____, I hereby state that I have read this agreement and explained its terms to my child. I hereby accept this agreement on behalf of my child and on my own behalf. I agree that all references to agreements or statements of the volunteer shall be considered to be references to me as well as my child and that for purposes of this agreement, I shall also be considered a volunteer.

DATE _____ PARENT _____

WITNESS _____

*******CHIEF OR HIS/HER DESIGNEE COMPLETES*******

Permission is hereby granted to the person named herein, and whose signature is affixed above, to be a passenger in a Columbia Heights Police Department vehicle as follows:

Date/Time ride-along begins: _____ @ _____ hours

Date/Time ride-along ends : _____ @ _____ hours

Officer Assigned _____

_____ Open-ended ride-along approval. To be renewed annually.

Approved by _____ Date: _____ Signature _____

*******OFFICER COMPLETES*******

Actual time ride-along begins _____ Actual time ride-along ended _____