

## Interns, Volunteers and Ride Alongs

### 339.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Urbana Police Department believes in supporting continuing education, particularly in the area of criminal justice. To that end, the Department participates in various intern programs where college or high school students work at the Police Department in a "real world" learning mode.

In addition, at times it may be beneficial for the Urbana Police Department to allow authorized persons to ride along with patrol officers during regular patrols. Allowing patrol observers provides members of the media and interested citizens an opportunity to learn about their police department and the job of a police officer. We believe this helps foster a greater understanding between officers and the community.

#### 339.1.1 INTERN

The Police Department participates in intern programs with various universities in Illinois as well as Parkland College and the Urbana High School. These interns spend a specific amount of time at the Department in various sections and units, working and learning about the police function.

### 339.2 INTERN COORDINATOR

There shall be an Intern Coordinator appointed to schedule, monitor, liaison with their school and assist the interns as they go through their programs at the Department.

The Intern Coordinator shall review the background checks on all interns. The background check may include a local records check and an automated check through LEADS. Those persons with notable criminal records or other unacceptable behavior patterns shall not be allowed to participate in the intern program. The final decision on whether a person will be accepted into the intern program rests with the Chief of Police or his designee.

#### 339.2.1 VOLUNTEERS

A volunteer is a person who performs a service for the department without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered. There are times that volunteers are utilized by the department for various tasks. The volunteers must also have a background check, which will be reviewed by the Chief of Police or his designee for approval.

#### 339.2.2 RIDE ALONGS

As a matter of policy, only those persons having a bona fide area of interest in the criminal justice system shall be allowed to ride along. This includes other government employees, students, Citizen Police Academy participants, accredited members of the media, and others approved by the Chief of Police or his designee. Participation in this program is limited to two "ride-alongs" per calendar year unless (a) the individual is participating in an authorized internship program or (b) approval has been granted by a Division Commander.

Family members or significant others of Urbana officers may participate in the ride along program. However, those family members or significant others may not ride with their related officer.

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The dress should be appropriate; no t-shirts, shorts or open-toed shoes. All Ride Alongs shall wear a ballistic vest when with a sworn officer. Ride Alongs should present themselves in a clean, neat, and respectful manner. Officers, in consultation with their supervisors, may end a ride-along if a ride along fails to follow reasonable guidelines requested by the officers. These include, but need not be limited to, improperly injecting themselves into situations, doing unsafe or irrational acts, or being disorderly or otherwise distracting officers from duties. Unless specifically approved, the following will generally not be eligible for the Ride Along Program: citizens under 18 years of age, individuals whose background checks reveal significant or felonious criminal history, and those with currently pending court cases.

Requests for a ride along should be made at least 72 hours in advance, unless approved by the Intern Coordinator or the Chief of Police or his designee. The Intern Coordinator shall schedule and manage all ride alongs to avoid conflicts with scheduling.

#### 339.2.3 WAIVER REQUIREMENT

All ride alongs and interns who are not Urbana Police Department employees will be required to sign a waiver of liability - an Assumption of Risks form - prior to the initial observation or "ride-along". The Services Division will maintain the observer's information and the waiver form. An on-duty Shift Supervisor must ensure that the waiver is properly completed.

#### 339.2.4 SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

Interns, volunteers and ride alongs shall not perform the following functions at the Police Department:

- Serve in any enforcement role
- Carry or use firearms or any weapons
- Drive any department vehicle
- Be assigned a duty post of any type without direct supervision
- Write official police reports
- Make data entry into any department computer system

Officers who have been assigned patrol observers must maintain an interest in their safety. Officers with observers should start the ride with a discussion of safety issues, instructions on the radio system and the rules which affect them. Observers are not to take police action or carry weapons of any kind. Officers are not to give weapons to an observer unless someone's life is in danger. This does not preclude a sworn officer from another department from carrying a weapon as provided by Illinois and federal statutes.

#### 339.2.5 TRAINING

All Urbana Police Department employees will treat interns, volunteers and ride alongs with respect. They will not be made fun of or belittled in any way by actions or words. Conversely if an intern,

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volunteer or ride along acts in any manner that is disrespectful or contrary to the expectations of this agency, they will be removed from their position.

#### **339.3 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Interns, volunteers and ride alongs may have access to confidential information such as criminal histories or investigative files. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor or departmental policy, all information shall be considered confidential and will not be released under any circumstances. Unauthorized disclosure of any confidential information, verbally, in writing or by any other means, by the intern, volunteer or ride along will be grounds for immediate dismissal and possible criminal prosecution.

#### **339.4 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES/TERMINATION**

An intern, volunteer or ride along may be dismissed at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his designee.