

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
POLICY MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Ride-Alongs

NO: Policy #120.10

DATE: 5/14/2018

AMENDED:

BY: Paul B. Hammick
Chief of Police

APPROVED: 6/11/18 Town Council

DISTRIBUTION: All Departments/Town Council

I. PURPOSE

- A. The Town of Bloomfield recognizes the educational benefit in allowing citizens to ride along as observers with Town of Bloomfield employees. It shall be the policy of the Town of Bloomfield to allow interested and eligible citizens the opportunity to accompany authorized personnel during their designated work hours for legitimate civic or educational purposes.
- B. The Ride-Along program provides the opportunity to explain the nuances of different Town of Bloomfield Departments that Town of Bloomfield employees accept as standard procedure. Citizens who often have limited knowledge, or base their perception of public service or public employment on popular misconceptions, are able to observe day-to-day operations from an employee's perspective.
- C. Participants can gain a deeper appreciation for public service and this in turn contributes to the Town of Bloomfield's efforts to be more transparent and inclusive.
- D. The Citizen Observer/Ride-Along Program can prove invaluable in demonstrating the many responsibilities and actions of Town employees, and can illustrate how public tax dollars are allocated.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. No one shall be permitted to take part in the Ride-Along Program without the prior knowledge and express, written consent of the applicable Department Head.

III. FORMS

See attached participation release/Assumption of Risk

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Eligibility Requirements

1. Persons wishing to participate in the Ride-Along Program must submit a written request and a signed Release & Indemnity Waiver to the applicable department head.
2. Participants must be 18 years of age; exceptions to this Policy include:
 - a. Departments that have a Ride-along policy with specific and limited exceptions, approved by the Town Manager.
 - b. The children of current Town of Bloomfield employees who are 14 years of age or older.

B. Program Restrictions

1. Department heads will cancel any ride-along if inclement weather makes conditions unsafe or if any other unsafe conditions exist.
2. Ride-along sessions shall last for a period not to exceed four (4) hours.
3. No more than two (2) ride-along sessions shall be scheduled during any work-day or shift.
4. All applicants shall read and agree to a rules of conduct and liability waiver form.
5. Participants in the Ride-Along Program shall only be allowed to ride-along once per twelve (12) month period, unless permitted by the Department Head or Town Manager.
6. If it is in the best interest of the public or the Town of Bloomfield, department supervisors shall have the discretion of refusing any person to participate in a ride-along or terminate a ride-along in progress. The supervising official refusing or terminating a ride-along shall submit a memo to the department head summarizing the reasons for such refusal/termination.
7. Participants shall not carry or bear weapons of any kind.
8. Department heads may impose further reasonable restrictions on participants.
9. Participants are observers to departmental operations. They shall not become involved in any operations.
10. Participants shall not use department equipment, except in the event of extreme emergencies, when authorized to do so.
11. Participants shall wear seat belts at all times.
12. Participants may not operate vehicle at any time.
13. Tobacco use of any kind is prohibited.
14. Alcohol use or use of medication that may impair sound judgement is prohibited.
15. Participants may take notes during the ride-along; however they shall not disclose the names of persons they observe or come into contact with unless the participant is a member of the media and receives consent from the individual(s).
16. Participants may not carry or use audio or video recording devices unless they have prior written authorization from the department head authorizing the ride-along. Cell phone may be carried but not used without permission.
17. Ride-alongs may not be used for profit purposes.

18. Ride along participants may not participate, directly, or indirectly, in situations that may jeopardize the safety of the participant, the employee, other staff or the public.

C. Ineligible Participants

1. Persons denied employment by the Town of Bloomfield
2. Individuals who have been terminated by the Town of Bloomfield or resigned to avoid termination.
3. Individuals who have filed claims or grievances against the Town.
4. Individuals under the influence of alcohol and/or medication that would impair their safety or that of others.



PARTICIPATION RELEASE / ASSUMPTION OF RISK

In consideration of the benefits I may derive by being allowed to observe Town operations by riding in a vehicle operated by Town of Bloomfield employees, I, the undersigned, with full knowledge of the inherent dangers with and an intent to expose myself to said known dangers, do hereby for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive and assume all risks, including but not limited to financial loss, property damage, medical bills, psychological trauma, personal injury, death and any other damages or claims. I do hereby release the Town of Bloomfield, its agents and officials and any other employee or agent from any and all liability whatsoever for any said injuries, accidents and/or damages caused by or incurred as a result of riding in such vehicle and/or being in accompaniment of a Bloomfield employee or other personnel whether said injuries, damages and/or claims occur as the result of negligence or reckless actions of said employee in the use of said vehicle or other equipment of any kind, and whether occurring in the line of duty or outside the line of duty or any other matter.

This waiver and assumption of risks is fully understood by the undersigned and entered into voluntarily. The undersigned agrees that said waiver is binding upon the undersigned and his/her heirs, successors, executors and/or administrators.

I further state that I have read the Town policy, understand it and this waiver, and hereby agree to abide by their contents.

Signature

Print Name

Date

Home Address

Telephone

IF SIGNER IS A MINOR:

Signature of Parent

Date

Subscribed and Sworn to Before Me this _____ Day of _____, 20_____

Signature of Notary

Approved By: _____