

PORT LAVACA POLICE DEPARTMENT
Citizen Observer Instructions and Rules

The Port Lavaca Police Department welcomes you to ride, as an observer, with one of our officers. As a professional law enforcement organization, we constantly strive to improve the level of service to our community. To that end, it is necessary to establish and maintain certain rules which govern the conduct and activities of citizens who ride with our officers to ensure the integrity of our Department is protected. In order for a citizen to ride, as an observer, with the Port Lavaca Police Department, he/she:

1. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
2. Must complete and submit the Rider Information Form and the Release of Claims Form to the Chief of Police, during normal office hours, a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
3. Must be willing to undergo a background check, by the Department, to ensure the rider does not have an unacceptable criminal record and/or outstanding warrants.
 - a. Must never have been convicted of a felony or any criminal offense involving moral turpitude.
4. The approved rider must present their own copy of the written request form and a picture ID to the on duty supervisor that accommodates the rider's request for an observation ride.
5. Observers in the Ride-Along Program are guests of the Police Department and shall conduct themselves in an appropriate responsible manner. Observers will:
 - a. Not use alcoholic beverages immediately prior to or during the watch that they are to ride;
 - b. Not use profane or abusive language or behave in any manner that would provoke or escalate tension;
 - c. Not enter into any investigation or converse with any citizen, witness or prisoner concerning a police incident or investigation;
 - d. Not make known to unauthorized persons the identity of persons arrested, detained, confined in jail or suspected of an offense;
 - e. Not operate or use any police equipment or vehicle or any item in police custody or control except in the case of an extreme emergency when instructed to do so by a police officer;
 - f. Not carry a firearm (unless they are commissioned peace officers) or convey the impression or state to anyone that they are police officers;
 - g. Remain in the police car during traffic stops and disturbance calls of a serious nature and they shall not enter a house, building or other property, public or private from which the public would be excluded because of a police incident or by the owner of the property; and
 - h. Obey with question any instruction in the furtherance of the police mission given by a police officer.
6. Dress and Grooming Standards:
 - a. Observers in the Ride-Along Program must dress and groom themselves in an appropriate and business-like manner. The on duty supervisor or his designee, will be the final judge of whether or not an observer's attire and/or grooming is appropriate for riding in a police car.

- b. Minimum requirements are slacks or dress jeans and a shirt with a collar for males, slacks or dress jeans and a blouse for females. T-shirts and work or unsightly blue jeans are not acceptable attire. For safety reason, no sandals, flip flops, Crocs, or opened toed shoes will be allowed.
 - c. Riders will be clean and neat in appearance, hair will be groomed in such a manner that it can be maintained under all, but the most adverse conditions and does not present a ragged, unkempt, bushy or extreme appearance.
 - d. No observer shall wear, on his/her clothing, anything that advertises any product, business, or organization, or any sign, symbol, or word(s) that are inflammatory in nature.
7. Citizen observers will be allowed to ride for a four (4) hour period, unless circumstances justify otherwise. Additional time must be approved by a supervisor.

On behalf of all the Port Lavaca Police Department and myself, I hope that you find this an educational, but enjoyable experience which serves to provide you with a better understanding of the law enforcement profession.

James Martinez

Chief of Police Port Lavaca

PORT LAVACA POLICE DEPARTMENT

RELEASE OF CLAIMS

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF CALHOUN §

Known all men by these present that I, _____, of Calhoun County, Texas in consideration of being allowed to accompany the Port Lavaca Police on official patrol, do by these presents for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, hereby release and agree not to hold liable, the City of Port Lavaca, its officers, agents and employees from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, costs or damages arising from or resulting from property damage, personal injuries or death sustained by me or my property while accompanying them.

I further agree by these presents for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, to indemnify, hold and save harmless the City of Port Lavaca, its agents, officers and employees, from any liability, action, claim, damage award or judgment incurred or suffered by the City or individuals as a result of any act or omission by me or caused by me while accompanying any employee, agent or officer of the City.

In addition, I make the following representations and acknowledgments upon which I intend the City of Port Lavaca to rely:

1. I understand and agree that while accompanying any officer, agent or employee of the City during his law enforcement rounds, I am to be only an unarmed lay observer and bystander with no active role whatever and that I will have and am give no duties, rights, powers or authority whatever other than those conferred by law upon any other person in like or similar circumstances as may arise from time to time and will under no circumstances interfere with the officers or offer any advice or counsel to any person being questioned, investigated, taken into custody or arrested by any officer;
2. Neither will I be considered an agent, servant or employee of the City of Port Lavaca and thus, I will not be covered by the City for any workers' compensation, death or disability benefits;
3. I realize that I may and will, at unpredictable times, be placed in both foreseeable and unforeseeable positions of considerable danger that could cause injury, severe injury, permanent disability, death, mental anguish, stress disorder, mental disability, permanent mental disability, and agree that neither the City of Port Lavaca nor any of its officer or employees shall be obligated to take any steps or action to protect my person or provide a means of withdrawal or retreat for me, and I hereby release them of any duty to do so

intending hereby to willfully and voluntarily assume all risk inherent in any situation and under any circumstances that may arise incident hereto; and

4. I agree that any information I may gain will be used by me only for my personal educational purposes except where I am summoned as a witness in any administrative or court proceeding.

Witness my hand this the _____ day _____, 20____

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, this the _____ day of _____, 20____, personally appeared before me the said _____ known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me that he freely and voluntarily executed the same for the purpose and consideration therein expressed.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE, this, the _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

Printed name of Notary

PORT LAVACA POLICE DEPARTMENT

RIDE-ALONG APPLICATION

Name (Last)_____ (First)_____ (MI)_____

Address _____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Home Phone_____ Business Phone:_____

Driver's License:_____ Social Security:_____

Law Enforcement Affiliation (if any) _____

Reason for
Request_____

I certify that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief

Reviewed by_____ Rank_____

Time/Date_____

Disposition: Approved ☐ Denied ☐ (check one)

Signature_____

Remarks (Reasons for denial, or Officer and Beat Assignment) _____

PORT LAVACA POLICE DEPARTMENT
RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM EVALUATION

To: Chief James Martinez

From: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Age: _____

Occupation: _____

On (date) _____ I was given the opportunity to ride-along with

Officer _____, of the Patrol Division.

The following is my evaluation of the program:

(Signature)

Please return to:

Chief James Martinez

201 N Colorado

Port Lavaca, TX 77979

PORT LAVACA POLICE DEPARTMENT
OFFICER'S EVALUATION OF RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

To: Administrative Division

From: _____

Evaluation of: _____

On (date) _____, I participated in a Ride-Along Program with the above-named person.

My impressions of this person and his/her conduct during the Ride-Along are as follows:

Officer

Patrol Supervisor

Lieutenant

Chief