



**Policy Title:** Ride-Along/Walk-Along Policy

**Date Reviewed:** October 2017

## 1.0 Rationale

Thames Valley Police (TVP) desires to be an open and trusted organisation enjoying the confidence of partners and wider public alike. In order to demonstrate and communicate the way that we work, we welcome members of our communities who could benefit from experiencing policing, to ride along or walk along with police officers and police community support officers as they do their job.

The Ride-Along/Walk-Along Scheme is designed to provide the opportunity for members of the public, police staff and members of partner organisations who are not police officers to experience operational policing first hand. It provides a positive engagement opportunity that builds trust and confidence with our communities, whilst also supporting current or future recruitment programmes.

We welcome feedback from members of the public on their observations and experience of their Ride- Along / Walk- Along, and this can be provided to the relevant Head of Department or Local Police Area (LPA) Commander. In addition, as a Force participating in the Home Office Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme, we encourage participants to feed any observations of the use of those powers into the Stop and Search Independent Advisory Group (via the Diversity Inspector at Headquarters), or directly to the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner.

## 2.0 Intention

The intention of this policy is to set out an administrative framework that ensures the safety of the Ride-Along/Walk-Along participant, the police officers responsible for them and the reputation of TVP.

This policy is to provide guidance to Heads of Department and LPA Commanders on dealing with members of the public, police staff and members of partner organisations who wish to accompany an officer on a Ride-Along/Walk-Along.

TV crews and the media wishing to take part in the Ride-Along/Walk-Along Scheme are dealt with in a separate policy owned by the Corporate Communications Department as often their requirements go beyond the remit of this policy.

### 3.0 General Principles

The over-riding principle of this policy is to ensure the safety of the public and staff during a Ride -Along / Walk -Along, whilst maintaining an effective policing response.

The Ride Along Risk Assessment ensures that officers who supervise a Ride -Along / Walk- Along are able to provide the best environment that maximises the Ride-Along/Walk- Along experience, whilst minimising risk.

The policy applies equally to members of the public, police staff, and members of partner organisations.

### 4.0 Guidance, Procedures & Tactics

#### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Ride-Along/Walk-Along participants

- Participants in the Ride-Along/Walk-Along Scheme including members of the public, police staff and members of partner organisations must be at least 18 years old and make an application in writing to the relevant Head of Department or LPA Commander. Applicants should be sent an application form (Appendix B) if not submitted with the initial request.
- Vetting checks will be carried out on all applicants except existing Thames Valley Police employees to inform a decision on their suitability and eligibility to participate in a ride- along /walk-along with a view to maintaining the security and integrity of Thames Valley Police systems and information. Approval to attend a Ride- Along/Walk-Along does not infer clearance for any other role in Thames Valley Police.
- If an attachment is approved the candidate will be sent a letter indicating the date, time and location of the allocated shift and the name of the nominated officer supervising, along with an indemnity form (Appendix C), Observer Briefing Sheet (Appendix E) and copy of the ride-along/walk-along policy and risk assessment. **A ride-along/walk-along participant will not be accepted without the necessary permissions.**
- The completed indemnity form must be returned to the LPA / Department one week before the attachment.
- Thames Valley Police Staff are not required to sign the indemnity form but are reminded that during the Ride-Along/Walk-Along they are on duty and are subject to the Code of Ethics and standards and practices of Thames Valley Police at all times.
- The participant should arrive 20 minutes before the start of the shift for a safety briefing and patrol overview, and should bring photographic identification (e.g. passport or driving license).
- It is essential that the participant complies with supervising officer instructions at all times. It may be necessary to withdraw from a situation if the officer believes that the participant's safety is at risk- be that of physical, emotional or psychological harm or injury.

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- It must be acknowledged that the Ride-Along/Walk-Along may need to be cancelled at short notice for operational reasons.

### **Nominated point of contact on LPA / Department**

The following applies to both internal (police staff) and external applications, unless otherwise stated:

- On receipt of an application (Appendix B) from an external applicant, appropriate security checks are to be carried out to assess the suitability of the candidate and the risk of compromising police tactics or sensitive information. These will be fully documented, and if there is any doubt about the applicant, the matter should be referred to the HQ Vetting Unit who will make the final decision as to whether they are suitable. If the decision is that a Ride-Along/Walk-Along would be inappropriate it will be the HQ Vetting Unit who will inform the individual in line with current procedures.
- If the application form (Appendix B) discloses a medical condition which could impact on the safety of the Ride-Along/Walk-Along participant or supervising officer, a further risk assessment will need to be done. It is possible that the participant will still be able to attend with reasonable adjustment which could include additional control measures or restrictions.
- When it has been decided that the applicant is appropriate for a Ride-Along/Walk-Along an appropriate supervising officer should be identified. If the participant wishes to patrol with the Special Constabulary the relevant Special Inspector should identify a supervising officer. When a shift has been organised the participant should be informed in writing, of the date, time and location of the Ride-Along/Walk-Along as well as enclosing the following documents:
  - This Policy
  - The Ride Along Risk Assessment
  - Indemnity Form (Appendix C)
  - Observer briefing sheet Appendix E.
- At the same time inform the participant of the type of clothing that should be worn and recommended things to bring with them e.g. bottle of water/drink and snack. It is recommended that participants arrive 20 minutes before the start of the shift.
- Ensure that a record of the date and details of the Ride-Along/Walk-Along arrangements, together with copies of all relevant forms are kept.
- Ensure that the signed original (rather than a scanned copy) of the Indemnity Form is forwarded to the Insurance Officer, Corporate Finance Dept.

### **Inspector/Sergeant and supervising officer of Ride-Along/Walk-Along (Appendix A)**

The following applies for both internal (police staff) and external participants, unless otherwise stated:

- External participants only: Before the shift commences, a final security check must be completed to confirm suitability of the participant as at the

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date of the ride along. Current police employees are exempt from these checks. If as a result of the check there is any doubt about the suitability of the participant, the matter should be referred to the Duty Inspector to make a decision on whether to continue with the ride along, or (if necessary) postpone and refer the matter to HQ vetting for a final decision.

- When the participant arrives for the shift, check photo identification and go through the risk assessment and safe working procedure at Appendix D.
- Retain the signed copy of the indemnity form (Appendix C), and pass to the nominated point of contact (as above) for retention
- Retain the signed copy of the safe working procedure (Appendix D), and pass to the nominated point of contact (as above) for retention (Appendix D)
- Provide the participant with a high visibility 'Observer/Civilian Attachment' jacket.
- Inform Control Room of the call sign of the officer/s that the participant will be with and ensure that they are aware that the control room must be updated each time there is a change
- During the team briefing session explain the safe working procedure to the team and the responsibility of the accompanying officer to protect the participant in any situations which may give cause for safety concerns
  - The participant is inexperienced in policing and there is a duty of care to prevent them from coming to harm.
  - Harm includes physical, psychological and emotional harm or injury
  - The participant will not have experienced immediate response driving and speed and actions should be moderated accordingly.
  - Control measures from the 'patrol' and 'mobile patrol' risk assessments are to be complied with.
  - The participant is to remain in the vehicle, until it is safe for them to alight.
  - At road incidents, the participant shall remain in the vehicle, until the scene has been made safe.
  - As the safety of the participant may be compromised in an emergency or violent situation an important concern must be to protect them and remove them from the situation if appropriate. A dynamic risk assessment should be carried out.
  - Decline deployments which local knowledge or incident type might reasonably suggest could put the participant at risk of harm – be that physical, emotional or psychological.
  - The supervising officer must conduct a dynamic risk assessment of each incident. If the supervising officer is still required to attend the deployment, consideration should be given to leaving the participant at a safe location away from the incident.
  - Ride-Along/Walk-Along participants should not accompany detainees in vehicles. In the first instance officers should ask for additional help with prisoner transport. In the event due to operational reasons Ride-Along/Walk-Along participants can no longer go on patrol arrangements must be made for the participant to return safely.
  - There should be a dynamic risk assessment agreed between the officer and the Ride-Along/Walk-Along participant on what steps to

take should for operational reasons the observation has to end. This includes the observer using alternative means of transport themselves including public transport or waiting to be collected.

## **5.0 Challenges & Representations**

Challenges and representations should be made to:

Head of Neighbourhood Policing & Partnerships  
Thames Valley Police Headquarters  
Kidlington  
Oxfordshire  
OX5 2NX

### **6.1 Communication**

### **6.2 Links to Police National Legal Database Other**

No links to PNLD.

### **6.3 Communications Strategy**

This policy shall be made available on the TVP intranet and the public TVP website. In addition, it will be brought to people's attention through the Manager's Briefing and will be included in an All User E-mail.

## **7.1 Compliance and Certification**

### **7.2 Human Rights Certification**

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the Human Rights Act and the principles underpinning it.

#### **(i) Legal Basis**

There is no specific legal basis for this policy other than those detailed under Health and Safety below. The policy is intended to facilitate people who are not police officers to experience operational policing whilst ensuring their safety, so far as is reasonably practicable

#### **(ii) Human Rights Articles Engaged**

Article 14 – Prohibition of Discrimination

#### **(iii) Prohibition of Discrimination**

Any disability should not automatically prevent an individual from participating on the ride along scheme. However, safety must be the primary consideration. When a disability is known an individual risk

assessment must be completed and documented. If the risks are too great then the ultimate control measure will be the non-participation in the ride along scheme.

### **7.3 Equality Impact Assessment**

The impact assessment has been completed in respect of this policy and has been graded as low.

### **7.4 Management of Police Information (MoPI)**

This policy does not affect any of the key business areas as identified by Management of Police Information (MoPI).

### **7.5 Data Protection**

Personal data processed as a result of this policy will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. It is acknowledged that 'sensitive personal data' may be processed and this data will be protected in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

### **7.6 Freedom of Information Act**

This policy is suitable to be made available to the public.

### **7.7 Protective Markings**

This policy shall be marked as Official.

### **7.8 Health & Safety at Work**

TVP has a duty of care under Sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to those they employ and those not in their employment but who might be affected by their undertakings. A Risk Assessment which identifies the foreseeable significant hazards and their respective control measures has been conducted, and the guidelines which must be followed are attached at Appendix A.

## **8.1 Monitoring and Review**

### **8.2 Links to Force Priorities / Performance Indicators**

This policy will help to contribute to the force aim “working in partnership to make our community safer”.

This policy will help to contribute to the force Strategic Objectives:

No 2 – To increase the visible presence of the police.

No 4 – Improve communication with the public in order to build trust and confidence with our communities

### **8.3 Review Process**

This policy shall be reviewed and revised at least annually. Each review should consider:

- Changes in legislation
- Court rulings – Domestic, European and Human Rights
- Examples of good practice from other Forces or other organisations
- Changes in Home Office Circulars
- Developments with ACPO Policy Unit
- Representations made by individuals and relevant organisations
- Diversity data



## **GUIDELINES FOR RIDE ALONG / WALK ALONG PARTICIPANTS ACCOMPANYING EMPLOYEES ON DUTY**

**ALL** persons undertaking attachments **MUST**, whatever their status:

1. **BE** fully briefed by a competent Officer or police employee as to the risks of the activity.
2. **BE** given a copy of the appropriate risk assessment and have received a copy of the observer briefing sheet appendix E. Both the briefing officer and the participant are to sign appendix D before the Ride-Along/Walk-Along commences.
3. All participants with the exception of Thames Valley Police Staff must **READ** and **SIGN** the indemnity form IND2 at Appendix C
4. **BE** advised as to suitable clothing and be provided with high visibility garments. Garments should be marked "Observer" or "Civilian Attachment" where applicable so that it is quite clear to other members of the public that the person is not a Police Officer. When the person is a member of another emergency service they should wear their own clearly marked high visibility garments. People who arrive without suitable clothing should not, under any circumstances, be allowed to undertake the activity.

In addition please note:-

5. **NO** member of the public should be allowed on routine patrol on the motorway because of the high risk
6. **NO** person under the age of **18** years should accompany a police officer on patrol.

**OUR DUTY OF CARE TO OTHERS SHOULD PREVAIL AT ALL TIMES**



# APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE THAMES VALLEY POLICE RIDE-ALONG SCHEME

## 1. Applicant

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms etc.) .....

Last Name .....

Forenames

Previous Last Name (if applicable)

Date of Birth.....

Place of Birth .....

Nationality

Address

.....

How Long at Current Address

If less than 3 years Previous Address

.....

.....

.....

.....

Tel No. Home .....

Daytime

Email Address.....

## 2. Next of Kin

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms etc.) .....

Last Name .....

Forenames

Address if different from above

.....

## 3. Medical Conditions

Is there any medical condition which you believe could be relevant to your fitness to participate in a Police Ride-Along? **Yes/ No** ..... If yes, please provide details:

.....

.....  
**4. Preferred police station and times**

Police station of choice

.....  
Most suitable days and times

.....  
Are you considering the Special Constabulary and wish to accompany a Special? Y/N

.....  
I certify the above to be true, and enclose a photocopy of photo ID (e.g. passport / driving license)

Signed..... Date.....



## THAMES VALLEY POLICE INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT between the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police ('the Chief Constable') and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley ('the PCC') of the first part and the undersigned of the second part.

In consideration of my use of Thames Valley Police premises, vehicles, river craft, helicopters or other property ('Thames Valley Police Property') and/or in consideration of my being allowed to accompany Thames Valley Police officers or staff on operational and/or non-operational duties on/between

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert applicable dates)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name)

HEREBY AGREE as follows:

1. To indemnify the Chief Constable and/or the PCC and/or their constables, officers, servants and/or agents against any expense, liability, loss, claim, proceedings, damages or costs arising by statute or common law in so far as caused by my wrongful or negligent act or omission or by my failure to comply with any briefing or instructions given to me.
2. To compensate the Chief Constable or the PCC in respect of any loss and/or damage to Thames Valley Police property caused by my wrongful or negligent act or omission or by my failure to comply with any briefing or instructions given to me.
3. This indemnity shall not apply to the extent that any action described in the foregoing paragraphs may arise out of the negligent act or omission of the Chief Constable, of the PCC, or of their officers, agents or servants.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**On behalf of Thames Valley Police:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D**  
**Ride-Along/ Walk-Along Briefing Sheet and**  
**Safe Working Procedure**

**Officer**

- The Ride-Along/Walk-Along observer is inexperienced in policing and you have a duty of care to ensure that the participant is reasonably safe.
- Harm includes physical, emotional or psychological harm or injury.
- The Ride-Along/Walk-Along observer will not have experienced immediate response driving and you should moderate your speed and actions accordingly. You will not undertake any vehicle pursuit.
- You are to ensure that the control measures from the 'patrol' and 'mobile patrol' risk assessments are complied with.
- You are to direct the Ride-Along observer to remain in the vehicle, until you feel that it is safe for the individual to alight.
- At road incidents, the Ride-Along observer shall remain in the vehicle, until the scene has been made safe with cones and signs.
- In an emergency, you are to take responsibility for the Ride-Along observer and if necessary remove them from any situation which may cause them harm.
- The Control Room will be aware of your call sign and should avoid deployment to incidents with significant risks.
- You are to decline deployments which, through local knowledge or incident type, you are aware could put the Ride-Along/Walk-Along observer at risk of harm, be that physical, emotional or psychological.
- The officer responsible for supervising the Ride-Along/Walk-Along observer must conduct a dynamic risk assessment of each incident. If the supervising officer is still required to attend the deployment consideration should be given to leaving the Ride-Along/Walk-Along observer at a safe location away from the incident.
- Ride-Along/Walk-Along participants should not accompany detainees in vehicles. In the first instance officers should ask for additional help with prisoner transport. In the event due to operational reasons Ride-Along/Walk-Along participants can no longer go on patrol arrangements must be made for the participant to return safely.
- As the officer responsible for supervising the Ride-Along/Walk-Along observer I am responsible for de-briefing the participant at the end of the shift to ensure their health and welfare. Any issues identified will be escalated to an appropriate supervisor.

**Ride-along participant**

- You are to comply strictly with instructions given by the officer.
- You are to remain in the vehicle at all times, until the officer directs otherwise
- You are to wear high visibility jacket marked "Observer"
- In an emergency you may be removed from the situation for your own safety, please comply with any instruction given to you.
- You are fully fit and do not require an individual risk assessment.
- You must not further disclose or discuss any personal or operationally sensitive

OFFICIAL

information that may be overheard or seen during the Ride-Along/Walk-Along.

Disclosure of such information could amount to a breach of the Data Protection Act.

- If you witness an incident you may be asked to provide a statement if necessary.
  
- Please be aware that there are risks and you may see sights that you would not normally expect to encounter such as aggressive behaviour by members of the public or the scene of a serious accident. If you have doubts concerning the effect that attending any incident may have on you, or any other concerns about patrolling with a police officer, you should consider whether to go ahead.
- You have personal responsibility to inform an officer if you have specific concerns or reservations about attending an incident type.
- You must inform an officer immediately if at any time during your ride along you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- You must not audio record, film or take part photographs during the observation. If you wish to take a photograph this can only be done with the permission of the officer.
- You must immediately advise Thames Valley Police of any material changes to your medical conditions provided on your application which you believe could be relevant to your fitness to participate in the Ride-Along/Walk-Along.

I have read and understand the above safe working procedures for Ride-Along/Walk- Along participants and by taking part agree to fully comply with them. I confirm that all relevant medical conditions have been disclosed by me

**Ride-Along**

Signature.....Printed

Name.....Date.....

**Officer** Signature.....

Printed

Name.....Date.....

**Appendix E**



**Thames Valley Police Ride-Along/Walk-Along Observer Briefing Sheet.**

1. On the day of your observation please bring with you a form of photo identification such as a Driving License or Passport.
2. You are to comply strictly with instructions given by the member of staff you are observing. If you are in a patrol vehicle you should remain in the vehicle at all times, until the officer directs otherwise.
3. In an emergency you may be removed from the situation for your own safety. Please comply with any instructions given to you.
4. You will be required to wear a high visibility jacket marked "observer" which will be provided to you on the day.
5. You must not further disclose or discuss any personal or operationally sensitive information that may be overheard or seen during the ride along/walk along. Disclosure of such information could amount to a breach of the Data Protection Act.
6. If you witness an incident you may be asked to provide a statement if necessary and to attend court as a prosecution or defence witness.
7. You are fully fit and do not require an individual risk assessment.
8. Please be aware that there are risks and you may see sights that you would not normally expect to encounter such as aggressive behaviour by members of the public or the scene of a serious accident. If you have doubts concerning the effect that attending any incident may have on you, or any other concerns about patrolling with a police officer, you should consider whether to go ahead.
9. You have personal responsibility to inform an officer if you have specific concerns or reservations about attending an incident type.
10. You must inform an officer immediately if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
11. You must not audio record, film or take photographs during the observation. If you wish to take a photograph this can only be done with the permission of the officer.
12. You must immediately advise Thames Valley Police of any material changes to your medical conditions provided on your application which you believe could be relevant to your fitness to participate in the Police Ride/Walk-Along.