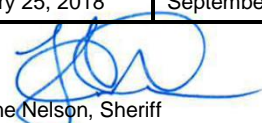




# DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Policy Title: <b>Volunteer (Auxiliary) and Citizen Ride-Along Program</b>	Effective Date: February 25, 2015	Policy Number: <b>4.51</b>	
Accreditation Reference: 1.5.13, 1.9.2	Review Date: February 25, 2018	Supercedes: September 20, 2011	Pages: 4
Attachments:	 L. Shane Nelson, Sheriff		

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the Sheriff's Office volunteer (auxiliary) program. The mission of the volunteer program is to serve our community by providing citizen support in building a stronger and safer community through education and partnerships with the Sheriff and our community. The purpose of the volunteer program is to continue to cultivate the positive relationships between the Sheriff's Office and the community at large.

## II. POLICY

The use of citizen volunteers in a variety of capacities, from non-sworn office help to sworn reserve deputies and technicians, is an invaluable service to this agency. The Sheriff's Office shall utilize the services of citizen auxiliary personnel to improve the quality of service delivery to the community and to assist regular agency personnel in the completion of their duties.

## III. PROCEDURES

### A. Organization

The Sheriff's Office Volunteer Program functions under the direction of the Sheriff. Volunteers will report to designated supervisors within the volunteer's assigned division.

### B. Scope

Volunteers serve at the discretion of the Sheriff and shall first:

1. Attend and complete the Sheriff's Office Citizen's Academy if assigned to the Community Events Coordinator;
2. Successfully complete the required application; and
3. Pass the background process, to include a pre-employment drug screen.

A criminal history check and CJIS certification will be conducted on those volunteers whose duties would allow access to records or other confidential materials. Unless otherwise directed, volunteers:

1. Will be used in non-sworn capacities. Volunteers will not perform duties that are required to be performed by a sworn deputy.
2. May not repeat or discuss any confidential information obtained through their affiliation with the Sheriff's Office.

3. Shall have a background check and receive authorization prior to being assigned to any position where they may handle confidential records that are not public records.
4. Commit to becoming a well-informed advocate for the Sheriff's Office.
5. Attend volunteer meetings as assigned.

#### **C. Recruitment**

Coordinators recruit citizen volunteers through advertisement, contacts in the community and from Citizen's Academy classes. Volunteers are then matched with programs or agency personnel who need assistance with ongoing duties or one-time projects.

#### **D. Coordination**

Coordinators will determine which duties, projects, and/or programs are suitable for the volunteers. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Search and Rescue
- Conduct NA and AA Meetings
- Investigate Cold Cases
- Deschutes County Fair
- Law Enforcement Memorial
- Shop With A Cop
- Administrative Support
- Citizen's Academy
- Clerical and Office Support
- Quarterly Shredding Events
- Basic Data Entry
- Other Community Events

#### **E. Orientation**

Each volunteer is given a basic orientation that includes familiarization with the Sheriff's Office and will be introduced to agency personnel.

#### **F. Training**

After Orientation, volunteers are assigned to a supervisor who provides training based on the duties or project that will be assigned to the volunteer.

#### **G. Evaluation**

Volunteers will be trained, evaluated and tested as necessary to assure competence in their performance and compliance with all agency procedures.

#### **H. Uniforms**

Volunteers are not authorized to wear a uniform, but may be issued appropriate identifying apparel or documentation that will authenticate them as a volunteer. The apparel or identifying documents will clearly be distinguishable from that of a sworn member of the agency. During special events or projects, volunteers may be required to wear safety gear, such as vests, as directed by a supervisor.

The Sheriff's Posse members wear khaki shirts, a "Sheriff's Posse" patch and a badge.

## **I. Equipment**

Coordinators may authorize volunteers to use agency owned equipment to complete their assigned tasks or duties. Use of any agency owned equipment shall be consistent with all required training, policies, and laws.

Any equipment utilized by volunteers will be properly cared for and kept secure at all times. Any damage or loss shall be immediately reported to their division's supervisor.

## **K. Use of Vehicles**

Volunteers required to operate county owned vehicles shall possess a valid Oregon driver's license and attend a county-sponsored defensive driving class.

With the exception of specially trained Search and Rescue volunteers and unless specifically instructed to do otherwise, volunteers are to utilize a designated volunteer vehicle only.

No agency vehicle shall be used by any person without the knowledge or permission of a supervisor.

The Sheriff's Office volunteer vehicle shall not be used for personal business.

The Sheriff's Office volunteer vehicle will be operated in a reasonable and proper manner.

Volunteers shall secure the vehicle whenever it is left unattended.

Following use, the vehicle should be returned clean and with a full tank of gas.

Volunteers are prohibited from applying or placing any signs, decals, posters, insignia, bumper stickers, window stickers or any other items on County vehicles unless authorized or directed by a supervisor.

Volunteers shall not transport persons in Sheriff's Office vehicles except in connection with agency business or as authorized by a supervisor.

No persons, other than county employees or authorized volunteers, shall be allowed to operate or ride in an agency vehicle without prior permission from a supervisor.

## **IV. LIABILITY COVERAGE**

The County provides volunteers the same protection from civil liability as that provided to full time employees.

## **V. CITIZEN RIDE-ALONG**

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office offers citizens the opportunity to ride-along with our patrol deputies as well as field technicians. Citizens are invited to complete a Citizen Observer (Ride-Along) Program Application which can be obtained from records staff.

Once the form is completed (to include the Release and Hold Harmless Agreement portion) and turned in, a criminal history, wants/warrants and driver's license query will be conducted to determine the potential observer's eligibility. Once cleared and authorized, the records staff will provide the completed form to the Administrative Lieutenant who then determines acceptance or denial of the applicant. The Lieutenant will call the applicant and schedule the ride-along or notify the applicant that their application has been denied.

Citizen ride-alongs shall be limited to once every six months, unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

Deputies are allowed to have personal ride-alongs (i.e., family member, friend). A Release and Hold Harmless Agreement shall be completed prior to the anticipated ride-along and provided to the shift supervisor. All personal ride-alongs shall be approved by a supervisor, including the supervisor's signature, prior to the ride-along. Personal ride-alongs shall be limited to once a month per deputy, unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

Citizen observers, as well as personal ride-alongs, shall follow the Citizen Ride-Along Program Rules. They are observers only and are not authorized to:

- Operate any Deschutes County Sheriff's Office vehicle;
- Use any computer or other Sheriff's Office equipment;
- Participate in calls for service or traffic stops;
- Access Sheriff's Office files to include LEDS/NCIC or other computerized files as well as hard copies of files, documents or reports; or
- Be left alone in any area of the Sheriff's Office or sub-stations.

The duration of any ride-along is at the discretion of the on-duty supervisor.

**In all cases, if the rider is under 18 years of age, the Parental Endorsement section of the Release and Hold Harmless Agreement shall be completed by the parent or guardian prior to consideration.**

**The Sheriff's Office maintains the right to refuse this service to anyone.**

All Ride-Along forms are filed with the records staff and are retained for a period of one year.