

# RIDE ALONG SCHEME POLICY

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## RIDE ALONG SCHEME

**Owning Department:** Suffolk CPC

**Department SPOC:** Ride Along Scheme Lead

**Risk Rating:** Low

**Legal Sign Off:** N/A

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## Legal Basis

**Legislation specific to the subject of this policy document:**

- None identified

**Other relevant legislation which you must check this document against (required by law)**

- [Human Rights Act 1998 \(in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated Regulations](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) and Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Freedom Of Information Act 2000](#)
- [The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

**Other documentation which you must check this document against:**

- [College of Policing – Code of Ethics](#)
- [Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies' Standards of Professional Behaviour](#)
- [College of Policing – Authorised Professional Practice](#)

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the arrangement by which Suffolk Constabulary engage with its citizens and communities through a particular initiative called Ride Along Scheme (RAS).
- 1.2 This will usually involve placing an Observer with a Police Officer, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) or Police Staff on routine activities.
- 1.3 This will also support the Best Use of Stop Search (BUSS) Scheme, by facilitating an opportunity for individuals to gain a practical insight into the use of Stop Search and Stop Encounter.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The scheme is intended to provide an opportunity for individuals to gain practical insight into the nature of police work across the whole range of routine patrol activities and all non-sensitive areas and support functions. The scheme actively seeks to support and encourage public engagement.

## **3. Eligibility**

- 3.1 Suffolk Constabulary will consider anyone to participate on the Ride Along Scheme, regardless of sex, marital or family status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion or belief, politics, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, social position or social disadvantage.
- 3.2 Participants in the scheme must:
  - Be aged 18 years or above (Applicants of 16 or 17 years of age will be considered in certain circumstances). If the observer is 16 or 17 years old, they should only participate if accompanied by a parent / guardian / adult with responsibility for their welfare. The accompanying person will be subject to the same eligibility and security criteria. If an accompanying person fails to meet these criteria for any reason, an alternative can be nominated by either the young person or Constabularies, with the approval of the parent / guardian.
  - Have no serious or recent convictions.
  - Have no medical conditions or injuries which may expose them to any additional risk of harm.
  - Read and agree to the Confidentiality Agreement, Observer Briefing Sheet and Risk Assessment.
  - Be a resident of, work in, or show a demonstrable link to the policing area in which they wish to undertake the observation.
- 3.3 Suffolk Constabulary will seek to make reasonable adjustments to allow as many people as possible to be eligible for participation in the scheme. However, in matters of dispute, the advice of the Health and Safety Department will be sought.

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- 3.4 To realise the aim of extending the Ride Along Scheme to as many people as possible, and given the Constabulary's finite resources, participants will be restricted to one observation in any one calendar year.
- 3.5 The participant must agree and demonstrate an understanding of the RAS risk assessment, confidentiality agreement and observer briefing sheet. The participant should agree to providing feedback following their observation.

## **4. Criminal Record / Security Check**

- 4.1 There will be a presumption to allowing members of the public to participate in the scheme, unless the individual possesses a relevant risk or conviction. All participants will be subject to NPPV Level 1 (Basic) vetting. Where an individual fails to satisfy the vetting procedure, their participation in the scheme will not normally be facilitated, and they will be informed why.
- 4.2 An individual may raise exception to the vetting decision, and provide details of mitigating information / circumstances to the Vetting Manager in the Joint Vetting Unit. In all cases, the final decision rests with the Vetting Manager who will liaise directly with the applicant and notify the Authorising Inspector (or staff equivalent) of the final outcome.

## **5. Safety**

- 5.1 The Constabulary has a duty of care towards the observer, members of the public with whom they may come into contact with and its staff.
- 5.2 Health and Safety and Data Protection legislation will be balanced with the need for the Constabulary to develop trust and confidence amongst all sections of the community through this scheme.
- 5.3 Specifically, the protection of life, the prevention of injury and the need to maintain individuals' privacy in certain sensitive cases will take precedence over the RAS scheme.
- 5.4 Whilst every effort will be made to get the observer as close to the work of front line officers as is possible, there may be occasions, where for reasons of safety or privacy, the observer is asked to withdraw to a safe distance.
- 5.5 A generic RAS risk assessment has been developed by the Health and Safety Department and will be complied with at all times.
- 5.6 It must be made clear to observers that they must follow any instructions given by the accompanying officer / staff member at all times during the Ride Along. For example, if observing incidents they may be asked to leave or remain in a police vehicle to ensure their safety.
- 5.7 The Constabulary will equip the observer with a Hi-Vis jacket, marked "Observer" and any other equipment deemed appropriate to ensure their safety.

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- 5.8 The Constabulary reserves the right to refuse participation in this scheme and to terminate the Ride Along, if it is necessary for the officer or member of staff to carry out their work effectively, efficiently and safely.

## **6. Health**

- 6.1 To participate on the RAS, observers must have no medical conditions or injuries that will expose the observer to any additional risk of harm.
- 6.2 Organisers of the observations will ensure that the RAS observer has disclosed any relevant medical conditions that could affect the placement through the completion of the observer's briefing form prior to the placement.
- 6.3 Where a condition that could affect the placement is disclosed the authorising officer will request the advice of the Health and Safety department and Force Medical Advisor (FMA) prior to the placement regarding suitability and any additional measures required to counter any specific risks beyond those set out in the Generic Risk Assessment.

## **7. Process**

- 7.1 There are three principle routes to accessing the Ride Along Scheme:
- Recommendation by a police officer or staff.
  - Referral from Stop Search Scrutiny Group meetings.
  - Request by a member of the public.
- 7.2 Any request to participate in the Ride Along Scheme must be referred to and authorised by the Inspector (or staff supervisor equivalent) responsible for the area being observed in the first instance. Whilst there is a presumption to facilitate requests made by members of the public, there are circumstances where a request may be refused, such as:
- The individual has completed an observation in the last 12 months.
  - The level of vetting to be undertaken is not suitable for the area which the individual has requested to observe.
  - The reason for the request does not satisfy the intentions of the scheme.
- 7.3 This policy does not seek to prescribe all the reasons for which a request may be refused, but any decision to refuse a request must be fully explained to the individual and documented.
- 7.4 All instances of observation under the Ride Along Scheme will be recorded on the RAS form. This form will be generated when the request is first received and submitted following the observation. All documentation required for this scheme will be available on the intranet.

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## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Authorising Inspector</i>               | <p>Submit NPPV 1 form confirming identity of participant for vetting.</p> <p>Identify an Officer responsible for facilitating the Ride Along Scheme observation.</p> <p>Confirm the date and contact details of the Officer responsible for the observation.</p> <p>Brief the Officer responsible for the observation on this policy and its requirements.</p> <p>Pass feedback from the participant to the relevant departmental head.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Officer Responsible for Observation</i> | <p>Ensure the observer has disclosed any relevant medical conditions that could affect the placement through the completion of the observer's briefing form prior to the placement, and advice sought accordingly.</p> <p>Check that the participant has successfully completed the vetting process.</p> <p>Ensure the generic risk assessment and confidentiality sheet and observer briefing sheet have been read and understood by the participant.</p> <p>Notify CCR to highlight the presence of the observer attached to your call sign and to make it clear that they would not be suitable for deployment in the immediate vicinity of any incident involving firearms, Hazmat, CBRN, Terrorism, Railway Lines, Deep Water, Building Sites, Fast Roads incident, or similar higher risk scenario.</p> |
| <i>Participant</i>                         | <p>Read and confirm they understand the risk assessment, confidentiality agreement and observer briefing sheet prior to commencing the observations.</p> <p>Provide feedback at the end of the observation by sending an e-mail to the authorising officer or officer responsible for hosting the ride along so the outcomes can be collated for highlighting the experience and any improvements which can be made for the future.</p> <p>Comply with instruction from the Officer responsible for the observation (where 16-17 years old comply</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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|  | with instruction of parent or guardian present, but always deferring to the instruction of the Officer responsible for the observation primarily). |
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### 9. Implementation

9.1 The process is outlined in Appendix A.

### 10. Intentions

10.1 The Ride Along Scheme is intended to satisfy and support the Constabulary's Vision, Mission and Values. It can:

- Build public confidence and improve customer satisfaction, by building positive view points and countering negative views or assumptions.
- Be used to engage with individuals from hard to reach and under-represented groups.
- Used to demonstrate commitment to partners within our communities, such as Neighbourhood Watch, Local Councils and Community Stake Holders.
- Provide an insight for potential police volunteers and recruits who want to join the Constabulary.

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## Appendix A – Ride Along Scheme Process Chart

