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|  <p>Landis Fire Department POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</p> <p>ZACHARY LECHETTE, PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR</p> | Ride-Along | Page 1 of 10 |
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| | POLICY # 200.06 | |

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish ride-along program procedures that will govern the program. This program will provide the public who meet the requirements, the opportunity to observe activities to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day operations and responsibilities of the fire department.

II. POLICY

The Landis Fire Department encourages community involvement in the operation of the Fire Department both during emergency and non-emergency related events. This policy will allow qualified and approved ride-along participants to be an observer of fire department personnel for legitimate civic or educational reasons. The ride-along program shall be regulated through the Fire Department's administration.

III. PROCEDURES

A. BACKGROUND


The ride-along program allows an individual that meets the requirements of the ride-along policy to respond to emergencies with the Landis Fire Department during the ride-along period. The program allows for the participant to witness the role of the firefighter and gain knowledge of the profession and the importance of firefighters in our community.

B. WARNING

Fire Department work and the duties of Department members may be dangerous. A ride-along may involve hazards to the health of citizens who desire to participate. There is the possibility that a citizen could be seriously injured or killed during a ride-along. This danger must be weighed against the value of exposure to the types of duties that Department employees perform.

C. APPLICATION

Any individual who wishes to participate in the ride-along program must complete a Fire Department Ride-Along Application and Release of Liability at least ten (10) days prior to the requested date for the ride-along. All documents must be completed in their entirety. Any application missing the required information, or one which is not completed in its entirety, will be denied.

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Complete applications will be forwarded to the Fire Chief, or his or her designee, to determine participant eligibility. Applicants will be notified in writing as to the decision of eligibility and approval to participate. This written notification includes, if any, the reason(s) for the denial of the ride-along request. All documents related to the application shall be maintained by the Department pursuant to the Landis Fire Department record retention schedule, as well as all applicable state laws.

D. ELIGIBILITY

Citizens desiring to participate in the ride-along program must apply for and obtain permission from the Town of Landis Fire Department. The Fire Chief, or his or her designee, will consider the reason the applicant wishes to participate, along with the frequency, duration, and hours requested.

In order to participate in the Fire Department Ride-Along Program, the applicant shall meet the following criteria, or fall within an exception outlined below:

- A. Each participant must be at least sixteen (16) years of age or older. Any ride-along participant under the age of eighteen (18), must have signed permission of a parent or legal guardian as required on the Application and Release of Liability Agreement.
- B. Each participant should be in good health and be free of any conditions that may restrict department personnel from performing their official duties. Individuals with severe or communicable illnesses will need to reschedule their approved ride-along to a time when the participant is no longer ill. The Department will, to the extent possible, make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations to any person interested in participating in the ride-along program.
- C. Applicants must read and complete a written application and acknowledge the risks associated with participation in the ride-along program through the execution of a written Release of Liability Agreement.
- D. Applicants must agree to keep personal and protected information gained during the ride-along confidential.
- E. Applicants shall not have been convicted of a felony, serious criminal or traffic offense or have been named in a protection order or restraining order granted by the court within the previous year. Applicants shall not be named as a defendant

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in a pending criminal case. Applicants must consent to the Town of Landis conducting a criminal background check and may be required to pay for the actual costs of such background check.

- F. Each participant shall agree to follow all directions of the on-shift Officer to which they are assigned, as well as all rules of the ride-along program and/or the Town of Landis

E. HIPAA COMPLIANCE

Under the requirements of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”), ride-along participants who come into contact with private, health-related information will be required to agree, in writing, to keep all confidential information learned during their ride-along participation confidential.

F. RIDE-ALONG RULES AND CONDUCT OF PARTICIPANTS

- A. Only one participant shall be permitted to ride-along in an emergency response vehicle at any time.
- B. Ride-along availability is limited to Monday-Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., except in special circumstances as approved in the sole discretion of the Fire Chief, or his or her designee. The hours, locations, and assignments for which applicants will be allowed to participate are to be determined by the Fire Chief, or his or her designee.
- C. Participants will not be allowed to participate, directly or indirectly, in situations that may jeopardize the safety of the ride-along participant, any Department personnel, or the general public.
- D. A patient or member of the public who is receiving services has the absolute right to refuse to allow participants to observe any procedures performed by EMS or other members of the Department. If a patient does not consent to the Participant’s observation, the Participant will not be allowed to witness any procedures and will need to wait in a location as directed by the Department member in charge.
- E. The Department reserves the right to alter or change the procedures and guidelines for the ride-along program at any time.



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- F. The Department and/or any Department personnel may terminate the ride-along at any time, for any reason, and transport the ride-along participant back to the Fire Department, or other location of origin. Examples of reasons why an employee may terminate the ride-along include, but are not limited to, the ride-along participant's conduct, safety, violation of the rules of conduct, or Department response needs. If necessary, Department personnel shall notify the Fire Chief, or his or her designee of the ride-along participant's termination. The on-shift officer shall indicate the termination and the reasons for the termination on the application form.
- G. Fire Department employees assigned to a ride-along participant should use appropriate caution to ensure that the citizen is not placed in unduly dangerous or hazardous situations. Employees should not engage in dangerous situations, to the extent possible, with ride-along participants.
- H. Department personnel will explain the potential hazards that may be encountered and the necessity for participants to immediately obey all instructions. Participants shall follow the rules of the program as well as any directions of the supervising Department member or the firefighter to which they are assigned.
- I. All ride-along participants are only observers of the Department's operations. No participant shall become involved in any incidents unless specifically instructed to do so by an authorized member of the Department.
- J. Participants shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of all names of persons or information learned through the program, unless otherwise authorized.
- K. Participants shall not operate any vehicle during their ride-along.
- L. Participants shall not use Department equipment except when directly authorized by department staff or in extreme emergencies.
- M. Participants shall be required to wear seatbelts at all times and remain within the Department's vehicle, unless otherwise directed by authorized Department personnel.

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- N. Participants are prohibited from possessing or carrying firearms or any other weapons. Participants are not allowed to record, photograph or capture sensitive information or have cell phones out during public interaction while on scene.
- O. Participants shall not smell of, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages or drugs before or during the ride-along.
- P. Participants shall wear appropriate, business casual dress at all times during the ride-along, including supportive shoes or boots. The Fire Chief, or his or her designee, has the sole authority to determine whether a participant is appropriately dressed. Inappropriate dress may be cause for immediate cancellation of the ride-along. Unless provided by the Department, ride-along participants shall not wear any clothing that implies direct association with the Department.



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RIDE-ALONG APPLICATION

All qualified personnel are required to complete the following application in order to participate in a ride along program. The rider must present a valid operator's license or Photo ID with this application before any authorization is completed. A copy will be made and attached to the application.


1. Full Name: _____
2. Drivers License Number and State: _____
3. Address: _____
4. Previous address: _____
5. Age _____ Date of birth: _____
6. Place of employment: _____

7. Length of employment: _____
8. Name of spouse or person to contact in the event of an emergency:

9. Have you ever been arrested, and if so for what reason: _____

10. Nickname(s) used: _____
11. Number to call in case of emergency: _____

Applicant's Signature Date

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Rules and Regulations of Ride-Along Participants

The following is a list of rules and regulations that apply to ride-along participants, but such list is not all-inclusive:

- (a). All participants in the Ride-Along Program are required to utilize a seat belt while in a Town vehicle.
- (b). Participants shall wear appropriate clothing and maintain a professional attitude.
- (c). Participants must recognize that their participation is strictly limited to that of an observer.
- (d). Participants will remain inside the fire vehicle when calls for service and other official duties are being performed unless specifically directed by the senior officer/firefighter.
- (e). Participants may request to ride with specific members, and members may request permission for specific civilians to ride with them. However, assignment of civilian riders to specific members will be at the discretion of the duty officer unless otherwise specified by the Fire Chief.
- (f). Participants are prohibited from carrying or possessing firearms while riding in departmental vehicles.
- (g). Participants are prohibited from consuming any alcoholic beverage for at least 8 hours prior to the scheduled ride-along.
- (h). Participants are prohibited from operating any Town of Landis Fire vehicles or equipment while participating in a Ride-Along.
- (i). **Participants shall not record or photograph any fire activities while engaging in a Ride-Along.**

By signing below, I acknowledge the rules, requirements, and expectations of the Landis Fire Department's Ride-Along program.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____



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Landis Fire Department and Town of Landis
Ride- Along Program Release and Waiver Form

The undersigned applicant has requested the Fire Chief to allow him/her to ride in a fire vehicle at a specified time with a member of the Landis Fire Department for the purpose of observing the member's activities.

The undersigned applicant understands that riding in a fire vehicle is an inherently dangerous activity, which may suddenly place the rider in circumstances beyond the control of the department or the member. By signing this waiver, the applicant voluntarily acknowledges the inherent risk of physical injury or death that may result from his or her participation in a ride-along. The undersigned specifically assumes the risk of injury or death associated with his or her participation in the ride-along.

Accordingly, the applicant on behalf of himself/herself and his/her heirs, assigns or personal representatives, hereby agree to waive and release all claims he/she may have for any physical or psychological injuries, including death, sustained while participating as an observer riding along in a fire vehicle. This waiver shall be for the benefit of the member operating the vehicle, the Landis Fire Department, the Town of Landis and any employees or agents of the Town of Landis.

In witness thereof, the undersigned hereunto sets his/her hand and seal.

Applicant's Full Name (Printed)

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Date Requested: _____ Date Expired: _____ # of Rides: _____

NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY

I, _____, a Notary Public for said County and State, do hereby certify that _____, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.

Witness my hand and Notarial seal, this _____ day of _____, and 20 _____.

Notary Public My Commission Expires: _____



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APPLICANT CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT

Arrest History? Yes No

If yes, please list charges and dates:

Warrants? Yes No

If yes, please list:

Date Application Received: _____

Background check completed by: _____

Date: _____

Application: Approved Denied

Signature: _____

If denied, please explain:

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF REVIEW

Date Application Received: _____ Approved Denied

If denied, please explain:

Assistant Fire Chief Signature: _____

Date: _____



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DENIED APPLICANT NOTIFICATION

Applicant notified by: _____

Date/Time: _____

Signature: _____

POST RIDE-ALONG INFORMATION

Host Member/Shift: _____ Primary Vehicle No.: _____

Date of Ride-Along: _____

Time of Ride-Along: _____ to _____