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OPERATIONS MANUAL
STANDARD INSTRUCTION 09 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
SECTION 22 RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

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I. PURPOSE

To provide participants an opportunity to observe San Diego Fire-Rescue and/or Falck San Diego personnel performing their duties.

II. SCOPE

This policy will apply to all sworn San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) (excluding lifeguards), and all Falck San Diego personnel.

III. AUTHORITY

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV. POLICY

A. Restrictions

1. Participants will not accompany personnel onto private property if the property owner objects.
2. No ride alongs by individuals under the age of 18, except for certified SDFD cadets.
3. The SDFD media services manager will approve all media ride-alongs.
4. Approved members of the media will be provided direction by the company officer and/or media services manager on acceptable filming or photography of emergency incidents prior to the ride-along taking place.

B. Rules

1. SDFD ride-alongs are limited to the hours of 08:00-20:00 and one ride-along per rolling year.
 - a. Exceptions may be made by the fire chief or their designee.
2. Qualified SDFD cadets are authorized to ride-along for 24-hour shifts.
3. Attire and grooming
 - a. Neat and presentable attire will include pants (no skirts or dresses), polo shirts or button-up shirts, and closed-toe shoes
 - b. Hair styles, make-up, jewelry, and perfume/cologne are to be minimal and in good taste
 - c. Must always wear the SDFD identification tag (available in all fire stations) in a visible location, if on a SDFD ride-along
 - d. Must always wear the Falck San Diego identification tag (available on all Falck San Diego units) in a visible location, if on a Falck San Diego ride-along
4. The use of tobacco products will be consistent with SDFD and Falck San Diego policies.
5. Participants will remain in the fire apparatus or ambulance at emergency scenes unless permitted to exit by a company officer or Falck paramedic.

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6. Participants will not enter any hospital unless accompanied by SDFD or Falck San Diego personnel.
7. Participants must be seated in their own seat with appropriate restraints and remain seat-belted in while the apparatus is in motion.
8. Participants may not video record, photograph, sound record, post on social media, or otherwise communicate any information obtained during the ride-along without approval of the SDFD fire chief or Falck division manager.
9. Participants will not use, handle or operate any SDFD or Falck San Diego equipment unless approved by the company officer and/or Falck paramedic.
10. Participants will not interfere with any SDFD or EMS operations.
11. Participants will not provide information to the media regarding emergency operations or patient information.
12. Participants will behave in a responsible and professional manner during the ride-along.
13. The company officer or Falck San Diego paramedic may terminate the ride-along at any time.

C. Fire Department Ride-Along Authorization

1. Qualifications for ride-alongs
 - a. Demonstrate interest in SDFD by completing a job interest application at sandiego.gov/join-fire-rescue and follow up with an email to joinSDFD@sandiego.gov
 - b. Interested applicants will be notified when a ride-along opportunity becomes available
 - c. Location and times will be coordinated between the participant, the media services manager, recruitment officer, company officer and the battalion chief of the ride-along unit
2. Participants will be given ride-along approval via email
3. Participants who are interested, who don't have access to email, can call SDFD headquarters for assistance
4. Approved ride-alongs will be entered on the Operations battalion calendar and include the participant's name and contact information
5. Cadet Program Ride-Along Authorization
 - a. Cadets who have completed the requisite training are eligible for ride-alongs.
 - b. Cadets schedule ride-alongs with an advisor and notify the cadet coordinator at least seven days prior of the scheduled date.

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- c. The cadet coordinator schedules the ride-along in the cadet program outlook calendar and is the point of contact regarding ride-alongs.
- d. Cadets will not participate in any hazardous situations and may participate in non-hazardous situations as approved by the company officer.

D. Falck San Diego Ride-Along Authorization

- 1. Minimum age for an ambulance ride-along is 18 years old.
- 2. Paramedic and EMT students attending a Falck San Diego contracted college or school are eligible for ride-alongs.
 - a. Ride-alongs are scheduled through the college/school
- 3. Civilian ride-alongs will contact Falck San Diego PIO office for approval and scheduling.
- 4. Ride-alongs are to introduce themselves to the company officer and crew when the ambulance is housed at a fire station.

E. Waiver Form and Documentation

- 1. Ride-along participants, except for SDFD cadets, will sign the forms below in advance of riding on SDFD or Falck San Diego apparatus or vehicle.
 - a. *SDFD/Falck Ride-Along Program Confidentiality Agreement (FD556)*
 - b. *SDFD/Falck Waiver of Claims for Damages and Covenant Not to Sue (FD554)*
- 2. Forms for ride-alongs on city vehicles will be kept in the fire station files for three years.
- 3. Forms for ambulances ride-alongs will be kept in Falck San Diego files, by paramedic field supervisors, for three years.
- 4. SDFD cadet waiver forms and documentation are managed by the cadet coordinator.

F. Company Officer/Paramedic Responsibilities

- 1. The company officer or Falck San Diego paramedic will:
 - a. Ensure all necessary documents are signed and collected in advance of participation
 - b. Ensure participants are signed onto the unit's MDC (if applicable)