

**Dorchester County Department of Emergency  
Services  
EMS Division  
Standard Operating Guideline**



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SOG 2.2 – Ride Along Program

Date Issued: 04/14/2015

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**I. Purpose**

- A. The ride-along program gives citizens, students, and providers from other agencies the opportunity to voluntarily ride with Dorchester County Emergency Medical Services (DCEMS) for the purpose of education or furthering interest and knowledge of the jobs performed by DCEMS.

**II. Eligibility**

- A. Any qualified citizen may ride with DCEMS. This includes personnel from other agencies, local or out of town residents, and students.
- B. All potential riders must meet the following criteria:
1. All riders must be at least 16 years of age or older. If the rider is a minor (under the age of 18), a parent must sign a waiver in the presence of a DCEMS employee. This same DCEMS employee will also sign the waiver as a witness.
  2. All riders will have no outstanding wants or warrants. Convictions for felony charges, assault and/or battery, or weapons charges may be grounds for refusal.
  3. Personnel from any Dorchester County Fire/EMS Department may ride with a DCEMS unit on a call by call basis. This will not delay any response by that unit.
  4. Due to liability and Regional policies, all EMT-B, CRT, EMT-I, and Paramedic students must ride with a DCEMS approved Preceptor.
  5. All pre-scheduled ride-along participants must have prior approval by the DCEMS Chief.

**III. Ride-along request procedures**

- A. Ride-along packets can be picked up at any of the DCEMS stations. This packet includes:
1. DCEMS Ride-along application
  2. DCEMS Release and Waiver

3. DCEMS authorization for criminal records/warrant check
  4. DCEMS Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreement
- B. All ride-along requests must be turned into the DCEMS Chief at least 7 days prior to the first ride date. All forms must be completed in their entirety and signed by all appropriate personnel.
- C. A member of the DCEMS Scheduling group will make contact with the rider to schedule times for their ride-along and placed on the DCEMS schedule.

#### **IV. Dress**

- A. Since the public will view the rider as a member of DCEMS, a dress code will be established and enforced. The rider will present with a neat and clean appearance and subject to approval by the on duty preceptor.
- B. Any clothing that gives the perception that the rider is a DCEMS employee is strictly prohibited.
- C. No uniform items will be supplied by DCEMS.
- D. Riders must maintain a neat appearance to include a uniform. This shall consist of blue or black pants, black shoes or boots, black socks (if visible), and an approved departmental shirt with logo. Riders will be strictly prohibited from wearing shorts, skirts, tennis or any open toes shoes.

#### **V. General Procedures**

- A. The primary concern of the preceptor is to ensure the safety of the rider. If a dangerous situation arises, it is the responsibility and the discretion of the preceptor to determine if the rider may proceed or remain at a safe and secure distance.
- B. Hours for scheduled rides will be from 0700-2300. Additional times are at the discretion of the DCEMS Chief.
- C. DCEMS units will not delay a response to wait for a rider.
- D. All riders should report to their assigned station prior to the beginning of their scheduled ride time.
- E. The preceptor shall instruct the rider of the following:
1. The rider may end the ride at any point during the scheduled shift.
  2. The preceptor should review the location and purpose of all emergency equipment in the ambulance. Riders shall also be instructed to not touch any of the equipment unless instructed to do so by the preceptor.

- F. Cameras or recording devices will not be permitted.
- G. If the rider is injured, normal departmental documentation policies will be followed.
- H. Riders are not permitted to operate any county vehicle unless they are a county employee, elected county official, an active volunteer affiliated with a Dorchester County Volunteer Fire Department, or approved by the EMS Chief.