

Explorers

210.1 VERSION

Agency Content

Review Date	Effective Date	Approving Authority
03/05/19	07/09/18	Eric D. English, Chief of Police

210.2 POLICY AND PURPOSE

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

The Harrisonburg Police Department offers a program for Explorers to familiarize and prepare qualified individuals for a career in law enforcement. The Department shall ensure that those participating in the program are properly appointed, trained and supervised.

210.3 ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

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All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines set forth in this policy. Responsibility rests with the supervisor to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and appropriate training, counseling and/or disciplinary action is initiated. This directive is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

210.4 RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

The Harrisonburg Police Department endeavors to recruit and appoint only those applicants who meet the high ethical, moral and professional standards set forth by this department.

Applicants shall be required to meet and pass certain pre-appointment procedures as designated by the Chief of Police.

210.4.1 REQUIREMENTS

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

Individuals in the Explorer program shall:

- (a) Have completed the eighth grade and be at least 14 years of age and under 21 years of age.
- (b) Maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 ("C" grade) for all courses taken.
 1. Explorers enrolled in college shall complete at least six units of college course work per semester (or quarter equivalent).
- (c) Commit to a minimum of four (4) hours of service per month.

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210.4.2 IDENTIFICATION

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

Explorers shall conform to all of the uniform regulation and appearance standards of this department.

Each Explorer will be provided two uniforms, which will meet the specifications described in the designated uniform and equipment specifications. The identification worn by uniformed Explorers shall be different and distinct from that worn by regular department personnel; it will include the designation "Explorer" on the uniform.

Explorers will be issued their Harrisonburg Police Department identification cards, which must be carried at all times while on-duty. The Harrisonburg Police Department identification card will be the standard identification card, with the exception that "Explorer" will be indicated on the card. Explorers shall be required to return any issued uniform or department property at the conclusion of service.

210.5 EXPLORER COORDINATOR

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

The Chief of Police shall delegate certain responsibilities to an Explorer coordinator. The Explorer coordinator shall be appointed by, and directly responsible to, the Administrative Bureau Commander or the authorized designee.

The responsibilities of the Explorer coordinator or the authorized designee include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Overseeing the Explorer program, including:
 - 1. Conducting Explorer program meetings
 - 2. Monitoring the overall Explorer program activities
- (b) Making individual Explorer assignments.
- (c) Monitoring the Explorer training program.
- (d) Monitoring individual educational and job performance.
- (e) Maintaining a liaison with other agency Explorer program coordinators.

210.5.1 EXPLORER ADVISERS

Discretionary

The Explorer coordinator may select individual officers to serve as advisers for the Explorer program. These officers will serve as mentors for each Explorer. Explorers will bring special requests, concerns and suggestions to their advisers for guidance or direction before contacting the Explorer coordinator. One adviser may be designated as the coordinator's assistant to lead scheduled meetings and training sessions. Multiple Explorers may be assigned to each adviser. Explorer advisers are not intended to circumvent the established chain of command.

210.5.2 EXPLORER MEETINGS

Discretionary

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All Explorer meetings will be scheduled and conducted by the Explorer coordinator. All Explorers are required to attend. Any absences must be satisfactorily explained to the Explorer coordinator.

210.5.3 EMERGENCY CALL-OUT

Discretionary MODIFIED

The Explorer coordinator shall develop a plan outlining an emergency callout procedure.

210.5.4 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

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The assigned officer is responsible for the overall management of the Police Explorer Program. Administrative structure for the Post shall be:

- (a) Chief of Police
- (b) Administrative Bureau Commander
- (c) Community Resource Unit Officer
- (d) Post Advisor
- (e) Post Captain
- (f) Post Lieutenant
- (g) Post Sergeant
- (h) Explorer

210.6 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Discretionary MODIFIED

New Explorers will receive an orientation of the Department and its facilities before reporting to their first assignments. On-the-job training will be conducted in compliance with designated department Explorer training guidelines. Training sessions will be scheduled as needed to train Explorers for as many assignments as possible based on age and ability. In addition to job-specific training, information will be offered to prepare Explorers to compete successfully in a police officer selection process and academy training. All Explorers training will focus on improving job performance, as well as preparation to become a police officer. These meetings will also offer an opportunity for Explorers to receive continuous feedback regarding their progress in the Explorer program.

210.6.1 EXPLORER TRAINING MATERIALS

Discretionary

Each new Explorer will be issued Explorer training materials. The Explorer training materials are an outline of the subject matter and/or skills necessary to properly function as an Explorer with the Harrisonburg Police Department. The Explorer shall become knowledgeable of the subject matter. He/she shall also become proficient with those skills as set forth in the Explorer training materials.

210.7 ROTATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Discretionary

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Job assignments should rotate on a regular basis to enhance the career development of each Explorer. Department needs and concerns will take precedence over individual considerations, with the final decision resting with the Explorer coordinator.

In general, more experienced Explorers will be assigned to positions requiring more technical skill or responsibility. They may also serve to train current and newly hired Explorers.

210.8 RIDE-ALONGS

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

All Explorers are authorized to participate in department ride-alongs on their own time and as approved by the Explorer program coordinator or Explorer adviser and the appropriate Patrol Commander. Applicable waivers must be signed in advance of the ride-along. Explorers shall wear their uniforms while on a ride-along.

Any Explorer attending school will be prohibited from riding Sunday through Thursday, between 11:00P.M. and 7:00A.M. while school is in session.

210.8.1 REQUIRED FORMS

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- (a) An executed [216-HPD Explorers Hold Harmless Form.pdf](#) will be on file, signed by a parent or legal guardian of the Explorer, by the Explorer, and by a notary.
- (b) The Explorer will provide the Post Advisor and/or Explorer Coordinator with the ride-along agreement signed by the parent or guardian.
- (c) The Explorer Coordinator shall be responsible for seeing that required forms are completed, routed to the proper place, and ultimately filed. The Hold Harmless Agreement form shall be retained for as long as an Explorer is in the program. The Explorer Coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining these files.
- (d) An Explorer will not, under any circumstances, be allowed to carry a firearm while participating in the ride-along program or any other explorer functions, except supervised firearms training.
- (e) Explorers may ride a maximum of 10 (Ten) hours a month, a minimum of four hours and a maximum of eight hours per day. Specific hours for riding along will be determined by age of the Explorer and approved by the Explorer Coordinator. Additional ride along hours may be approved by the Explorer Coordinator with the Patrol Commander's approval.

210.8.2 PRIOR REQUIREMENTS

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In advance of riding along, explorers must:

- (a) Be current with their dues and attendance.
- (b) Undergo any classroom training required by the Explorer Coordinator.
- (c) Schedule their ride along with the Explorer Coordinator or Post Advisor at least 48 hours in advance.

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- (d) Report at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled ride-along time in full uniform, with a flashlight, notebook, pen, and Emergency Medical Treatment Consent Card
- (e) Be clean and neat in appearance.
- (f) Complete training exercises which include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Daily operations of a police officer
 - 2. Post guidelines
 - 3. Familiarization with police vehicles and equipment
 - 4. Additional training to include:
 - (a) Note taking
 - (b) Geographical orientation of the area
 - (c) Communications and radio procedure

210.8.3 EXPECTED CONDUCT

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Expected conduct of the Explorer:

- (a) Follow the directions of the supervising officer
- (b) Explorers will not carry on a conversation with any prisoner, witness, or complainant unless specifically directed by the supervising officer
- (c) Follow guidelines of the Harrisonburg Police Department Ride-Along policy

210.8.4 PROCEDURE

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The following procedures will be followed for an Explorer to participate:

- (a) Calls the Explorer may participate in:
The explorer participates in the ride-along program as an observer. The explorer may fulfill various duties as determined by the ride-along officer. These may include:
 - 1. Traffic/crowd control
 - 2. Assist motorist
 - 3. Complete routine paperwork that will not be used in any court action
 - 4. Protect crime scene
 - 5. Act as an interpreter as needed
 - 6. Calls which are low risk in nature
- (b) Calls the Explorer may not participate in: At no time will the Explorer be at risk or used in dangerous or undercover activities. Some specific functions to avoid:
 - 1. Interview/interrogation of witnesses or suspects
 - 2. Participate or be left in control of the arrest of a suspect
 - 3. Leave the police vehicle, unless instructed by the assigned officer

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4. Assist at any scene, unless told to by the assigned officer
5. Be armed in any manner
6. Sign any arrest, offense, accident report, traffic citation, or other legal documentation
7. Assist in providing cover for any possible crime in progress
8. Driving vehicles
9. Riding with any vice, narcotics or organized crime unit
10. Riding in a high speed pursuit

210.9 CODE OF CONDUCT

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Explorers are held by the same code of conduct as with any Harrisonburg Police Department employee.