



Norwich Township Fire Department  
5181 Northwest Parkway  
Hilliard, OH 43026  
(614) 876-7694



## **NORWICH TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT RIDER/OBSERVER PROGRAM RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***RIDER/OBSERVER GUIDE***

#### Definitions:

- 1. RIDER:** Individual with the expectation to function within a specific clinical experience at the Norwich Township Fire Department, with due regard to the advancement and enhancement of their education. Riders may ride from 8:00AM - 10:00PM Monday through Friday and from 8:00AM - 2:00PM Saturday.
- 2. OBSERVER:** Individual with expectation to ride a specific piece of apparatus or to view the performance of specific duties with the Norwich Township Fire Department, in a non-functioning capacity. Observers may ride from 8:00AM - 8:00PM Monday through Friday and from 8:00AM - 2:00PM Saturday.

**\*\*For the purpose of this document "Rider" shall be utilized interchangeably with "Observer". It is up to the individual while applying for the position to define whether they are making an application for the position of Rider or Observer.\*\***

**If you have any questions about ride time or scheduling of ride time, please contact Captain Jeff Evans at [Jeff\\_Evans@NorwichTownship.org](mailto:Jeff_Evans@NorwichTownship.org) or (614) 876-7694.**

## **RIDER / OBSERVER UTILIZATION**

The Norwich Township Fire Department has instituted a rider/observer program, whereby the goals shall be to provide education to related individuals and/or entities as to the fire department's operation. The rider/observer may include students within a fire/EMS related program which requires them to perform clinical applications, individuals from other fire/EMS agencies to observe our operations for their own agency's performance improvement, individuals from hospitals with which our fire department associates, other government agencies, members of the media during the research of news related stories and other applications as appropriate.

Upon approval in the rider/observer program, the individual will receive a specific assignment to a vehicle and station. Individuals may receive assignments based upon their needs:

### **A. EMS vehicles**

1. Approved riders on these vehicles are not to be considered a part of staffing
2. Riders can only function in their approved capacity based on their level of education

### **B. Fire Apparatus, including Battalion Chief and with other Staff Officers**

1. Approved riders on these vehicles are not to be considered a part of staffing
2. Riders can only function in their approved capacity based on their level of education

### **C. Fire Prevention Bureau**

1. Approved riders on these vehicles are not to be considered a part of staffing
2. Riders can only function in their approved capacity based on their level of education

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Upon arrival at the station of assignment, the participant in the rider program will be given pre-instruction rules of operation, what they are allowed to do, and any safety guidelines that are applicable to the position.
- B. Sign a certificate of waiver for our agency for release of liability.
- C. Sign a certificate acknowledging confidentiality of what they encounter while riding/observing.
- D. If assigned to EMS as an observer or participant, they may be asked to leave an area in the event there is a suspected airborne communicable disease or at other times where there is suspected danger to the individual.
- E. The employees of the Norwich Township Fire Department are to be notified of the rider program, who the riders are, when they will be there and any specific limitations.
- F. The Norwich Township Fire Department reserves the right to immediately dismiss any individual from the field clinical experience for breach of regulations, safety practices or breach of confidentiality.
- G. The Norwich Township Fire Department reserves the right to regulate the number and frequency of participants for the rider program and to limit the hours in which they ride. Examples may be that they are not allowed to ride prior to 7:00AM and after 11:00AM; this may be due to bed availability or general departmental concerns.

## **STUDENT UNIFORM**

Most EMS/Fire programs have an established code of dress for their students. The riders of this program will at a minimum be in either their official school program uniform or in professional clothing that is not offensive to the public but considered appropriate for the function of their position. Fire department officers have the right to deny a rider due to what is deemed to be inappropriate clothing. Identification shall be required and will consist of either school identification badge, employee badge from current employment or an observer badge issued by the Norwich Township Fire Department. In the event the rider/observer is issued a badge by the fire department, it shall be considered Township property and returned at the end of their session.

Jewelry, other than watches, wedding rings, necklaces (must be worn under clothing) and bracelets (must be conforming, not interfere with operations and not offensive) shall be prohibited during their riding session. The wearing of jewelry shall be consistent with the rules and regulations within the fire department. Riders will also be expected to practice good personal hygiene, with specific regard to body odor, oral hygiene and nail care. If make-up is utilized, it shall not be offensive and be professional in nature. The use of cologne/perfume is permitted; however, discretion must be utilized by the individual. If it is found to be considered offensive, the rider/observer may be asked to remove it (shower) or return another time.

## **PERMISSION**

To ride as an observer or function within the department, the individual must make a request at least ten business days in advance of the intended ride time and this request must be made within normal business hours (8:00AM - 4:00PM, Monday through Friday, excluding Holidays). This will allow the Fire Department Administration adequate time to complete the necessary paperwork and have it filed, give the individual their assignment, and forward the intended rider/observer to the appropriate shift officer(s). This permission will be based upon one "session", which may be more than one ride time with the agency. If, in the event a rider is applying for a specific shift for the term of a course or college quarter, it may be approved contingent upon their ability to work with the Battalion Chief to schedule assigned dates/times. Notification of approval will be by phone and e-mail.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT PRECEPTOR**

Riders with the fire department will work under the direct supervision of a fire department employee who has expertise in the given area. Students may be provided opportunities to perform skills that they have been trained in, practiced with and been given permission to perform. These riders shall never perform a skill in the absence of their assigned preceptor or authorized fire department representative or without their knowledge and approval. Failure to inform the fire department representative prior to performing the skill will be handled accordingly. Such incidents may involve removing their ability to continue to ride or notification of their employer/school. The Battalion Chief of the unit shall see that the incident is documented and forwarded to the appropriate individual(s) within the fire department. The primary point of contact will be the EMS/Training Captain. He will then notify the Fire Chief, 40 hour Battalion Chief, and the appropriate Battalion Chief.

## **GENERAL CONDUCT**

While operating within the fire department as a rider/observer, the individual must comply with the rules and regulations set forth by the Norwich Township Fire Department. If at any time the rider/observer fails to comply, they shall be told of what the proper conduct is/should be. If they continue to fail, they shall be dismissed from that riding session. If at any time the rider is involved with direct patient care and compromises that patient's care, the fire department representative that is acting as their preceptor may request the Battalion Chief notify that individual of the incident and at their discretion have them dismissed from that riding session. The Battalion Chief of the unit shall see that the incident is documented and forwarded to the appropriate individual(s) within the fire department. The primary point of contact will be the EMS/Training Captain. He will then notify the Fire Chief, 40 hour Battalion Chief, and the appropriate Battalion Chief. A decision may also be made by these administrative officers to either limit what the rider does in the future or remove him/her completely from the program.

## **RIDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The rider has specific responsibilities placed upon them during their ride time.

1. They shall inform their preceptor of what it is that they are expecting from their field experience.
2. Determine through conversation with the preceptor what they are allowed to do.
3. Discuss with their preceptor any paperwork that will need to be completed and signed by the preceptor to evaluate them during or after their field experience.
4. Abide by the rules and regulations of the Norwich Township Fire Department.
5. Abide by specific guidance of the assigned preceptor of the Norwich Township Fire Department.
6. Abide by the confidentiality agreement.
7. In the event problems arise with their assigned preceptor, the rider agrees first to discuss the problem with their assigned preceptor. If in the event the problem is not resolved, it shall at that time involve the next higher officer on duty at that time. It shall become that officer's discretion as how to seek a remedy to the problem.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Norwich Township Fire Department agrees that once riders are accepted to work with them to provide a range of experiences that the individual is seeking.

1. The fire department representative assigned to that rider shall provide that individual an orientation to the piece of equipment to which they have been assigned.
2. The fire department representative assigned to that rider shall provide that individual an orientation to safety operations relative to that piece of equipment and to general operations within the fire department.
3. The fire department representative assigned to that rider shall work with that rider to complete any necessary paperwork for documentation of skills utilization, hours riding, etc.
4. The fire department representative assigned to that rider shall notify their Battalion Chief in the event problems arise and specify the resolution. It shall become the Battalion Chief's responsibility to use their discretion for additional resolution or notifications.
5. If the rider is on an EMS unit, they shall not be expected to perform skills that the other personnel elect not to perform. An example is cleaning and disinfection of the EMS vehicle or equipment; it is a team effort to provide adequate cleaning and disinfection and is not the individual responsibility of the rider. They most likely will be asked to participate, as long as they are allowed to function as more than an observer.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

Riders on EMS/Fire Apparatus may encounter communicable disease situations. If in the event there is a suspected airborne communicable disease, the rider may be asked to leave the area for their general safety, unless they have been fit tested (will need to provide documentation) and have their own TB/respiratory protection. In this situation, they may be asked to go to their assigned vehicle or to ride on another vehicle back to the station.

In the event the rider is acting as a participant in patient care, the expectation will be that they have had infection control training and that they will abide by uniform infection control practices. This includes the wearing of appropriate personnel protective equipment. In the event the rider sustains a hazardous exposure, that individual shall complete the paperwork that the regular full-time fire department employees complete to document their exposure. The preceptor of that rider shall at that time notify their officer of the incident and let their officer give them the appropriate guidance as how to handle the incident. One of the components of this is also to notify the Department Infection Control Officer. It is the rider's responsibility to absorb any costs related to their testing, evaluation and/or treatment related to this exposure. In the event the Department Infection Control Officer is notified that a patient had a suspected communicable disease that is transmissible to others via airborne or is highly contagious through other methods of transmission, the Department Infection Control Officer shall attempt to notify with the rider to advise them of the situation and to provide guidance on what to do at that point.

### **FORMS TO BE COMPLETED:**

1. RIDER/OBSERVER APPLICATION
2. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT
3. RELEASE WAIVER



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**RIDER/OBSERVER APPLICATION**

In order for an individual to participate as a rider or observer with the Norwich Township Fire Department, this application must be completed and the time must be approved, prior to participation. This application must be completed at least **ten** business days in advance of the desired ride time and must take place during normal business office hours (8:00AM - 4:00PM, Monday through Friday, excluding Holidays). The rider/observer must have approval and all applicable paperwork completed prior to being able to ride with the Norwich Township Fire Department. If approved as a rider/observer, the individual will be notified and shall at that time receive a copy of their "Release Waiver", which will have been signed by an authorizing representative. A copy of the "Rider/Observer Application" form shall be taken with the individual to their assigned station as additional proof of approval. The below listed individual desires to ride with the Norwich Township Fire Department:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:**

List School:  CSCC  Grant  Tolles  General Observer  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Employed:**

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Position being asked for:  Rider  Observer

Assignment being applied for:  EMS  Fire Apparatus  
 Fire Prevention  Administrative Assignment

Station Request:  81  82  83 Shift Request:  1  2  3

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Applicant Signature Date

- Approved
- Not Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Fire Department Signature, Title, Date



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**CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

I acknowledge that in the performance of my duties during clinical experience or while riding as a general observer, I will receive, use and generate information which is considered privileged and confidential. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to patient information, medical records, Fire Prevention Bureau inspection activities, fire fighting and general incident operations. I understand that the unauthorized dissemination of confidential information would be harmful to the service, the patients and to others served by the Norwich Township Fire Department.

I understand and agree that in the performance of my duties as a rider, participant and/or observer, I must hold all such information in the strictest of confidence. When it is necessary to discuss confidential information in the performance of my given duty, I shall do so in a professional manner and avoid public areas where the discussion can be overheard. Any paperwork that is required to be completed relative to my ride time/observer time shall not include confidential information related to a specific patient. It may however, contain aggregate information that may be utilized with the riders specific education. This may include any patient assessments, EKGs, and clinical experience paperwork. The paperwork will not contain any identifying information relative to the patient. If in the event it does, any identifiers shall either be removed or blacked out prior to removal from the Norwich Township Fire Department.

I understand that any violation related to this confidentiality statement may result in removal from the rider program, may be punishable by law and may include punitive damages assessed by a court of law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Rider/Observer Name - Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Rider/Observer Name - Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**Note: If the Rider/Observer is under 18 years of age, this Confidentiality Statement must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian Name - Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian Name - Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Fire Department Representative - Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Fire Department Representative - Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date



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**RELEASE WAIVER**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have voluntarily applied to participate as an observer with the Norwich Township Fire Department, using the facilities owned and controlled by the Norwich Township Fire Trustees in Norwich Township, Franklin County, Ohio.

**I AM AWARE THAT AS AN OBSERVER THERE ARE HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES, AND I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY OR DEATH.**

\_\_\_\_\_(Initials)

As lawful consideration for being permitted by the Norwich Township Fire Department to participate in these activities and use of their facilities, I hereby agree that I, my heirs, distributors, guardians, legal representatives and assigns will not make a claim against, sue, attach the property of, or prosecute the Norwich Township Fire Department, Norwich Township, the Norwich Township Trustees, and/or any of its affiliated organizations for injury or damage resulting from the negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, by any employee, agent, or contractor of Norwich Township Fire Department or its affiliates, as a result of my participation in observing.

**I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE NORWICH TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT AND/OR ITS AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS, AND I HAVE SIGNED IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.**

I hereby authorize for one year from the date of execution hereof any authorized representative of the Norwich Township Fire Department or authorized agent bearing this release to obtain any information pertaining to my employment, education, residence, academic achievement, personal information, work performance, background investigations, polygraph examinations, any and all internal affairs investigations or disciplinary records, including any files that are deemed to be confidential and/or sealed. I also authorize release of any criminal justice records of arrests, citations, detentions, probation and parole records, or any police reports or other police records in which I may be named for any reason, including any files that are deemed to be juvenile and confidential. I hereby direct the Norwich Township Fire Department to release this information upon the request of the bearer, whether in person or by correspondence. I further authorize the bearer to make copies of these records.

I further agree to submit to the Fire Chief of the Norwich Township Fire Department any picture taken or text formulated by me for approval before said picture or text is release for publication.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Rider/Observer Name - Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**Note: If the Rider/Observer is under 18 years of age, this Release Waiver must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian Name - Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Fire Department Representative - Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date