

Kingsport Police Department

Citizens' Academy Overview

In 1994, the Kingsport Police Department embarked on a concept of educating community citizens on the daily activities of their police officers by conducting its first Citizens' Police Academy. This program was modeled after some of the few other similar programs already in existence throughout the State of Tennessee.

The goal of the Kingsport Police Department Citizens' Police Academy is to foster a better relationship between the community and the police department through training. It is envisioned that graduates will gain an understanding of the operations of the Police Department and develop an awareness and appreciation of the various challenges and decisions faced every day by Kingsport Police officers.

Even though, through this program, the selected citizens are given training in numerous police-related subjects, the graduates are **NOT** prepared for, nor expected to, conduct any police services (street duty). Rather, it is hoped that the graduates will become goodwill ambassadors for the department.

With each graduating class, the list of prospective "goodwill ambassadors" continues to grow. Positive comments expressed in the community by these graduates increases the interest in the Citizens' Academy throughout the City of Kingsport.

Enrollment in the academy is restricted to between 12 and 18 candidates.

Requirements for admission to the academy are established to maintain the quality of the program for the citizens of Kingsport. Basic requirements include:

1. A minimum age of 18
2. A resident of Kingsport
3. If not a City resident, an owner or manager of a business in the City
4. Non-city residents will be considered on an individual case-by-case basis dependant on space availability.

Applicants are recruited through referral of graduates or officers or by telephone requests by members of the community. The Academy is also advertised in the local newspaper and other forums when preparation for another class is underway

When the application is returned, a thorough background investigation is completed. This investigation includes a criminal history, a driver's license status check, and a warrant check. Background investigations must be completed due to the sensitive nature of police work. Once the list of prospective students is narrowed to the 12 to 18 maximum, a letter of acceptance

is mailed to each student. A criminal conviction will not necessarily preclude an applicant from participating; however, the Kingsport Police Department reserves the right to review these on a case-by-case basis.

Students are encouraged to attend every class session; however, a minimum of eight classes are required for graduation. In addition to class attendance, students are required to ride for an eight hour shift with a patrol officer and spend two hours observing in Central Dispatch. Candidates must also agree to, and sign a liability waiver and an indemnity agreement. The liability waiver releases the Police Department from liability should the student incur an injury while he or she is riding with patrol officers. The indemnity agreement informs the student of the confidential nature of police work with regard to criminal histories and other information they may hear while spending time in Central Dispatch. It also advises them that they **MUST NOT** relay any of this confidential information to anyone outside the Department.

Private citizens are allowed to ride by the Department's insurer, The Tennessee Municipal League; however, the hours are restricted. Students may ride from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. from Monday through Friday. If this does not coincide with the student's work schedule, the eight hour ride-along can be broken up into segments that are more accommodating for the student.

The Citizens' Police Academy is held one evening a week from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 or 9:30 p.m. for approximately ten weeks. There will be one additional class held at the Police Firing Range. This additional class typically occurs on a Friday evening or a Saturday morning. Students are exposed to a variety of police topics during the Academy. In order to keep the classes interesting and the students busy, the teaching format varies between the use of lecture, videos, demonstrations, and hands-on exercises. The topics covered in the Academy will be selected from the following list:

1. Introduction (Academy Overview, Justice Center Tour, etc.)
2. Crime Scene Investigations
3. Gangs
4. Child Abuse and Neglect
5. Vice Operations
6. Traffic Stops
7. D.U.I. and Crash Investigations
8. Building Searches
9. Defensive Tactics and the Use of Force
10. Police K-9s
11. Explosive Ordnance Disposal
12. S.W.A.T. Team Demonstration

All students who complete the requirements for graduation will be recognized at a meeting of the Kingsport Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Please complete and sign all documents enclosed in this packet, so we can begin to process your application right away. We look forward to seeing you in our next session.