

READY FOR A RIDE-ALONG?

My experience riding with a Trooper in the Mat-Su Valley

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Have you ever thought about being an Alaska State Trooper or wondered what their job entails? If so, you should consider requesting a ride-along.

The Alaska State Troopers conduct ride-alongs more often than you may think. Most people who request this experience are potential recruits, this provides them with a front row seat to what their job might look like. Some passengers are legislative aides sent by Alaska representatives to learn about the challenges of our great state and challenges specific to the State Troopers. Others are simply curious civilians, like myself.

The Troopers work twelve-hour shifts, and the ride-along typically takes half that time. You could do a ride-along in almost any location that has a trooper post, from southcentral Alaska to the northwest. They are happy to oblige.

I enjoyed my ride-along experience with Trooper Ledford, who is stationed at the Palmer Post in B-Detachment. He was very helpful in answering all of my questions and ensured my comfort throughout the day. We responded to multiple calls, including one involving a trailer that turned over while carrying heavy equipment, temporarily shutting down the Parks Highway. Thankfully, no one was injured and the road required minimal repairs. Thanks to the Alaska State Troopers, the Mat-Su Fire Department and a Good Samaritan, the road was cleaned up within a few hours and safe for driving. Our second request for assistance involved a disturbance which ultimately lead to a trespassing warrant.

B-Detachment, consisting of the Matanuska region, including Palmer and Wasilla among other communities, is a large area. Many people don't realize that this is about the size of West Virginia. Although it's large in size, there are no more than seven troopers on duty at a time. According to a staffing study conducted earlier this year, there is a large need for more troopers all across the state. Therefore, there is a large focus on recruitment and retention these days. All in all, officers like Trooper Ledford are doing their best to patrol areas to keep the public safe.

Other than the occasional traffic stop and frequent calls for help, Troopers often receive requests for public information, for instance; insurance organizations and defense attorneys requesting details about client cases. Communication with the public in an important part of a trooper's job that many people don't often think about. In all aspects of their job, the Troopers are diligent in what they do, handling tricky situations with integrity and courage.

If you would like to find out more about your Alaska State Troopers, request a ride-along by contacting your local [trooper post](#). Share your Trooper experience with us on Facebook and Instagram at Alaska State Troopers (Official).



A dump truck lost its load when it merged onto the Parks Highway in the Mat-Su Valley. Traffic in the area was backed up while AST and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement investigated. The driver was ultimately cited for improperly securing the load.



Troopers in the Valley were onscene for approximately three hours investigating a wreck involving improperly loaded heavy equipment. The highway sustained minor damage.



A Trooper patrol vehicle parked along the Parks Highway during an investigation. To learn about becoming an Alaska State Trooper, visit us at: [HTTP://www.alaskastatetrooper.com](http://www.alaskastatetrooper.com)

