

Sheriff



Larry Ashley, Okaloosa County Sheriff

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Phone: (850) 651-7410, Email: Sheriff@sheriff-okaloosa.org

December 1, 2015

OCSO ACHIEVES NATIONAL ACCREDITATION



The OCSO is now the first and only law enforcement agency in Northwest Florida to be awarded National Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. In fact, fewer than five percent of the 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the nation are nationally accredited. The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office has achieved this gold standard in public safety.

The national CALEA program is the primary method for an agency to voluntarily demonstrate its commitment to excellence. The OCSO was awarded Advanced Law Enforcement Accreditation at CALEA's National Winter Conference in Miami November 21, 2015.

"This prestigious designation is evidence that the OCSO is committed to providing enhanced service to the citizens of Okaloosa County while upholding the highest standards of law enforcement practices in training, policies and procedures," said Sheriff Larry Ashley. "Our agency earned statewide accreditation from the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation in July 2010. Now we've joined the less than five percent of law enforcement agencies in the nation to have earned National Accreditation. It is evidence of our willingness to continually strive for superior performance while at the same time embracing transparency and innovation. We believe this commitment puts us among the nation's leaders in law enforcement professional development."

The standards focus on department policies, and operational procedures such as police training, use of force, emergency preparedness, and accountability. Compliance with these standards means a law enforcement agency both follows a code of conduct recognized by its law enforcement peers, the legal system and the public and also meets the best professional requirements and practices for agencies nationwide.

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Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation
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opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate"

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The program reflects the current thinking and experience of law enforcement practitioners and researchers. Major law enforcement associations, leading educational and training institutions, governmental agencies, as well as law enforcement executives internationally, acknowledge CALEA's Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies© and its Accreditation Program as benchmarks for today's law enforcement agency.

- CALEA Accreditation requires an agency to develop a comprehensive, well thought out, uniform set of *written directives*. This is one of the most successful methods for reaching administrative and operational goals, while also providing direction to personnel.
- CALEA Accreditation standards provide the necessary reports and analyses a CEO needs to make fact-based, informed *management decisions*.
- CALEA Accreditation requires a *preparedness program* be put in place—so an agency is ready to address natural or man-made unusual occurrences.
- CALEA Accreditation is a means for developing or improving upon an agency's *relationship with the community*.
- CALEA Accreditation strengthens an agency's *accountability*, both within the agency and the community, through a continuum of standards that clearly define authority, performance, and responsibilities.
- Being CALEA Accredited can limit an agency's *liability and risk exposure* because it demonstrates that internationally recognized standards for law enforcement have been met, as verified by a team of independent outside CALEA-trained assessors.
- CALEA Accreditation facilitates an agency's pursuit of *professional excellence*.

To link to a video featuring a CALEA assessor who visited the OCSO, Sheriff Larry Ashley, And OCS Professional Compliance and Accreditation Manager Robert Norris click here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYQjIwV_nuY



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