PURPOSE

This pamphlet is intended to provide the Stafford County Sheriff's Office employee and the citizens of Stafford County a view of the governing policies that provide the foundation upon which the Sheriff's Office stands. These Policy Statements are broad in nature and designed to provide the fundamental operational philosophy of the Sheriff's Operation.

MISSION STATEMENT

The entire membership of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office participated in the development and adoption of a Mission Statement that is the guiding principal of the Sheriff's Operation. It is reproduced in this Order as a preamble to the policy statements that follow:

We, the men and women of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with our community, are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life by maintaining order, protecting life and property, and reducing the fear of crime.

We will ensure the peace and safety of all citizens by upholding the Constitution of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

As leaders of the community, we will embrace our core beliefs:

Integrity – Compassion – Fairness - Professionalism.

As a team we are, "Committed to Excellence" through:

Integrity

We will earn and maintain the trust of our citizens by being personally and professionally accountable to the highest ethical and moral standards. We will conduct ourselves above reproach, mindful of justice, with the courage to uphold these convictions.

Compassion

We will treat everyone with dignity, respect and understanding. We will be responsive to the community and each other by being caring, sensitive and conscientious.

Fairness

We will maintain a standard of what is right and proper, free from self-interest, prejudice or favoritism. We will be consistent, objective and just in all our actions.

Professionalism

We will provide quality service through motivated, dedicated and well-trained employees. Our actions, attitudes and appearance will demonstrate self-discipline, attention to duty and service to our community

Duty, Powers, and Jurisdiction:

PRIMARY DUTY: The Stafford County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) exists to safeguard the lives and safety of all persons within Stafford County, Virginia; to protect property; and to assist in securing to all persons the equal protection of the law. The SCSO has the responsibility to preserve the public peace; to detect and prevent the commission of crime; to enforce the Laws and Ordinances of the Commonwealth and County; to apprehend and arrest criminals and those who violate or are lawfully accused of violating such Laws and Ordinances; to preserve order at public places; to maintain the safe and orderly flow of traffic on public streets and highways; to cooperate with and assist law enforcement agencies in carrying out their respective duties, and to discharge its duties and responsibilities with the dignity and manner that will inspire public confidence and respect.

BASIC DUTIES AND POWERS: The duties and powers of the SCSO, with respect to law enforcement, are concurrent with similar powers and duties conferred by law upon other law enforcement agencies of the Commonwealth in their respective jurisdictions. Technological developments, changes in the population and economy of the Commonwealth, and other factors directly related to proper law enforcement require effective cooperation between all such agencies in order to provide efficient utilization of equipment, personnel, information and prompt means of collection, analysis and dissemination of information relevant to the duties of all such agencies. The duties imposed upon the Stafford County Sheriff's Office must be construed to promote such effective cooperation.

JURISDICTION: Members of the SCSO shall exercise full law enforcement authority on land, water and air within the territorial limits of Stafford County, Virginia, except:

- In places ceded to or acquired by the United Commonwealths or lawfully used by the Federal Government for naval, military, postal, customs or other purposes, or

- As limited by applicable law.

Operational Policy and Principles:

The following material reflects the broad operational Policies and Principles to which the Stafford County Sheriff's Office adheres, or in which the Stafford County Sheriff's Office believes. Official Policy is not intended to be static. Some ideas may remain unaltered for years and others may be subject to complete reversal. The following Policy statements represent a general outline of social thought and philosophy upon which the Stafford County Sheriff's Office is prepared to stand.

Law Enforcement Discretion:

The complex nature of modern law enforcement operations requires that law enforcement exercise discretion on both administrative and operational levels. To enumerate the specific ways in which discretion may be exercised is a formidable task and one that can never fully cover the

various circumstances a Deputy, Supervisor or Administrator might confront.

Therefore, all sworn members of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office shall retain the broad power of law enforcement discretion that is inherent in American Law Enforcement. However, some limitations will be imposed.

- Discretion will be exercised when it serves the ends of justice and the community as a whole.

- In juvenile matters, the welfare of the juvenile will govern the exercise of law enforcement action. Diversion from this system is a goal of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office which is attained through the development and perpetuation of programs designed to prevent and control juvenile delinquency.

- Exercise of discretion will be strictly governed in specific areas that are enumerated throughout the Procedural sections of the Manual of Policy and Procedure. (Examples: Arrest, Force, Reporting, etc.)

- A deputy must necessarily exercise discretion in the enforcement of the laws because of:

  a. The limited resources available to them.
  b. The inherent ambiguity of some laws.
  c. The possibility that an alternative to law enforcement action can accomplish the purpose of the law.

- Discretion will never be exercised to favor an individual, a group, an organization, a political party, or a special interest. In the same vein, discretion will never be used against any of the above.

Crime

Criminality, like poverty, unemployment and poor housing, is a community problem-not a problem for law enforcement alone. We have a responsibility for preventing and suppressing crime and for solving crime once it has occurred, but law enforcement cannot prevent every crime from happening or solve every crime that is committed. We require the active cooperation, assistance and moral support of the community we serve.

For crime to occur, three (3) factors must be present: motivated offender, suitable target, and an absence of capable guardianship. The function of law enforcement works to remove the offender through apprehension tactics, remove the target through crime prevention techniques and supply guardianship through directed patrols.

Intelligence

A law enforcement agency must keep itself informed of the activities of those who are known to be, or suspected of, engaging in criminal enterprises and must disseminate such information among those members to whom it may be useful. The public has a responsibility to inform law enforcement of situations and conditions which may lead to the discovery of criminal activity or to the apprehension of a criminal. It is the function of law enforcement to encourage the public to fulfill this obligation.

Crime Prevention

The best means available to law enforcement in the prevention of crimes is aggressive patrol in public places by uniformed deputies in conspicuously marked cars. The total resources of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office shall be deployed throughout the County in accordance with the demonstrated need for patrol and law enforcement calls for services. The determination as to what type of patrol and how much patrol is to be used in any given area is dependent upon an analysis of types of crime and incidents in that area. The Stafford County Sheriff's Office also adheres to the concept of reducing crime through proactive Crime Prevention programs.

Every Deputy is accountable for crime and safety hazards that exist in his/her area of patrol; and, he/she has a responsibility for eliminating those hazards that can lead to crimes and accidents.

This same deputy has the function of conducting preliminary investigations of crimes, to make immediate arrests during preliminary investigations of crimes, to make arrests when required and to obtain all available information that might assist in the detection and apprehension of an offender. After a crime has occurred, it is of no value to concentrate deputies at the scene of the crime except for the purpose of seeking witnesses, attempting to identify and apprehend the criminal and collecting physical evidence for investigative purposes. It is the duty of supervisory personnel to assure that deputies who are not required at the scene of a crime are promptly returned to their normally assigned duties.

Informing the Public

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office has an obligation to educate the public to prevent crimes and accidents. The public has an obligation to heed this advice. Command personnel are encouraged to meet with community groups to discuss law enforcement problems whenever the need or opportunity arises.

It is the Policy of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office to cooperate with all news media unless such cooperation hampers the progress of an on-going investigation or the rights of an accused person. –It is the Policy of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office to encourage public speeches, publications, radio and television presentations by members of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office to further public understanding of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office's operation and objectives.

Enforcing the Law

The primary purpose of enforcing the law is to enable citizens to be free from criminal attack - to enjoy freedom of movement and conduct themselves within the framework of existing laws. Enforcement of the law will necessarily restrict the liberties and freedom of movement of those persons who, by engaging in criminal activity, interfere with the rights of others. To arrest such a person is not a denial of the criminal's Civil Rights because no individual or group has the right to violate the law.

The administration of criminal justice is related to a punitive process; those who are guilty should be punished. Punishment, the certainty of punishment and the fear of punishment generate respect for, and obedience to, the Law. Nonetheless, it is better to prevent a crime, accident or disturbance than it is to deal with it once it has occurred.

As the frequency of crime increases, the number of arrests and prosecutions for criminal conduct will also increase.

Enforcement must be selective to be most effective in decreasing the number of crimes. Selective as to time and place; directed at the locations of greatest frequency during the hours of the day, day of the week, and season of the year. It must also be selective as to the relative importance of violations. Enforcement must be directed at those categories of offenses that are most susceptible to prevention by patrol.

Selectivity does not mean activity, observation, or enforcement directed towards a specific group of people because of their ethnic, racial, or sexual preference. Racial Profiling is not an acceptable practice and is not tolerated by the Stafford County Sheriff's Office.

Domestic Violence

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office recognizes the importance of reducing violence or the threat of violence in the homes of our citizens. It shall be the policy of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office to thoroughly investigate all matters dealing with domestic violence and take proper action to prevent recurrence.

Deputies responding to domestic violence calls shall respond in a manner that is consistent with the goal of crime intervention. Domestic violence shall be responded to as the criminal activity it is.

Domestic Violence calls will receive priority response in relation to all other assault calls. Due to the continued nature and the dynamics of Domestic Violence, the Stafford County Sheriff's Office response will be upgraded for such calls to ensure the safety of all family members.

Traffic Supervision

Our primary objectives in traffic supervision is to save lives, to prevent accidents and to expedite the flow of traffic. We believe that reducing the number of traffic violations through enforcement will reduce the number of vehicle collisions and traffic fatalities. There is a direct correlation between the quality of enforcement and the degree of safety experienced on the streets and highways.

Enforcement efforts will be concentrated against violations at times and places that give rise to the greatest number of collisions. Conspicuous patrol by marked cars constitutes the principal means of accomplishing the objective of promoting proper driving. Unmarked patrol vehicles may be used in conjunction with enforcement methods.

Enforcement action, under routine circumstances, shall be taken in those cases that pose the most serious threat to life and property.

- These include removal from the highways individuals who are driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol;

- Strict enforcement of speed and reckless driving violations as governed by Commonwealth Law, and;
- Issuing citations to those who commit hazardous moving violations.

Deputies are expected to exercise discretion. It is proper to warn a violator when, in the opinion of the deputy, the violation was unintentional and non-hazardous or when conditions indicate that our final objective is achieved as effectively as if a summons were issued.

When multiple violations occur during the same time frame, Deputies are expected to act as in any other traffic violation. However, Deputies should be alert to the possibility of other factors that may have contributed to the improper operation of the vehicle. Thus, requests for reexamination by the Virginia Department of Transportation may be in order in the case of elderly or youthful drivers.

New traffic regulations or laws require an educational period. It is the policy of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office to provide this education through the use of warnings during the initial period of the new law or regulation.

Use of Force

The use of excessive force by a Law Enforcement Officer is the ultimate in discourtesy and misconduct. Brutality is the use of force where it is not required or resistance has ceased. The justifiable use of force, where authorized under the law, when making an arrest, preventing the escape of a criminal, or in protecting the life of the deputy or of another person is not brutality. Deputies shall use physical force only when persuasion, advice and warnings are found to be insufficient to obtain cooperation; and then only the minimum degree of physical force necessary to obtain compliance shall be used. This does not mean a deputy should hesitate or retreat when immediate physical response is required.

Civil Disturbances

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office will deal quickly and decisively with any civil disturbance.

In civil disturbances there is a temptation to avoid or delay taking action in the hope that the problem will dissipate of its own accord or that it will be solved by local leaders and other citizens; this should be sought and encouraged. However, in accepting such services a deviation from normal law enforcement practices and normal community life must not be permitted. Ignoring hazardous situations and hoping that they will resolve themselves often results in a worsening of the incident(s) because a disorder tends to increase in size and to become more destructive when ignored.

Investigations

When law enforcement has reason to suspect that a crime has been committed, is being committed or is about to be committed, an inherent duty exists to investigate to ascertain the facts, to arrest anyone there is reason to believe is responsible, or to take action to prevent a crime from being committed. The purpose of an investigation is to determine the true facts of the crime so that the guilty may be brought to justice. Every legal means available to ascertain the truth should be exhausted.

Processing the Offender

All citizens of this country are guaranteed certain basic constitutional safeguards. These safeguards shall not be denied to any citizen even though he/she is suspected of having committed, or in fact has committed, a criminal offense.

Deputies are under obligation to:

- Be consistent with court decisions, advise a prisoner of his/her constitutional rights.

- Permit the prisoner to communicate with his/her attorney and, as situations warrant, with a member of his/her family.

- Expedite Procedures so that he/she will be detained no longer than necessary.

- Provide for his/her appearance at the first court call after his/her arrest whenever feasible.

- Respect the right to refuse to give evidence against him/herself.

Deputies should have a reasonable period of time to complete their investigation, but at the same time, recognize an obligation to complete the investigation with reasonable swiftness. Should the investigation establish the innocence of the suspect, he/she should immediately be released.

In offenses of a regulatory nature, that are usually marked by the absence of a specific victim, the deputy must use discretion in deciding whether the law enforcement objective is best served by an arrest, by a summons, or by a courteous warning. The deputy shall avoid actions that humiliate, inconvenience, or distress the inadvertent minor violator.

Courtesy

The attitude of law enforcement towards the public must always be courteous and helpful. Deputies must strive to be objective in dealing with offenders. For a citizen to offend a Law enforcement Deputy's personal feeling is not a crime. A citizen will not be physically or psychologically mistreated.

Nothing does more to upgrade the public image of law Enforcement or to enlist public cooperation and support than courtesy. We must be firm but in a courteous, considerate and respectful way. Law enforcement courtesy is courtesy in a broader sense. It embodies a sense of human kindness, respect for rights of the individual including an individual in law enforcement custody. It

includes avoiding condescending language or provocative actions and gestures.

Human Relations

Deputies shall never show any bias or prejudice, talk down to, or use any derogatory terms in reference to any group or individual because of race, religion or other affiliation. All persons are entitled to be treated with complete courtesy and with the respect due to every person as a human being.

Civil Rights

All persons are entitled to seek redress of grievances through free speech, peaceful assembly and peaceful picketing. This does not mean that everyone expressing opinions or beliefs may do so at any place or at any time without regard for the maintenance of public order or in violation of the law. The laws of our country and Commonwealth are written for all the people. It is Sheriff's Office Policy to take whatever action may be necessary to enforce the laws that protect the rights and property of all citizens. This means arresting those who break the law. Conflict can be prevented when there is respect for law and order and for the civil rights and privileges of all.

Personnel

Each employee of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office, regardless of his/her assigned task, is an important member of the Sheriff's Office since each task contributes toward the achievement of our basic objectives. Personnel policies are intended to obtain the best individual that is suited for the job to be accomplished.

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office has an obligation to attract and recruit the most competent individuals available to its sworn ranks since it is upon the recruits of today that the future leadership of the Sheriff's Office will depend. Intelligent and well-educated personnel dedicated to developing a successful career in law enforcement should be sought. Recruitment of personnel of this caliber will promote our attainment of professional status.

In like manner the Sheriff's Office will attempt to attract civilian personnel who wish to provide strong, dedicated, professional support to the sworn members of the Office.

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office has an obligation to develop a personnel program that will meet the needs of members of the Sheriff's Office for career development and proper placement.

Training

Training is a continuing process. The goal of training is to improve the performance of employees, foster cooperation and unity of purpose, and make the Stafford County Sheriff's Office more efficient in the accomplishment of its mission. Training is a function of command. Each Administrator and Sheriff's Supervisor has, as part of his/her overall supervisory task, the responsibility of training subordinates.

All members of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office are encouraged to improve themselves by furthering their education and thereby contributing to the resources of the Sheriff's Office. The function of the Training Officer is to identify training needs, to foster training throughout the Stafford County Sheriff's Office, to provide in-service

training as well as special training opportunities and to train recruits.

Training materials used or furnished to individual members of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office during the course of recruit or in-service training shall be considered as part of the operational procedures of this Office and as such are required performance levels for all members.

Discipline

Discipline is a function of command. Supervisors are given authority to fulfill their assigned responsibilities and are expected to exercise their authority to that end. When discipline fails, a determination must be made as to whether the blame rests with the member or with the Supervisor.

Discipline is not synonymous with punishment. Punishment is normally resorted to only when leadership and supervision have failed. A well-disciplined Sheriff's Office is not a well-punished one. Rather, discipline is a force that supports voluntary compliance with all Sheriff's Office's Policy and Orders. It follows then that a well-disciplined Sheriff's Office has little need of punishment.

Violations of Policy and Orders require disciplinary action. In recommending punishment, the motive of the offender should be considered as a factor when making recommendations.

Internal Investigations

Law Enforcement is required to ensure public compliance with standards of conduct established by Law. Therefore,

law enforcement is obligated to ensure the same compliance by members of Law Enforcement organizations. The standard of conduct to which law enforcement personnel must adhere has been held to be at a higher level than that expected of the average citizen (Court decisions support this premises).

Through resentment against law enforcement authority, some citizens accuse law enforcement personnel of misconduct without having any basis for doing so. An objective investigation serves to support the employee who is endeavoring to do his/her job properly and provide relief from the fear of punishment from allegations that are unfounded. At the same time, it ensures to the citizen with a legitimate complaint the impartial review of the matter and the appropriate disciplinary action. To protect both citizens and the Sheriff's Office, all complaints against employees must and will be immediately investigated thoroughly and objectively.

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office is fully justified in utilizing all investigative procedures and techniques that are legally available to ensure the absence of criminal activity or violations of Sheriff's Office Policy and Orders by its employees. The information contained in disciplinary reports and files shall be treated confidentially. These files shall be maintained separately from other records in a secure file, open only to the Sheriff and his designees. As outlined in the Virginia Code these files are exempt from the Freedom of Information Act.

The need for a variety of continuous checks to assure compliance with established Policy and Orders is recognized. An awareness that such a check is being made does not constitute an affront to the employee; rather, it is a

reminder of the sensitive nature of the work and the need to maintain high standards of conduct.

It is in the interest of every member to rid the Stafford County Sheriff's Office of those who have, by their conduct, betrayed the trust placed in them and injured the reputation of the Sheriff's Office. A law enforcement employee is a responsible person and must answer for a violation like any other citizen. Therefore, if a member of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office protects another member against disciplinary action, it is cause for stringent disciplinary action. Protection of wrong doers undermines the confidence of the public in law enforcement.

Responsibilities of Supervision

It is the Supervisor's function to direct the work of others. His/Her success is based upon the performance of his/hersubordinates. As a leader, the supervisor has the responsibility to influence those under his/her direction by motivating them to perform at high levels of efficiency. The morale of a group is a reflection of the quality of supervision.

A supervisor is a director of subordinates; an evaluator in assessing their productivity, their strengths and their weaknesses; their instructor; and a communicator of performance, both to higher authority and to subordinates. Supervisors are required to report accomplishments, needs and productivity of subordinates to higher authority.

Supervisors are an integral part of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office's administration. In the Supervisory role, these individuals function on behalf of management and

communicate to higher command those matters of concern to his/her subordinates.

Supervisors have the major responsibility of facilitating internal communication. It is their function to keep subordinates informed, to explain Policies and Orders along with the reasoning behind the order, and to stop rumors by obtaining and reporting facts.

Supervisors are the conduit through which information flows from top to bottom and bottom to top. Thus, Command Staff is aware of issues on the operational level as well as operational staff understanding the wishes of command.

External Control

Discipline is a function of command and therefore a reflection of the effective or ineffective exercise of command. As such, disciplinary power must remain under the control of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office and cannot rest with an agency, panel, or committee outside the Sheriff's Office.

Interference with Stafford County Sheriff's Office discipline has an adverse effect upon law enforcement performance. It destroys morale and introduces unwholesome influences into the disciplinary process. It will foster attitudes weakening a Deputy's determination to do his/her best to enforce the law.

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office should not, and does not, resist duly constituted civilian control or direction, but supports the premise that effective management of the law enforcement must be carried on through the normal chain

of command. The Sheriff is responsible for the performance of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office and the accomplishment of objectives. In performing his duties as Sheriff, he is accountable directly to the citizens.

The Professional Attitude

The professional law enforcement employee is one who is respected by persons with whom he/she comes in contact, who handles every situation with a minimum of conflict, who uses discretion in the enforcement of the law and who does not become personally offended or emotionally involved in any situation. A professional learns to recognize and analyze impulses that may arouse reactions that jeopardize public safety within the individual deputy or within the persons with whom he/she interacts.

An understanding of these impulses gives the employee a greater degree of self- control and makes him/her more understanding of a citizen's behavior. This understanding also eliminates expressions of personal prejudice and any unjustifiable action thereby inspiring in the citizen a greater degree of respect and cooperation.

Loyalty

Every member of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office has an obligation to be loyal to his or her superiors and to the government that employs them, (so long as those to whom he/she is responsible are acting lawfully and in accordance with Stafford County Sheriff's Office Policies) as long as he/she remains an active member of the Sheriff's Office.

Loyalty, like friendship, is a dual process. All supervising and command staff must have a concern for the welfare of

their subordinates and a responsibility to support them in their proper actions.

Gratuities and Rewards

Gratuities must be refused because they degrade the law enforcement profession and the Stafford County Sheriff's Office. Standing rewards by commercial concerns are against Sheriff's Office and public Policy. Their intent is to secure special privilege in law enforcement service or protection at the expense of law enforcement service to the public. Non-material awards such as commendations and citations are not objectionable because the recipient is determined after the law enforcement action has taken place and is elected from a number of candidates.

Bribery

It is an insult to a law enforcement professional and the institution he/she represents to offer him/her a bribe. Those who bribe or attempt to bribe a law enforcement employee contribute to the deterioration of law enforcement. Any person who attempts to bribe a law enforcement employee will be arrested, and prosecuted as will the employee who accepts a bribe.

Eliminating Law Enforcement Misconduct

Collusion between law enforcement and criminals, the shakedown of motorists and merchants, the fixing or adjusting of citations and other similar acts of law enforcement misconduct can only result in the miscarriage of justice. Such acts undermine honest efforts to enforce the law and are harmful to the image of the law

enforcement profession as well as the Stafford County Sheriff's Office

Good conduct is not only the responsibility of the individual law enforcement employee, but of every individual employee regardless of position. Misconduct will not be tolerated by the Stafford County Sheriff's Office at any level.

Mistakes

The person who makes no mistakes is the person who takes no action. Any action involves a prior decision. A force the size of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office is required to make hundreds of decisions each day. There must inevitably be some mistakes in judgment or action.

Citizens are not as incensed by a mistake as they are by law enforcement efforts to conceal or deny it. Openly admitting a mistake is the first step toward correcting the mistake that is made. Three (3) things must be done:

- It must be freely admitted, without fear or attempts to shift the blame.

- Steps must be taken to correct the procedures or attitudes that made such a mistake possible.

- The mistake must be rectified. An apology may suffice; however, if injury or damage is involved, appropriate compensation for damages must be found.

Uniforms, Equipment, Quarters

The uniform must command respect for it identifies the Deputy as a representative of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office. It should be in good condition, clean, well pressed and buttoned at all times. The uniform must be worn with pride and in a way to bring credit to the Sheriff's Office. Investigators, or non-uniformed members, while not on a special assignment, must dress in a manner that will also bring credit to the Sheriff's Office.

Equipment furnished to members of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office is the property of the County. There are no individual proprietary interests in such equipment. It is available for use by personnel having occasion to need it in the performance of their assigned tasks.

The appearance of a law enforcement facility reflects the operating efficiency of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office. The public should not be given the impression that only criminals have business in the Sheriff's Headquarters. The public should be encouraged to visit law enforcement facilities and every effort is to be made to make these facilities clean, neat and attractive. The basic responsibility for maintaining all facilities rests with the Supervisor of the Unit occupying the quarters.

Stafford County Sheriff's Office Policies and Orders

Stafford County Sheriff's Office Policies and Orders are the product of staff consideration. Each Policy or Order, in its formative stage, is subject to review by command personnel. In this manner, all available experience and knowledge is brought to bear on the particular problem under consideration. The end product represents the best thinking of the command staff of the Sheriff's Office along with thoughtful research into national best practices. Once

adopted, it is incumbent upon all personnel to support the Policy and Orders and to work for its successful implementation.

Law Enforcement Management

The Sheriff's Office is much like a large business enterprise and it must be operated as such to be efficient.

Personnel Resource: The most costly item of law enforcement expenditures resides in the Personnel Resources of the organization. Command personnel must constantly guard against it being utilized uneconomically. Every effort must be made to resist assuming tasks that are non-law enforcement in nature and which deplete the personnel available to perform the Stafford County Sheriff's Office's basic function. The best measure of the ability of Command and Supervisory personnel is the economic and effective use of manpower.

Crime Statistics: Crime statistics reflect only those crimes that are either reported to law enforcement or discovered by them. Many crimes occur in the County that are not reported and therefore are not reflected in crime statistics.

Statistics alone cannot be used as a means for comparing the efficiency of one Sheriff's Office with that of another. There are so many environmental and sociological factors that cause or influence crime and accidents that statistics alone are of little value for this purpose.

The primary value of statistics is their contribution to internal management efforts.

Statistics can be effectively used in measuring day-to-day activity; in comparing one month against another to detect trends; in measuring workloads in various parts of the County at various times of the day or seasons of the year.

Planning: Planning is a continuing process of systems and operations analysis. The objective of planning is the development of new methods and techniques for eliminating unnecessary tasks and improving Sheriff's Office operations. An organization that does not plan becomes stagnant.

Records: It is our Policy to record accurately and completely information relating to all criminal incidents and traffic accidents reported to the Stafford County Sheriff's Office in addition to the action taken by the Sheriff's Office. This is the only means by which patterns of activity, (both criminal and traffic), can be identified, the size and nature of our problems analyzed, and proper and effective action taken. The recording of a crime, traffic accident, and all other calls for service provides the information upon which the Stafford County Sheriff's Office relies to plan for and accomplish tasks.

Inspections: Written Policies and Orders alone will not provide a more efficient operation. There is a need for ensuring that Policies and Orders are properly implemented and followed. A program of Sheriff's Office inspections conducted through periodic checks ensures that established Policy and Orders are in fact being followed. Beyond this, all command personnel have a responsibility for a continuing program of field inspections to acquaint themselves with operational problems and to elicit compliance with established Policy and Orders.

Internal Evaluation: The natural extension of the inspection process is an internal evaluation process to ensure that the Stafford County Sheriff's Office is meeting goals and objectives that have been set by the Sheriff. The evidence that this evaluation is being carried out will be accomplished through Activity Reports that are submitted on a daily, monthly or yearly basis by each Unit of the Sheriff's Office.

Discrimination

It is the Policy of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office, in conjunction with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, that no Sheriff's Office employee shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or political affiliation or belief, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, be subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in any programs or activities enjoyed by other members of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

It is in the victim's best interest to directly inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The victim should immediately inform the Sheriff through established complaint mechanisms within the Sheriff's Office.

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Supervisors are encouraged to take steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring.

Ethical Responsibilities

Every member of the Sheriff's Office has certain basic personal responsibilities as a member of the law enforcement service. He/She also has specific responsibilities as a member of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office. The latter is reflected in the Stafford County Sheriff's Office Oath of Office.

"I, _____, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge all the duties incumbent upon me as Deputy Sheriff, according to the best of my ability, so help me God."

Ethics in Law Enforcement Service

In America, where the supremacy of public opinion is assured, it is essential that the system upon which public safety depends is developed to a high degree of efficiency and that it is administered in a manner to assure the continued approbation and respect of the public.

Rules cannot be drawn that will prescribe in specific detail the manner in which all the duties of law enforcement deputies shall be performed. The problems of law enforcement service are many and they are subject to the influences of the constant development of public administration. The Code of Conduct outlined in General Orders prescribes the areas that are required to support the ethical operation of the Sheriff's Office.

The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics

The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics is reproduced in this Policy Statement because it is a fundamental part of the Policy of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office. It can also be found in the General Order that establishes the Code of Conduct for sworn members of the Sheriff's Office.

"As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; to respect the constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the Law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accept gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of law enforcement service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession - law enforcement.”