



ADMINISTRATION			205.00	
<div></div> <div>ACCREDITATION MANAGEMENT AND FAMILIARIZATION</div> <div></div>				
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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide guidance to the members of the Punta Gorda Police Department regarding the establishment of an accreditation management system and orientation program that provides for the administration, maintenance, and follow-up of the law enforcement accreditation process.

## SCOPE

This procedure shall apply to all Punta Gorda Police Department personnel.

## DISCUSSION

It is the policy of the Punta Gorda Police Department to maintain a system that ensures that periodic reports, reviews, and other agency activities mandated by law enforcement accreditation standards are accomplished and that all members are familiar with the accreditation process. It is further the policy of the Punta Gorda Police Department to achieve and maintain state accredited status by meeting and exceeding Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc.,

standards. All agency members shall make a concerted effort to constantly improve professionalism throughout the Police Department.

## DEFINITIONS

1. **Accreditation:** The bestowing of credentials symbolizing approval from a professional organization upon practitioners or specific institutions. It is a progressive and time-proven way of helping organizations evaluate and improve their overall performance.
2. **Professional Standards Specialist:** The Professional Standards Specialist is responsible for organizing and supervising agency resources and activities to achieve and maintain accredited status.
3. **Assessors:** Individuals representing the CFA Commission who evaluates an agency's compliance with accreditation standards. These individuals receive special training through the CFA to perform this role. Members of the Punta Gorda Police Department holding the rank of Lieutenant or above and the Professional Standards Specialist may be considered for this role.
4. **Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA):** An international law enforcement accreditation body, also referred to as "International Accreditation."
5. **CALEA Recognition:** A program formed as a result of an alliance between CALEA and CFA featuring "core standards" that permits agencies to demonstrate professional accomplishments while addressing high liability and critical organizational issues. This program is no longer available.
6. **Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc (CFA):** The law enforcement accreditation body for the state of Florida, also referred to as "State Accreditation."
7. **Excelsior Status:** The agency has accomplished the first accreditation and five reaccreditations without conditions.
8. **Florida Police Accreditation Coalition, Inc. (FLA-PAC):** A not-for-profit organization representing a coalition of Florida criminal justice agencies working together to achieve and maintain accredited status. FLA-PAC provides a network for criminal justice professionals that encourages communication, mutual cooperation, support, and the sharing of resources in the pursuit and maintenance of accreditation.
9. **Mock On-Site Assessment:** A trial run for the final On-Site Assessment conducted prior to the final On-Site Assessment. The Mock On-Site Assessment involves the examination of proofs of compliance, inspections, and interviews by accreditation assessors to

discover any shortcomings so adjustments and corrections can be made prior to the formal On-Site Assessment.

10. **On-Site Assessment:** The final three (3) day examination of proofs of compliance, inspections, and interview of agency personnel by accreditation assessors to verify that the agency complies with applicable accreditation standards.
11. **Proof(s) of Compliance:** Verification by documentation and/or demonstration that the agency fully complies with the letter and spirit of an accreditation standard.
12. **Self-Assessment:** A process by which the agency endeavors to achieve compliance with applicable standards, establish proofs of compliance, and facilitate the mock and final on-site assessments. Review of organizational, managerial, operational, and administrative operations are conducted during this time period. Self-Assessment is generally conducted within the three (3) year period between on-site assessments, or within the two-year period prior to an initial on-site inspection.
13. **Standard:** Declarative statement that places a clear-cut requirement, or multiple requirements, on an agency.

## PROCEDURE

### I. THE PUNTA GORDA POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

- A. Current Status - The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. (CFA), 2331 Phillips Road, Tallahassee, FL, 32308, (800) 558-0218.
- B. Agency History
  1. The Punta Gorda Police Department was initially accredited by CFA on May 27, 1998, in Clearwater Beach, FL, and was the 11th municipal Police Department in the State of Florida. The on-site assessors were Captain Kim Bogart (Pasco County Sheriff's Office), Sergeant R. W. French (Jacksonville Sheriff's Office), and Captain Bob Peryam (Monroe County Sheriff's Office).
  2. The Police Department achieved re-accredited status three years later on May 23, 2001, in Clearwater Beach, FL. The on-site assessors were Captain John Schmidt (Leon County Sheriff's Office), Special Agent Supervisor Tim Elder (FL Department of Law Enforcement), and Assistant Chief Robert Garlo (Tequesta Police Department).
  3. The agency achieved a second re-accreditation award through CFA on June 23, 2004, in St. Petersburg Beach, FL. The on-site assessors were Major Rob Homan (Lee

- County Sheriff's Office), Accreditation Manager Dianne Hill (Hernando County Sheriff's Office), and Sergeant John Gazzano (Pembroke Pines Police Department).
4. For the first time in agency history, the Department achieved National Recognition through CALEA at the 74th CALEA Conference, on July 31, 2004, in Buffalo, NY.
  5. On June 6, 2007, the department earned a third re-accreditation award through CFA at Hutchinson Island, FL. The on-site assessors were Deputy Chief Jeffrey Chudnow (Coral Springs Police Department), Special Agent Supervisor Sandra Wilson (Florida Department of Law Enforcement), and Lieutenant John Hankins (Cocoa Police Department). The alliance agreement between CFA and CALEA was dissolved; therefore, the Punta Gorda Police Department did not participate in the CALEA recognition process.
  6. On June 1, 2010, the department earned a fourth re-accreditation award through CFA at Bonita Springs, FL. The on-site assessors were Retired Chief Billy Walls (Florida Department of Environmental Protection), Chief Ron Cave (Florida Department of Environmental Protection), and Sergeant Andrew McIntosh (St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office).
  7. On June 27, 2013, the department earned the prestigious Excelsior re-accreditation award through CFA at Bonita Springs, FL. The on-site assessors were Captain Janet Hartman (Department of Financial Services, Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigation), Chief Van Toth (Hialeah Gardens Police Department), and Lieutenant Raymond Beltz (Jacksonville Sheriff's Office).
  8. On June 22, 2016, the department earned a sixth re-accreditation award through CFA at Champions Gate, FL. The on-site assessors were Ms. June Esposito (Retired), Sergeant Patricia Stanton (Temple Terrace Police Department), and Officer Daniel Sacher-Brown (University of South Florida Police Department).
  9. On June 26<sup>th</sup> 2019, the department earned their seventh re-accreditation (third Excelsior) through CFA at Champions Gate in Orlando, FL. The on-site assessors were Deputy Chief Mark Foxworth (Fernandina Beach Police Department), Major Sabrina Maxwell (Bureau of Law Enforcement, Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco), and Major Robert Parmelee (Lauderhill Police Department).
  10. On June 16<sup>th</sup> 2022, the department earned their eighth re-accreditation (fourth Excelsior) through CFA at Champions Gate in Orlando, FL. The on-site assessors were Retired Captain Keely Weaver (Florida Highway Patrol), Accreditation Manager Lisa Iannone (Hernando County Sheriff's Office), and Sergeant James Strenth (Cassleberry Police Department).

## II. BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION

- A. **Historical Perspective** - In 1993, [Florida Statute 943.125](#) directed that the Florida Sheriffs' Association and the Florida Police Chiefs' Association create a voluntary state law enforcement accreditation program. Today, the Commission consists of chiefs of police, sheriffs, a city manager, a county commissioner, a state law enforcement agency head, a state inspector general, and a circuit judge from across the State of Florida. The Commission meets three times a year to oversee the accreditation program and to officially accredit agencies which have passed the rigorous review process.
- B. **Benefits** - Accreditation recognizes professional excellence and is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a law enforcement agency. The accreditation process provides the following benefits:
1. Provides a thorough review of agency status and readiness every three (3) years;
  2. Reinforces the agency's ability to maintain the highest standards of professional law enforcement services;
  3. Ensures that policies and procedures are documented in writing and defensible;
  4. Ensures that the agency is trained and functioning according to established policies and procedures;
  5. Strengthens the agency's defense against lawsuits and complaints;
  6. Increases community pride and employee morale through statewide recognition;
  7. Assures government leaders of the quality of services delivered by their local law enforcement agency;
  8. Provides a quality work environment for well-trained professionals which aids in retaining and recruiting qualified personnel;
  9. Ensures professional review of agency operations, personnel practices, and training policies.

## III. THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

- A. **Inspection Cycle** - The Punta Gorda Police Department is reviewed every third year for reaccreditation.
- B. **Self-Assessment** - Self Assessment is the period between each accreditation on-site.

1. Self-Assessment involves a thorough examination by the agency to determine whether it complies with all applicable standards.
2. The agency prepares forms and develops “proofs of compliance” for applicable standards (including brief explanations for not complying with other standards) and assembles the forms and “proofs” in a manner that will facilitate review by the assessors.
3. The agency also develops plans for accomplishing its public information requirements, mock on-site assessment, and final on-site assessment, which pertain to activities for each phase.

#### C. Mock On-Site Assessment

1. The agency selects an assessment team, at the discretion of the chief of police, to conduct a mock onsite assessment to determine the agency’s readiness to proceed to the final on-site assessment.
2. The “mock” assessor(s) provide the agency with verbal feedback on the progress and readiness for final inspection at the end of the assessment. No written report is provided.
3. The Punta Gorda Police Department generally conducts mock assessments approximately thirty (30) days prior to the onset of the final on-site inspection.

#### D. On-Site Assessment

1. The Commission selects the assessment team and schedules all activities for the assessment team’s travel, accommodations, and on-site review of the agency during a period mutually agreeable to all parties.
2. During the on-site visit, the assessors (usually three), acting as representatives for the Commission, review all standards, and in particular, verify the agency’s compliance with all applicable standards.
3. Assessors provide the agency with verbal feedback on their progress during and at the conclusion of the assessment.
4. The assessors submit a formal written report of their on-site activities and findings and the agency is scheduled for a Commission review.
5. If any compliance issues remain unresolved, the agency may complete unfinished work, or it may choose other options (i.e., appeal or voluntary withdrawal).

#### E. Commission Review

1. The assessors' final report is forwarded to the Commission when all applicable standards and required activities have been complied with.
2. The Commission schedules a hearing at one of its meetings, usually the meeting immediately following the on-site assessment.
3. At the hearing, the Commission reviews the final report and receives testimony from agency personnel, assessors, CFA staff, or others.
4. If satisfied that the agency has met all compliance requirements, the Commission awards the agency accredited status for a three year period.

#### F. Maintaining Accredited Status

1. To maintain accredited status, the accredited agency must remain in compliance with all applicable mandatory standards and a minimum of 80% of non-mandatory standards.
2. The agency submits an annual report to the Commission attesting to continued compliance and reporting changes or difficulties experienced during the year, including actions taken to resolve non-compliance.
3. The Commission reserves the right to schedule interim hearings to consider continuing accredited status if non-compliance becomes a serious issue.

### IV. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS SPECIALIST

#### A. Selection and Authority

1. The Professional Standards Specialist is appointed by the Chief of Police and is a non-sworn member of the department.
2. The Professional Standards Specialist has direct access to all agency commanders, supervisors, and other members whose expertise or authority is needed for the successful operation of the accreditation process.

#### B. Responsibilities - The Professional Standards Specialist is considered a facilitator and coordinator for agency personnel to assist them in complying with the professional standards mandated by accreditation and is responsible for the following:

1. Managing the accreditation function/process to include the Power DMS software for program tracking;
2. Ensuring that the department is adhering to all accreditation standards;

3. Ensuring all standard files contain all necessary and proper proofs of compliance;
  4. Maintaining the official tracking system for the accomplishment of time sensitive activities, and accessibility by all agency personnel;
  5. Drafting new or revising written directives or assigning writing projects to subject matter experts or supervisors to achieve accreditation objectives;
  6. Ensuring that revisions of all departmental written directives are in compliance with accreditation standards;
  7. Ensuring that all agency written directives are reviewed by staff a minimum of once every accreditation cycle to ensure that the procedure is current;
  8. Maintaining master and archive files for agency written directives;
  9. Ensuring that department members are familiar with and educated about the accreditation process;
  10. Keeping the Chief of Police updated on the department's accredited status;
  11. Ensuring that CFA standard revisions are complied with as soon as possible;
  12. Properly preparing and submitting the required CFA Annual Report;
  13. Preparing agency personnel and standard files for each mock and final on-site assessment;
  14. Keeping abreast of the latest developments in the accreditation process by attending FLA-PAC and Commission meetings;
  15. Keeping CFA staff abreast of any changes in the department's accredited status;
  16. Conducting random, unannounced inspections of agency personnel and facilities for the purpose of assessing compliance with accreditation standards; and
  17. Assisting any department personnel with accreditation-related questions or activities.
- C. Training: If an employee is assigned to the position of accreditation manager during the current accreditation cycle, they shall receive specialized accreditation manager training, as defined by the agency, within one year of being appointed to the position.

## V. CONTINUED COMPLIANCE



- A. It is the responsibility of all department supervisors to ensure continued compliance with all standards applicable to their component and to familiarize personnel about applicable standards. Division/Section Commanders are specifically responsible for their component's compliance with accreditation standards.
- B. The Professional Standards Specialist will assist all components in maintaining compliance.
- C. Supervisors who propose revisions or amendments to directives and procedures must forward copies of the proposal to the Professional Standards Specialist for verification that the revisions are in compliance with accreditation standards.

## **VI. PROOFS OF COMPLIANCE**

- A. Department members shall provide proofs of compliance by either documentary or other means, to the Professional Standards Specialist upon request or when appropriate. The specific nature of these requests shall be defined by the Professional Standards Specialist in accordance with applicable accreditation standards.
- B. Schedule of Time Sensitive Activities - The Professional Standards Specialist shall maintain and update as needed a Punta Gorda Police Department "Schedule of Time Sensitive Activities". This schedule contains time sensitive reports and/or activities that are required to comply with accreditation standards and department procedures. It shall be the responsibility of the Professional Standards Section Supervisor to liaison with department members and supervisors to ensure that required reports and activities are submitted as needed.

## **VII. ACCREDITATION FAMILIARIZATION**

- A. An overview of the accreditation process will be provided to all new members of the Police Department during their orientation and/or field training. This overview will include:
  - 1. History and background of law enforcement accreditation;
  - 2. Goals and objectives;
  - 3. Involvement of and impact upon the agency;
  - 4. Advantages of obtaining accreditation; and
  - 5. The actual accreditation process.

- B. Familiarization with the accreditation process may be achieved through classroom instruction, e-mail, and memorandum(s).
- C. The Employee Development Coordinator is responsible for coordinating accreditation training and maintaining the training documentation.

**APPROVED**



**PAMELA R. SMITH, CHIEF OF POLICE**

**STAFF REVIEW DATES:** 09-15-2003, 08-09-2004, 08-08-2007, 05-09-2011, 03-18-2013, 01-16-2017, 01-29-2019, 11-03-2020, 06-03-2022, 05-30-2024

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