



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Michael Terry
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Re: HCSO Awarded Re-Accreditation from Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission

Date: June 17, 2022

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office Detention Center earned re-accreditation status during the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC) meeting on June 15, 2022 in Orlando.

This was the Hernando County Sheriff's Office Detention Center's third re-accreditation since its initial accreditation in 2013.

The FCAC onsite inspection took place over three days, April 5-7. This inspection team was comprised of inspectors from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Leon County Sheriff's Office, and Monroe County Sheriff's Office.

The inspectors were charged with reviewing three years of documentation, observing daily operations, interviewing staff, and interviewing the inmate population to verify compliance with the standards.

The inspection team found the Hernando County Detention Center in full compliance with the 257 total applicable standards. Of these 257 standards, 180 were mandatory and 77 were non-mandatory standards.

The lead inspector, Chief Ruben Bryant from JSO, submitted his report to the FCAC recommending the Hernando County Detention Center be re-accredited for the third time.

The accreditation process benefits many. Beyond being a professional review of agency operation, personnel practices and training policies, it reinforces an agency's ability to maintain the highest standards of professional law enforcement and detention services. In providing a thorough review of an agency's current status and readiness, it assures

government leaders and the public that the quality of services being delivered are second to none and that well trained staff are maintaining the public trust.

The FCAC standards far exceed the minimum state standards of the Florida Model Jail Standards.

Sheriff Nienhuis states, “Although accreditation does not eliminate the possibility of something going wrong, it significantly reduces or eliminates the risk and liability that creeps in when best practices are not updated or maintained. This can happen easily and unintentionally in a detention environment if there is not ongoing review by expert external audits. The public can be assured that their tax dollars are not being exposed to unnecessary risk in Hernando County's Detention Center.”

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.