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1/17/2023

**ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT TEAM TO EXAMINE OCEAN COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE; INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT**

TOMS RIVER - A team of assessors from the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) are scheduled to examine all aspects of the Ocean County Sheriff's Office policies and procedures, management, operations, and support services on Feb. 2 and 3, announced Ocean County Sheriff Michael G. Mastronardy.

"Verification by the team that the Ocean County Sheriff's Office meets the Commission's 'best practice' standards is part of a voluntary process to achieve accreditation, a highly prized recognition of law enforcement professional excellence," Mastronardy said.

As part of this final on-site assessment, employees and members of the general public are invited to provide comments to the assessment team. They may do so by telephone or email. The public can call (732) 929-4748 from 11 a.m. to noon on Feb. 3. Email comments can be sent to InternalAffairsOCSheriff@co.ocean.nj.us.

Telephone comments are limited to five minutes and must address the agency's ability to comply with the NJSACOP standards. For information about the standards, contact Captain Robert Woardell at (732) 288-7630.

Anyone wishing to offer written comments about the Ocean County Sheriff's Office's ability to comply with the standards for accreditation is requested to email the Accreditation Program Director at hdelgado@njsacop.org or write the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission, 751 Route 73 North, Suite 12, Marlton, N.J. 08053.

The Ocean County Sheriff's Office must comply with NJSACOP Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (LEAP) standards in order to achieve accredited status.

"Accreditation results in greater accountability within the agency, reduced risk and liability exposure, stronger defense against civil lawsuits, increased community advocacy, and more confidence in the agency's ability to operate efficiently and respond to community needs," Mastronardy said.

According to the Accreditation Program Director for the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police Harry J Delgado, Ed.S. "the assessment team is composed of law enforcement practitioners from similar New Jersey law enforcement agencies.

"The assessors will review written materials, interview agency members, and visit offices and other places where compliance with the standards can be observed," Delgado said. "Once the Commission's assessors complete their review of the agency, they will report to the full Commission, which will then decide if the agency is to be granted accredited status."

Accreditation is valid for a three-year period during which time the agency must submit annual reports attesting to their continued compliance with those standards under which it was initially accredited.

“The Ocean County Sheriff’s Department, under the direction of Sheriff Mastronardy, does an outstanding job in protecting our citizens and also implementing programs that assist and provide outreach to all of our communities,” said Ocean County Commissioner Gary Quinn, liaison to the Sheriff’s Department. “The Board of Commissioners is proud of the work done by this office.”

The New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police through its New Jersey Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission is the legitimate authority and accreditation agency in the state of New Jersey. For more information regarding the Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission please write the Commission at New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission at 751 Route 73 North, Suite 12 Marlton, N.J. 08053 or email hdelgado@njsacop.org

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