


# MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## General Order

<b>CHAPTER:</b> 056		<b>TITLE:</b> Career Development Program
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> May 15, 2009	<b>NO. PAGES:</b> 6	<b>REVIEWED/REVISED:</b> November 29, 2022
 Sheriff of Monroe County		

I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for a Career Development Program.

II. **DISCUSSION:** This directive applies to all Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) personnel. A well-designed and administered Career Development Program is in existence to benefit the individual and the office. The program will promote productive, efficient and effective job performance and improve individual job satisfaction.

### III. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A. **Career Development Program:** The MCSO Career Development Program is comprised of the following:

1. Tuition Reimbursement Program
2. Salary Incentive Monies
3. Career Counseling
4. Temporary Assignment Requests
5. Training following Promotion
6. Management and Supervisory Training
7. In-Service Training Program

#### B. Tuition Reimbursement Program

1. Undergraduate Studies: Higher education allows personnel to gain a more thorough understanding of society, to communicate more effectively and to engage in the exploration of new ideas and concepts. Personnel are encouraged to achieve a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university.
  - a. Applying for the Tuition Reimbursement Program for undergraduate studies:
    - 1) Member must have been a full-time member of MCSO for a minimum of two years.
    - 2) Member must provide documentation that he/she qualifies for admission to pursue undergraduate studies, for credit, at an accredited college or university.

- 3) The course of study to be pursued by the member must be directly related to their work and current activities or some reasonably foreseeable possible assignment with MCSO.
  - 4) Member must have a documented work history of successful performance in their position. MCSO reserves the right to deny assistance to those members who are not performing in their job satisfactorily, either prior to the request or during their pursuit of a degree. A copy of the member's last two performance evaluations will be included with the application.
  - 5) Member must complete the Tuition Reimbursement Application form.
- b. The minimum time period for employment and MCSO approval must be satisfied prior to beginning instruction for which reimbursement will be requested.
  - c. The information mentioned above will be forwarded, through the chain of command, to the appropriate division commander for approval. The application will be forwarded to the director of Training to be reviewed for completeness, bureau commander for approval and to the Sheriff for final approval. A copy of the approved request shall be forwarded to the Training and Finance Divisions, and the original will be retained by the applicant.
2. Graduate Studies (Master's degree only): MCSO understands the value of higher education and recognizes the public benefit of employing highly-skilled, well-educated individuals. Given the complexity and/or the scope of management responsibilities required of certain positions, MCSO must determine a public benefit exists for a particular member to obtain a Master's degree.
    - a. Persons applying for the Tuition Reimbursement Program for graduate studies (Master's degree only) shall:
      - 1) Have been a full-time member of MCSO for a minimum of five years.
      - 2) Be a senior command staff officer who is recommended by their supervisor. The member's supervisor shall explain the benefit of a graduate level curriculum to both the member and MCSO in their recommendation. The course of study to be pursued by the member must be directly related to their work and current activities or some reasonably foreseeable possible assignment with MCSO.
      - 3) Have a documented work history of successfully performing in a senior management position MCSO reserves the right to deny assistance to those members who are not performing in their job satisfactorily, either prior to the request or during their pursuit of a degree. A copy of the member's last two performance appraisals will be included with the application.
      - 4) Complete the Tuition Reimbursement Application form. The minimum time period for employment and approval by the Sheriff must be satisfied prior to beginning instruction for which reimbursement will be requested.
    - b. The information mentioned above will be forwarded through the chain of command, to the appropriate division commander for approval. The application will be forwarded to the director of Training to be reviewed for completeness, bureau commander for approval, and to the Sheriff for final approval. A copy of the approved request will be forwarded to the Training and Finance Divisions, and the original will be retained by the applicant.
3. Reimbursement Procedures

- a. Members receiving any other type of educational financial aid or assistance may be eligible for partial reimbursement of tuition costs that not covered by other means.
- b. Tuition will be reimbursed based on the following:
  - 1) For all freshmen (1XXX) and sophomore (2XXX) level classes, tuition will be reimbursed at the College of the Florida Keys (CFK) current per-credit-hour fee.
  - 2) For all junior (3XXX) and senior (4XXX) level classes, tuition will be reimbursed at Florida International University's current per-credit-hour fee.
  - 3) For course work directed towards a Master's degree (5XXX and 6XXX), tuition will be reimbursed at Florida International University's current per-credit-hour fee.
- c. The Human Resources Division will maintain a listing of the current, approved tuition rates as outlined above. Any additional costs incurred above these amounts will be the responsibility of the member.
- d. Upon successful completion of an approved course, reimbursement will be made at the rates outlined below:
  - 1) Grade of A – member will be eligible for 100% tuition reimbursement
  - 2) Grade of B – member will be eligible for 75% tuition reimbursement
  - 3) Grade of C – member will be eligible for 50% tuition reimbursement
  - 4) Grade of Pass (for courses graded as pass/fail) – member will be eligible for 50% tuition reimbursement
- e. Only the cost of the actual course tuition will be reimbursed. Late fees, lab fees, refundable deposits, books, travel and other incidental expenses are not reimbursable. Members who are mandated to attend a course for performance-related issues will be reimbursed 100% upon registering for the course.
- f. Members approved for tuition reimbursement under this policy are eligible for reimbursement of up to a maximum of 45 credit hours per calendar year.
- g. Requests for reimbursement shall be submitted to the Finance Division. The request must include an official record of the grade earned, a receipt for the tuition paid, a copy of the approval for reimbursement and a copy of all grants or other funding mechanisms the member received in connection with the payment of the tuition. Members will only receive reimbursement for the actual costs incurred after grants and other funding mechanisms are deducted. Reimbursement requests must be made within 30 days of the completion of the course.
- h. Members who request permission to participate in this program agree to remain with MCSO for a period of two years from the course completion date for undergraduate studies and three years for graduate studies. Members who separate employment without satisfying the agreed period of employment will be charged on a pro-rata basis for the reimbursed tuition. These costs will be deducted from the member's final paycheck.
- i. The tuition reimbursement program is contingent upon available funds. The program may be terminated at any time at the discretion of the Sheriff. Applicants will be notified prior to the program ceasing.

- j. Members who have successfully met the requirements necessary to obtain an Associate, Bachelor or Master's degree, whether through MCSO's reimbursement program or the member's own initiative, will be granted leave with pay on their graduation day. Should the graduation fall on a regularly scheduled day off, the member will be granted a day off within the same payroll period the graduation occurs in. Requests for leave under this section shall be submitted to the Sheriff via the chain of command.
  - k. Members who have been previously approved for tuition reimbursement and who are currently enrolled in classes, shall be governed by the policy in place when they began their course work. All other members shall be governed by this revised policy and must meet the criteria outlined above.
  - l. Members who receive discipline while participating in the tuition reimbursement program may be deemed ineligible for continued participation in the program.
- C. Tax Liability:** Members receiving tuition reimbursement should be aware that a portion of that reimbursement may be taxable as income under IRS rules. Such rules may vary from year to year. Finance will report all reimbursement according to IRS rules.
- D. Salary Incentive Monies:** Law enforcement and correctional deputies will be paid educational incentive monies according to Florida Law (Section 943.22, F.S.). MCSO personnel are encouraged to pursue the educational incentive monies available by statute. 943.22 Salary Incentive Program for full-time officers.
1. For the purpose of this section, the term:
    - a. "Accredited college, university, or community college" means a college as defined in F.S. 943.22.
    - b. "Bachelor's degree" means graduation from an accredited college or university.
    - c. "Community college degree or equivalent" means graduation from or completion of at least 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours at an accredited college, university or community college.
  2. A basic salary incentive shall be paid to any law enforcement officer who was entitled to such payment under this paragraph as it existed immediately prior to October 1, 1984.
    - a. Any full-time officer who has a community college degree or equivalent shall receive the sum of \$30 per month in the manner provided for in paragraph (h).
    - b. Any full-time officer who receives a bachelor's degree shall receive an additional sum of \$50 per month in the manner provided for in paragraph (h).
    - c. Any full-time officer who completes 480 hours of approved career development program training courses on or before June 30, 1984 shall receive the sum of \$120 per month. Any full-time officer who is entitled to full or proportional career development salary incentive payments, on or before June 30, 1985 shall continue to receive such payments. On or after July 1, 1985, any officer who completes a combination of 480 hours of approved advanced and career development training courses shall receive the sum of \$120 per month. The commission, by rule, may provide for proportional shares for courses completed in 80-hour units in each program in a manner provided for in paragraph (h).
    - d. The maximum aggregate amount, which any full-time officer may receive under this section, is \$130 per month. No education incentive payments shall be made for any law

enforcement or correctional position for which the class specification requires the minimum of a 4-year degree or higher. No contributions shall be required and no benefits shall be paid under the provisions of the Florida Retirement System with regard to any payment made under the provisions of this section.

- e. Nothing in this section may be construed to permit or require retroactive salary incentive payment.
  - f. No employing agency shall use, or consider as a factor, any salary incentive payment for the purpose of circumventing payment of any salary or compensation plan which provides normal pay increases periodically to its officers.
  - g. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement has established rules as necessary to provide effectively for the proper administration of the salary incentive program, which shall include, but not be limited to:
    - 1) Proper documentation and verification of any claimed training or education requirement.
    - 2) Proper documentation and verification that the employing agency has provided in its salary structure and salary plans salary incentive payments for full-time officers as required in this section.
    - 3) Proper documentation and verification that training received for purposes of salary incentive payment is job-related.
  - h. Each employing agency shall annually submit reports to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement containing information relative to compensation of full-time officers employed by it.
  - i. The employing agency shall be responsible for the correct salary incentive payment to full-time officers. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement may, in a post-audit capacity, review any action taken and order the correction of any error committed by an employing agency.
- 3. If an officer holding concurrent certification is transferred or reassigned within the same employing agency, they will adhere to the guidelines regarding salary incentive as outlined in F.S. 943.22.
  - 4. No individual filling a position in the senior management service as defined in Florida Statute 110.402 is eligible to participate in the salary incentive program authorized by this section.

#### **E. Career Counseling**

- 1. When a supervisor conducts an Annual Performance Evaluation he/she shall discuss with the member:
  - a. Their career goals
  - b. The impact of the performance rating on those career goals
  - c. Actions, training and career pathing the member can pursue.
- 2. This counseling shall be documented by the member and rating supervisor signing on the Performance Evaluation form in the space provided.

3. Training: commanders and directors conducting career counseling activities are to issue and read the Supervisors Career Counseling Self Study Guide.

**F. The Training Division shall schedule approved training.** Approved training consists of:

1. Annual in-service training
2. Advanced, Specialized and Instructor Training courses certified by the Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (FCJSTC). A copy of these courses are available from the Training Unit
3. Specialized training programs conducted by reputable training institutes
4. Basic Recruit Training

**G. Temporary Assignment Requests:**

1. Personnel may request, via the chain of command, temporary assignments to specialized areas within the office such as Investigations, Crime Prevention, Staff Inspections, etc. The assignment will be for a minimum of one month to allow an individual first-hand knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of a desired assignment.
2. Personnel may request, via the chain of command, a temporary assignment to a semi-permanent shift in order to attend classes at local schools or institutions. Efforts shall be made to assist personnel who desire to further their education.

**H. Training following Promotion:** As personnel are promoted, it will be the responsibility of the member's immediate supervisor to ensure that the skills necessary to perform at the level of promotion are provided prior to promotion or immediately following the promotion.

**I. Management and Supervisory training:** will be a key element in the Career Development Program. It will be a major factor in enhancing a member's overall potential for upward mobility. Such training may take place through the FCJSTC or Career Development Courses of Mid-Management and Line Supervision.

**J. In-Service Training Program:** The Training director or his/her designee and the Human Resources director shall develop, maintain and administer proficiency in-service training programs to keep members up-to-date on the duties and responsibilities of the job presently being performed.