

**MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**General Order**

<b>CHAPTER:</b> 2		<b>TITLE:</b> Office Direction
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> January 5, 2010	<b>NO. PAGES:</b> 4	<b>AMENDED:</b> February 3, 2014
<b>REFERENCE:</b> CALEA 11, 12		<b>RESCINDS:</b>

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Directive is to establish guidelines for Office Direction.

**DISCUSSION**

This Directive shall apply to all Sheriff's personnel. The Sheriff of Monroe County, Florida is charged with protecting the lives and property of its citizens and guests. Naturally, there may be times when the Sheriff is outside the boundaries of Monroe County or may be otherwise incapacitated making it difficult for him to carry out the mandates of his Office. Therefore, to ensure that the Office will continue to function in an orderly fashion, the following system of succession is established to ensure that leadership is available when the Sheriff is incapacitated, out of town, or otherwise unable to act. Procedures and policies have been established to ensure accountability of Supervisors, to resolve conflicting orders, and to coordinate efforts and communication through staff meetings. In addition, policies have been established to define Authority & Responsibility and Unity of Command.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

• **Order of Succession**

In the event the Sheriff of Monroe County is incapacitated, off duty, out of town, or otherwise unable to act, command shall automatically succeed in the following order, unless otherwise directed:

- Planned absences
  - Undersheriff (Colonel)
  - Major, Bureau of Law Enforcement
  - Major, Bureau of Corrections
  - Chief, Bureau of Administration
  - Designated Commander/Captain
- Exigent circumstances – Where the Sheriff and Undersheriff both are incapacitated or otherwise unable to act, command shall automatically succeed in the following order:
  - Major, Bureau of Law Enforcement
  - Major, Bureau of Corrections
  - Chief, Bureau of Administration
  - Law Enforcement Commander/Captain by Seniority.

- **The Undersheriff is responsible for the day to day operations of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office.**

- **Accountability**

In the areas of command, the Sheriff has appointed certain personnel to supervisory roles in order to carry out the effective administration of his Office. These supervisory personnel are accountable for the performance of those under their immediate control. Effective direction, coordination, and control are required from each level of supervision within the Office.

In order to become aware of what is expected of each Member of the Office and to further promote efficiency and responsibility, each Member will be accountable to only one Supervisor at any given time.

- **Obedience to Orders**

Members shall promptly obey all lawful orders issued by a superior or other competent authority. This includes orders relayed from a superior by a member of the same or lesser rank.

- Unlawful Orders

- No member shall obey an order, which is contrary to law.
- No member shall be disciplined for refusing to obey an unlawful order.
- A member receiving such an unlawful order shall report the circumstances in writing, via the chain of command, to the appropriate Bureau Command as soon as possible.

- Conflicting Orders: A subordinate given a lawful order that conflicts with a previous order, shall advise the person issuing the second order of this fact. Responsibility for countermanding the original order then rest with the person issuing the second order. The member shall not be held accountable for disobeying the original order.

- Unjust or Improper Orders: Members receiving lawful orders they feel are unjust or contrary to agency directives, shall first obey the order to the best of their ability, then report the circumstances, in writing, via the chain-of-command, to their Division Command.

- Unclear Orders: Members in doubt as to the nature, meaning or details of a lawful order will seek clarification from the person issuing such order.

- **Staff Meetings**

- So that as much conflict as possible can be avoided and to enhance the effective and efficient operation of the Office, it is important that all Members communicate. To accomplish this, staff meetings are to be held at all levels within the organization and written minutes should be kept.

- Once a week, the Sheriff and his immediate staff will meet to discuss policy, operational decisions, and/or other matters of importance. The appropriate content of those meetings will be passed onto the staff Members' subordinate Supervisors.

- Supervisors will meet weekly with their respective staffs to discuss matters of importance and shall forward necessary matters back to those members of the Sheriff's immediate staff for discussion at the Sheriff's staff meetings.
- All Members of the Office shall be advised of the necessary content of the staff meetings through their respective Supervisors and shall have access for input on matters they deem appropriate.  
[CALEA 12.1.4]

- **Unity of Command**

- Each member shall be accountable to only one supervisor at any given time.
- Each organizational component shall be under the direct command of only one supervisor.
- Command Protocol - In order to avoid confusion and discord, it is imperative that guidelines be established to designate command responsibility when a particular operation involves personnel from different components within the Sheriff's Office.
  - Major Operations - In any long-term operation involving personnel from various components, command shall be assumed by the commander of the component responsible for the operation, or a person designated by the Sheriff.
  - ICS Command will be followed in accordance with the All Hazard Plan.
  - Crime Scene - When two Supervisors of the same rank are at a crime scene, the Supervisor of the investigative component shall have command of the crime scene.
- At the scene of any major incident, the assigned Deputy shall be responsible for initiating an incident report.
- The assigned Deputy or his supervisor may request a detective if they determine such a need exists.
- If a serious criminal offense has occurred, the Communications Section shall follow prearranged call-out procedures. Upon arrival at the scene, the assigned detective shall assume investigative responsibility and coordinate any additional support personnel required.

- **Delineation of Responsibility**

- The Office shall maintain, through the Human Resources Division, an updated statement of the duties and responsibilities of each job assignment within the Office.
- A statement of the duties and responsibilities of each job assignment and of each organizational component is made available to all personnel through Human Resources.
- Organizational Component Responsibilities - See Chapter 1.

- **Authority and Responsibility**

- It is the policy of the Sheriff that every member of his/her Office be granted the appropriate authority to effectively execute his/her area of responsibility. Each member will be accountable for the exercise of his/her authority.

- It is also important for those personnel in a supervisory role to know how and when to delegate their authority. All members will be fully accountable for the use of delegated authority, as well as for the failure to use it.