
Policy Manual

103.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The manual of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is hereby established and shall be referred to as the Policy Manual or the manual. The manual is a statement of the current policies, procedures, rules and guidelines of this office. All members are to conform to the provisions of this manual.

All prior and existing manuals, orders and regulations that are in conflict with this manual are rescinded, except to the extent that portions of existing manuals, orders and other regulations that have not been included herein shall remain in effect where they do not conflict with the provisions of this manual.

103.2 POLICY

Except where otherwise expressly stated, the provisions of this manual shall be considered as guidelines. It is recognized that the work of law enforcement is not always predictable and that circumstances may arise which warrant departure from these guidelines. It is the intent of this manual to be viewed from an objective standard, taking into consideration the sound discretion entrusted to members of this office under the circumstances reasonably available at the time of any incident.

103.3 DISCLAIMER

The provisions contained in the Policy Manual are not intended to create an employment contract nor any employment rights or entitlements. The policies contained within this manual are for the internal use of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office and shall not be construed to create a higher standard or duty of care for civil or criminal liability against the County, its officials or members. Violations of any provision of any policy contained within this manual shall only form the basis for office administrative action, training or discipline. The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office reserves the right to revise any policy content, in whole or in part.

103.4 AUTHORITY

The Sheriff shall be considered the ultimate authority for the content and adoption of the provisions of this manual and shall ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws. The Sheriff or the authorized designee is authorized to issue Special Orders, which shall modify those provisions of the manual to which they pertain. Special Orders shall remain in effect until such time as they may be permanently incorporated into the manual.

103.5 DEFINITIONS

The following words and terms shall have these assigned meanings, unless it is apparent from the content that they have a different meaning:

Adult - Any person 18 years of age or older (Md. Code CJ § 3-8A-01).

APS - Adult Protective Services.

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County - The County of St. Mary's.

Professional Staff - Employees and volunteers who are not sworn peace officers.

CJIS - Maryland Criminal Justice Information System.

COMAR - Maryland Code of Regulations (Example: COMAR 10.38.03.02).

Custodian of Records - The authorized person having physical custody and control of the records of the Office (Md. Code GP § 4-101).

Office/SMCSO - The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

DJS - Maryland Department of Juvenile Services.

DPSCS - Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

Employee - Any person employed by the Office.

Manual - The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Policy Manual.

May - Indicates a permissive, discretionary, or conditional action.

Md. Code - Maryland Annotated Codes (Example: Md. Code PS § 1-301). Following are abbreviations for sections of the Maryland Annotated Codes referenced in this Policy Manual:

- **CJ** - Courts and Judicial Procedure
- **CL** - Commercial Law
- **CP** - Criminal Procedure
- **CR** - Criminal Law
- **CS** - Correctional Services
- **ED** - Education
- **EL** - Election Law
- **ET** - Estates and Trusts
- **FL** - Family Law
- **GP** - General Provisions
- **HG** - Health – General
- **HS** - Human Services
- **IL** - Insurance Law
- **LE** - Labor and Employment
- **LG** - Local Government
- **NR** - Natural Resources
- **PS** - Public Safety

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- **SG** - State Government
- **SP** - State Personnel and Pensions
- **TG** - Tax – General
- **TR** - Transportation

Md. Const. - Maryland Constitution (Example: Md. Const. Art. IV § 44).

MDOT - Maryland Department of Transportation.

Member - Any person employed or appointed by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, including:

- Full- and part-time employees
- Sworn peace officers
- Reserve, auxiliary deputies
- Professional Staff employees
- Volunteers

METERS - Maryland Electronic Telecommunications Enforcement Resource System.

MPTSC - Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission.

MSP - Department of Maryland State Police.

MVA - Motor Vehicle Administration.

OAG - Maryland Office of the Attorney General.

Deputy - Those employees, regardless of rank, who are sworn members of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

On-duty - A member's status during the period when the member is actually engaged in the performance of assigned duties.

Order - A written or verbal instruction issued by a superior.

Peace Officer - Those employees, regardless of rank, who are sworn members of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

Rank - The title of the classification held by a deputy.

Shall or will - Indicates a mandatory action.

Should - Indicates a generally required or expected action, absent a rational basis for failing to conform.

Supervisor - A person in a position of authority that may include responsibility for hiring, transfer, suspension, promotion, discharge, assignment, reward, or discipline of other office members, directing the work of other members or having the authority to adjust grievances. The supervisory

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exercise of authority may not be merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the use of independent judgment.

The term "supervisor" may also include any person (e.g., deputy-in-charge, lead or senior worker) given responsibility for the direction of the work of others without regard to a formal job title, rank, or compensation.

When there is only one office member on-duty, that person may also be the supervisor, except when circumstances reasonably require the notification or involvement of the member's off-duty supervisor or an on-call supervisor.

103.6 ISSUING THE POLICY MANUAL

An electronic version of the Policy Manual will be made available to all members on the office network for viewing and printing. No changes shall be made to the manual without authorization from the Sheriff or the authorized designee.

Each member shall acknowledge that he/she has been provided access to and has had the opportunity to review the Policy Manual and Special Orders. Members shall seek clarification as needed from an appropriate supervisor for any provisions that they do not fully understand.

103.7 PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE POLICY MANUAL

The Sheriff will ensure that the Policy Manual is periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

103.8 RECOMMENDATIONS/REVISIONS FOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Sheriff's Office employees recommend the development or revision of Policies and Procedures whenever it appears such additions or changes are necessary or beneficial. Pursuant to approval by the appropriate Division Commander, the recommendations are submitted electronically to the Accreditation Manager. They should be submitted in Word format with only the proposed recommendations in red ink. Once the recommendation is reviewed for Accreditation compliance, it is then forwarded to the Sheriff/Assistant Sheriff for comments, further recommendations and approval. Once the final approval is returned to the Accreditation Manager, he/she will initiate the implementation process.

- (a) When an employee submits a draft policy or procedure revision, he/she will submit it electronically through the following chain:
 1. Division Commander
 2. Accreditation Manager
 3. Assistant Sheriff
- (b) Once the new directive or proposed revisions are considered, found not to contradict other existing agency directives or applicable law, and approved at each level, the final draft is approved for publication and incorporated into the agency manual.
- (c) Number Assignment - Policy numbers are assigned by the Accreditation Manager.

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Previous versions of policies and procedures are archived in the Lexipol Knowledge Management System (KMS) and all orders are archived in PowerDMS for the purpose of tracking changes and revisions as well as for historical record.

103.9 REVISIONS TO POLICIES

All revisions to the Policy Manual will be provided to each member on or before the date the policy becomes effective. Each member will be required to acknowledge that he/she has reviewed the revisions and shall seek clarification from an appropriate supervisor as needed.

Members are responsible for keeping abreast of all Policy Manual revisions.