

# Longwood University Police Department

## VLEPSC Accreditation Team

Longwood University Student Affairs

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### Overview of Accreditation

The [Virginia Sheriffs' Association](#), the [Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police](#) and the [Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services](#) (DCJS) make up the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC). Executive board members consisting of active Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police establish professional standards and administer the accreditation process by which Virginia agencies can be systematically measured, evaluated, and updated. DCJS manages the day-to-day operations for the Commission.

The Commission's goals include the following: To increase the effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth through the delivery of services; To promote cooperation among all components in the criminal justice system; To ensure the appropriate level of training for law enforcement personnel; To promote public confidence in law enforcement; and; To promote the professionalism of law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **Effect of Accreditation in the Community and to the Campus**

Accreditation increases the law enforcement agency's ability to prevent and control crime through more effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services to the community it serves. Accreditation enhances community understanding of the law enforcement agency and its role in the community as well as its goals and objectives. Citizen confidence in the policies and practices of the agency is increased. Accreditation, in conjunction with the philosophy of community policing, commits the agency to a broad range of programs (such as crime prevention, alcohol awareness, etc.) that directly benefit Longwood's students and support its central mission. Accreditation creates a forum in which police and citizens work together to control and prevent crime. This partnership will help citizens to understand the challenges that confront law enforcement. Law enforcement will, in turn, receive clear direction from the community about its expectations. Thus, a common set of goals and objectives will be arrived at and implemented.

## **Effect of Accreditation to the Chief of Police or Sheriff**

Accreditation increases cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies and other branches of the criminal justice system. The accreditation process requires an in-depth review of every aspect of the agency's organization, management, operations, and administration to include:

- establishment of agency goals and objectives with provisions for periodic updating;
- re-evaluation of whether agency resources are being used in accord with agency goals, objectives, and mission;
- re-evaluation of agency policies and procedures, especially as documented in the agency's written directive system;
- correction of internal deficiencies and inefficiencies before they become public problems;
- the opportunity to re-organize without the appearance of personal attacks.

The accreditation standards provide norms against which agency performance can be measured and monitored over time. Accreditation provides the agency with a continuous flow of Commission distributed information about exemplary policies, procedures, and projects. Accreditation provides objective measures to justify decisions related to budget requests and personnel policies. Accreditation serves as a yardstick to measure the effectiveness of the agency's programs and services. The services provided are defined, and uniformity of service is assured. Accreditation streamlines operations, providing more consistency and more effective deployment of agency manpower.

## **Effect of Accreditation to the Police Officers**

Accreditation requires that agency policies and procedures are in written form and are available to all agency personnel at all times. Accreditation assures employees that every aspect of the agency's personnel system is in accord with professional standards, and that the system is both fair and equitable. The agency is compelled to operate within specific guidelines. It is accountable to the Commission. The agency must stay in compliance with the standards set forth by the Commission in order to retain its accreditation. The morale of the agency is enhanced by increasing the employees' confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of their own agency. Operations become more streamlined and consistent. Accreditation policies address officer safety issues and provide for adequate training and equipment of the officers. Accreditation is a coveted award that symbolizes professionalism, excellence, and competence. Employees will take pride in their agency, knowing that it represents the very best in law enforcement.

## **Model Standards**

The Commission shall have the sole authority to establish the model standards that a criminal justice agency must meet in order to become accredited. The Commission shall be the sole authority having the power to grant or deny accreditation status. The Commission shall additionally recommend rules and regulations establishing an accreditation process that

encourages and provides criminal justice agencies with a voluntary opportunity to demonstrate that they meet the model standards developed by the Commission. Program standards shall address a variety of topics relevant to the delivery of professional law enforcement services. There are a total of 187 standards. Standards may fall within categories that include but are not limited to the following:

- Administration; 77 standards in 25 topic areas
- Operations; 67 standards in 14 topic areas
- Personnel; 33 standards in 10 topic areas
- Training; 8 standards in 4 topic areas

Nothing in this regulation shall limit or be construed as limiting the power of the criminal justice agency, or other agency or department of any county, city, town, or other locality to enable rules and regulations which establish higher standards than required by the accreditation program. Criminal justice agencies are encouraged to exceed program requirements whenever possible. The accreditation process shall be non-adversarial in nature and shall actively promote the cooperation of the Commission, program staff and assessors with participating criminal justice agencies. The LUPD has completed all General Orders and we are currently in the process of gathering compliance for all standards. Once we have completed the compliance phase, we will hold a mock assessment to see how we measure up to the standards. After completing the mock assessment, we will make any necessary changes and then hold out actual accreditation assessment. The following shows the timeline for Accreditation.

**Timeline:**

Application Signed	2010
Developing General Orders	2010 completed 2013
Gathering Compliances	February 2013-completion August 2013
Mock Assessment	September 2013
Full Assessment	November 2013