



# COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

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### **I. ACCREDITATION**

Law enforcement accreditation dates back to 1929 when the Wickersham Commission made recommendations to improve on weaknesses noted in police service. Following up on these recommendations, several different organizations unsuccessfully attempted to write standards for police including the American Bar Association and National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice.

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies was formed in 1979. The voluntary accreditation program for law enforcement agencies is a joint effort between the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) and four major law enforcement executive membership associations:

- \* International Association of Chiefs of Police;
- \* National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives;
- \* National Sheriff's Association;
- and the
- \* Police Executive Research Forum

The Commission obtained a grant from the Federal Government to write standards for law enforcement. Their objective was to improve delivery of service and create greater standardization for police administrative and operational practices. The standards were very diverse due to the input of each of these agencies and the standards showed support from various aspects of policing. Each organization wrote a section of the standards with the other organizations reviewing and approving. After review by each founding organization the standards were sent out to various police agencies for field-testing.

In 1984 CALEA started accepting applications for accreditation.

### **II. DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT**

On July 30, 1994, the Anne Arundel County Police Department formally received status as an accredited law enforcement agency making it the 10<sup>th</sup> such agency in Maryland. As an accredited agency, the department is responsible for conducting a continuous assessment of its compliance with accreditation standards. The Accreditation Unit, a component of the Administrative Services Division, is charged with the task of monitoring department compliance and submitting annual progress reports to CALEA. This on going self-assessment ensures that the directives guiding this department are current in the form of (1) modern law enforcement policies and procedures, and, (2) the most recent court rulings affecting law enforcement. The department is on track to be reaccredited in 1999 after which reaccreditation will take place every three years.

**III. BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION IN ACCREDITATION PROCESS**

- \* Greatly reduces exposure to civil liability by adherence to a set of professionally recognized and nationally accepted set of law enforcement policies and policies and procedures.
- \* Promotes a continuous positive evolution of law enforcement policies and procedures that helps to establish a proven management system of written directives, sound training, clearly defined lines of authority, and routine reports that support decision making and resource allocation.
- \* Professional excellence of the department is recognized on a national, state and local level.
- \* Enhances coordination of mutual and cooperative law enforcement efforts with neighboring agencies and other members of the criminal justice system.
- \* Increases community advocacy through a forum in which police and citizens work together to prevent and control crime through a partnership which helps citizens understand the challenges confronting law enforcement, and gives the department clear direction about community expectations.
- \* Required surveys are conducted to gauge citizens' perceptions of the department's efforts to protect and make their communities safe.
- \* Improves the department's ability to better manage its fiscal and material resources through nationally established cost-effective policies and procedures.
- \* Promotes confidence in government officials and the department's ability to operate efficiently and meet the community's needs through its commitment to excellence in leadership, resource management and delivery of services.
- \* Sustains and improves employee morale by symbolizing professionalism, excellence and competence.
- \* Required written directives strive to keep employees informed about policies and practices; facilities and equipment to ensure employees' safety; and processes to safeguard employees' rights.
- \* Employees take pride in their department, knowing it represents the very best in law enforcement.
- \* Improves the overall quality of life in the community and positively influences growth in the residential and business communities for those individuals or businesses desiring to relocate in Anne Arundel County.

**IV. PROPONENT UNIT:** Accreditation Unit.

**V. CANCELLATION:** Original issue date: 03-15-97.