



Florida Sheriffs Association 2019 Legislative Priorities

Drones

In 2013, the Florida Legislature passed comprehensive drone legislation specifying how law enforcement could use drones. In order to ensure the privacy of the public, the law required law enforcement to first obtain a search warrant in order to use a drone. However, situations have arose over the last five years that necessitate another look at laws related to drones and how they can be used to create efficiencies and enhance public safety. New exemptions for law enforcement's use of drones should include: (1) crowd control or traffic management, (2) collection of evidence at a crime scene or traffic crash, and (3) for the assessment of damage due to a flood, wildfire, or natural disaster.

Court Security

Florida sheriffs play a fundamental role in the courts by maintaining the rule of law and provide protection to judges and other participants in the judicial process. Sheriffs support legislation that clarifies that the sheriff is in charge of court security and that the chief judge has decision-making authority to ensure the protection of due process rights through the scheduling and conduct of trials and other judicial proceedings. This legislation contains no fiscal impact. Nothing in this legislation provides a sheriff with any other means to increase their budget, and it only clarifies the role of the judge and the sheriff in providing safe and secure trial court facilities.



Florida Sheriffs Association Legislative Platform

Prevention & Youth Services

Civil Citations: Oppose a statewide mandate of issuing civil citations to all juveniles. The Florida Sheriffs Association supports improving the current program with enhanced data collection to ensure deputies have the most up-to-date information available to them before issuing a civil citation.

Law Enforcement

Drones: Support law enforcement's ability to use drones for critical incidents to ensure public safety.

Distracted Driving: Support legislation to reduce texting and distracted driving.

Jails, Corrections & Re-Entry

Early Release: Support Truth in Sentencing laws requiring convicted criminals to serve at least 85% of their sentence.

Mandatory Minimum Sentencing: Oppose the elimination of mandatory minimum sentences.

Expunction of Criminal Records: Oppose unlimited expunction of criminal records.

State Sentencing: Oppose the sentencing of state inmates to county jails, but the Florida Sheriffs Association supports sheriffs' ability to individually contract with the Department of Corrections for housing state inmates.

Administration

Florida Retirement System: Support returning length of service to 25 years and the retirement age to 55 years for Special Risk Class employees.

Florida Retirement System: Support legislation to assess the financial impact and necessary funding required for an ad hoc cost of living adjustment for future Special Risk Class retirees.

Budget

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training Funding: Support continued funding to train law enforcement officers to safely assess and identify people in mental health crisis and help connect them with community treatment and keep them out of the criminal justice system.

Community Mental Health Funding: Support funding for mental health services that will assist persons after they are released from county jails and have to transition back into the community.

Sexual Offender/Predator Registry Improvements: Support continued funding to FDLE for critical updates to the electronic statewide registration process.