



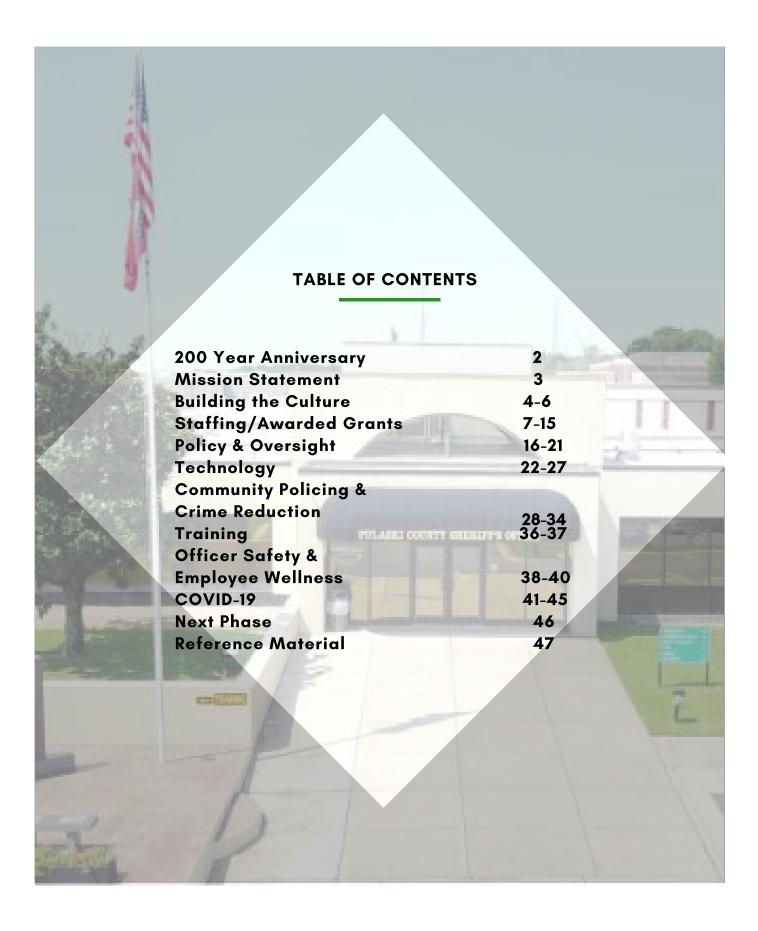
PULASKI COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE CELEBRATES 200 YEARS



In 2019, Sheriff Eric S. Higgins became the 46th Sheriff of the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office.

Formerly known as Chief Eric Higgins, he served for over 30 years with the Little Rock Police Department, retiring as an Assistant Chief. Still possessing an unyielding desire to serve his community, he spent his retirement working with grass roots organizations focused on reducing the recidivism rate. Though former Chief Higgins may have believed his path was fixed, there was a greater achievement awaiting. Upon winning the election in 2018, he was sworn in as the first African American Sheriff in the 200 year existience of the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office. More fittingly, he assumed office in time to commemorate the Agency's "200 Year Anniversary"

In keeping with the community first platform he ran for office on, the focus and theme of the celebration was about the Pulaski County's 200 years of service to the community. The inaugural event was open to the public and took place on June 19, 2019 on the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office campus.



WHERE IT STARTED

THE MISSION

Sheriff Higgins has a deep seeded belief that law enforcement must be *community focused*, serving in the community's best interest. An agency must be *safety driven*, ensuring its actions are in keeping with the safety and well being of the community and agency members. And above all, an organization must be *integrity based*, by policing in a fair, honest and equitable manner that is inclusive of all the citizens of Pulaski County.

In order to create and guide the culture of the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Higgins started with revising the agency's mission statement.

"In partnership with our community, the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office strives to be a premier law enforcement agency and detention facility by protecting life, property, and individual's rights while providing professional and ethical service to our community."

To further push the message, Sheriff Higgins commissioned an agency emblem which would commemorate the 200 year anniversary and its new cultural belief of CSI- Community Focused, Safety Driven and Integrity Based.



BUILDING A CULTURE

Sheriff Higgins challenged agency leadership to move the organization towards a more 21st Century Policing philosophy. The Philosophy of 21st Century Police is derived from Sir Robert Peel. Peel is widely believed to be the father of modern democratic policing.

"Sir Robert Peel's Principles of Law Enforcement 1829"

In 1829, he created the Metropolitan Police in London, England, and along with it proposed the principles under which they would become efficient in maintaining safety and security within the community under the law.

These nine (9) principles were so intuitive at the time, and obviously based on some significant thought on the topic, that they have remained as the main ingredient for police success over the last two centuries in all democratic countries across the world. Police leaders, top down, still use and quote them frequently as good reminders of "community policing" and the reasons we exist. Note the following themes which are so crucially important for our success: crime prevention, community trust and engagement, reasonable force as a last resort, impartiality without favour, never above the law, the police are the public and the public are the police, efficiency through crime prevention.

- 1. The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.
- 2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.
- 3. Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public.
- 4. The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.
- 5. Police seek and preserve public favor not by catering to the public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.
- 6. Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient.
- 7. Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.
- 8. Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.
- 9. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.

THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON 21ST CENTURY POLICING

BUILDING A CULTURE

In December of 2014, then President Barrack Obama commissioned a task force on 21st Century Policing. The eleven person committee included academics, law enforcement officials, and civil rights activists. The co-chairs of the task force were former Philadelphia police commissioner Charles H. Ramsey and George Mason University professor of criminology, law and society Laurie Robinson. The task force would go on to compile a list of 6 pillars considered to be the best practices for effective policing.

Pillar 1 Building Trust and Legitimacy

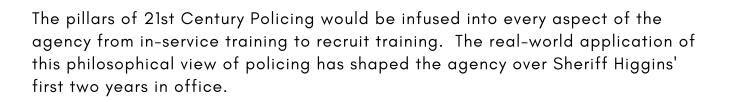
Pillar 2 Policy and Oversight

Pillar 3 Technology and Social Media

Pillar 4 Community Policing and Crime Reduction.

Pillar 5 Training and Education

Pillar 6 Officer Safety and Wellness



21ST CENTURY POLICING

HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU BETTER?

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) defines 21st Century Policing as best practices designed to help agencies promote effective crime reduction while building public trust and safeguarding officer well-being.

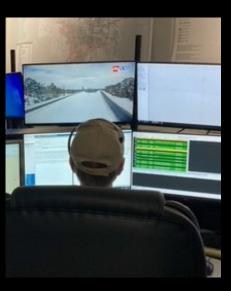
Building Trust & Legitimacy



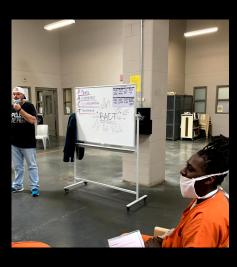
Policy & Oversight



Technology & Social Media



Community & Policing & Crime Reduction



Training & Education



Officer Safety & Wellness





EMPLOYEE PAY

Upon assuming office in 2019, Sheriff Higgins found that the agency was in a crisis state regarding employee retention. Salary was determined to be the main issue, and the resultant inability to compete with surrounding agencies for candidates. In 2019, the Pulaski County Government had a job study completed by the Johanson Group. The Johanson Group recommended that the County raise the wage scale by 3%. The County Comptroller then recommended a 2% increase that would bring every employee up to 88% of the market rate.

The effects of this pay increase raised salaries for existing employees but failed to increase the starting pay, leaving the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office near the bottom compared to other central Arkansas agencies.

In 2020, Sheriff Higgins, utilizing the available budget for salaries, increased the starting pay from just north of \$35,000, to \$40,201.00. The change was a positive step in an effort to compete with surrounding agencies. However, Pulaski County still remains in the bottom tier for salary and compensation even compared to smaller Central Arkansas Agencies. The Pulaski County Sheriff's Office has jurisdiction throughout the county, to include the cities within its borders. Though widely believed, the Sheriff's Office's policing does not occur in a donut fashion operating around the cities. The agency's footprint exists in each city within Pulaski County, with it's main area of responsibility being in the unincorporated areas of the county.

The only agency larger than Pulaski County Sheriff's Office in Central Arkansas is the Little Rock Police Department. In Little Rock there are approximately 198,606 residents; the starting salary of a Little Rock Police officer is \$43,742. The maximum pay of a Little Rock Police officer is \$66,579 per year.

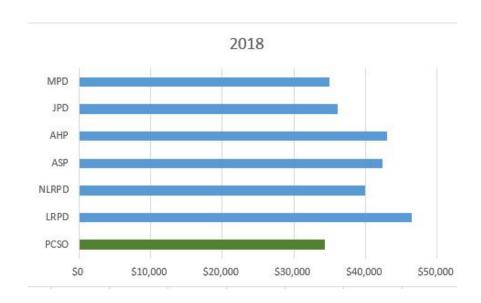
In North Little Rock, where there are 65,911 residents, the starting salary of a non-certified police officer is \$40,000. A certified officer with two-four years of experience receives a starting pay of \$42,500. A certified police officer with four or more years of experience receives a starting pay of \$47,749.

The starting salary of a Sherwood Police officer with no experience is \$35,984. The starting salary of an officer with one year of experience is \$39,526 and the starting salary of an officer with two years of experience is \$41,502. There are 29,523 residents in the City of Sherwood.

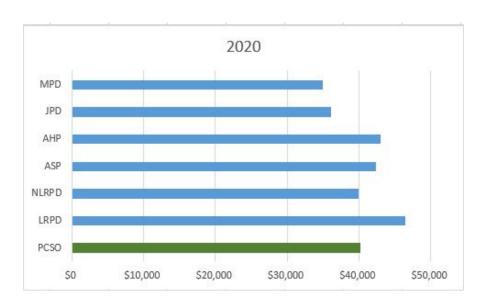
The starting salary of a Maumelle Police officer, where there are 18,214 residents, is \$35,000.

EMPLOYEE PAY

Here is how the Sheriff's Office compared prior to Sheriff Higgins taking office:



This is how the Sheriff's Office compares now:



New Staff Positions

In order to successfully carry out the new vision for the Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Higgins conducted an agency-wide assessment. As a result, several key positions were noted as non-existent (Finance Director, IT Director, Neighborhood Coordinator, Communication Specialist, Crime Analyst and Re-entry Coordinator). These key positions would play a major role in carrying out the Agency's mission.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

The Finance Director was determined to be an immediate business need. The Pulaski County Sheriff's Office annually returned budget surpluses each year while failing to address critical agency deficiencies. The Finance Director would be responsible for the maintenance of the financial records in addition to supervision of functions that include the areas of accounts payable, property accounting, budgeting and other special projects.



CRIME ANALYST

Sheriff Higgins found that the agency did not participate in regular analytical meetings. Nor was there a data collection process in place. In order to compile useful data points for real-world application, Sheriff Higgins created a Crime Analyst position. The Crime Analyst would be tasked with utilizing statistical modeling and analysis of crime data to identify criminal trends and patterns and develop strategies to assist the agency in identifying criminal activities.

COMPSTAT

One of the major functions of the Crime Analyst is compiling data and providing key data points. The data provided by the Crime Analyst is used to fuel command staff discussion during the monthly Compstat meetings.

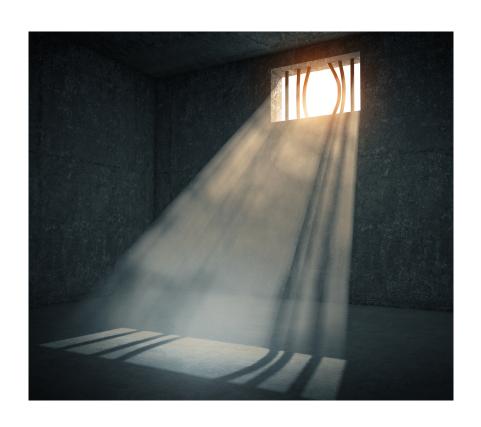
Compstat emphasizes information–sharing, responsibility and accountability, while improving effectiveness.

It includes four generally recognized core components:

- (1) Timely and accurate information or intelligence;
- (2) Rapid deployment of resources;
- (3) Effective tactics; and
- (4) Relentless follow-up.

RE-ENTRY COORDINATOR

Pillar 4 of 21st Century Policing is Community Policing and Crime Reduction. The effects of recidivism is a catalyst for high crime rates. Sheriff Higgins, based on his own personal experience of helping those incarcerated establish a positive moral compass, reduces reoffending. Sheriff Higgins petitioned the Pulaski County Quorum Court to create the position of Re-entry Coordinator. The Coordinator develops the CSI Academy 12-week program curriculum and serves as a liaison between Pulaski County and local service providing agencies regarding ex-offenders returning to the community after incarceration.



NEIGHBORHOOD COORDINATOR

In keeping with the focus of changing the lives of those in the community, the Neighborhood Coordinator position was created. The Neighborhood Coordinator serves as the lead community liaison for the county with the primary focus of building relationships with community stakeholders to implement and measure the impact of community based projects. The coordinator also works throughout the county to schedule regular neighborhood crime watch meetings and shares crime information on social media platforms such as Next Door to ensure the Sheriff's Office has the greatest impact on the community's quality of life.



IT DIRECTOR

The sheriff noted that the Sheriff's Office Computer Services Division was not staffed with sufficient management. Prior to Sheriff Higgins creating this new position, the network administrator had oversight. The new Information Technology Director partners across the organization to create, implement, and maintain internal technology systems while supporting the hardware needs of the agency's rapidly expanding headcount. The IT Director would also provide guidance and professional advisement on needed technology upgrades such as facility security cameras, body cameras and the NexGen 911 software.



COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST

Following the best practices of 21st Century Policing, specifically Pillar 3, Technology and Social Media, the sheriff created the Communication Specialist position. The communication specialist conducts research and drafts a variety of content for public and internal audiences. The position implements communication plans and strategies to engage the community on issues of public concern. In addition to managing all agency social media platforms, the communication specialist assists all agency divisions within both branches of the Sheriff's Office.



GRANT FUNDED POSITIONS



The PACT Peer Specialist

PEER SPECIALIST

Many detainees incarcerated in the Pulaski County Regional Detention Facility are plagued by addiction. Addressing the need for counseling during confinement is crucial in focusing on the underlying issues that causes repetitive offending. The Peer Specialist, through personal experience, aids inmates and detainees in problem solving by connecting them to resources related to recovery while promoting new social skills and enhancing job skills.



The Opioid Grant Adminstrator

OPIOID ADMINISTATOR

Drug use is one of the most common underlying factors that fuels continued criminal behavior. Sheriff Higgins, knowing that one of the most common addictions of the day is opioid addiction, created the Opioid Administrator. Funded by a federal grant in 2019, the administrator implements programs, projects, education, training, and oversees administrative tasks associated with activities of this grant-funded prevention program.

AWARDED GRANTS

Grants Awarded to the Sheriff's Office

Edward Byrne JAG \$91,567

Sheriff Detention \$197,393 July 2019

DHS Lunch Program (21 & under)

To obtain resources and funding for new projects taken on by the Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Higgins applied for and received the following grants:

Body Worn Camera \$444,000 October 2019

Opioid Abuse Site-Based Program \$474,523 October 2019

Project Safe Neighborhood \$75,500 January 2020

PCSO Combat COVID-19 Grant \$97,417 January 2020

P.A.C.T. Peer Specialist \$45,000 February 2020

Jr. Deputy \$600,000 October 2019

SAAP-Alien Data Reimbursement \$2400 November 2020

TOTAL GRANTS: \$2.2 Million

UNIFORMED STAFFING



K-9 Program Expansion

The K-9 program was expanded in 2019, with the Sheriff assigning a K-9 inside the Detention Facility. The program consists of two K-9 dogs, Dennis and Bruno, trained in both drug detection and tracking.





Reserve Program

The Reserve Deputy Program, which was revamped in 2020, is a group of dedicated citizens who volunteer their time to the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office. The Reserve Deputies are utilized to provide two person patrol units and other services and activities, as required. Some of the extra activities that Reserve Deputies perform are:

- Child Printing
- Community Awareness and Safety
- Security for various events such as the Arkansas State Fair and the Special Olympics
- Reserve Deputies are also on an "on call" basis to respond to aid in the event of a natural disaster

Recruitment and selection for the Reserve Deputy Program is coordinated through the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office Enforcement Training and Special Services Division. Individuals selected must undergo a vigorous background investigation and successfully complete the certification guidelines as outlined by the State of Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training.



BUILDING TRUST AND LEGITIMACY POLICY AND OVERSIGHT

Building trust and legitimacy while fostering relationships with the community and aligning policies with community values.

IN CAR CAMERAS

A total of 235 Body Worn Cameras and 121 In-Car Cameras were deployed in March 2020. More than 93,525 videos totaling 19,690.80 hours of citizen contacts, including detainee contact within the detention facility, have been recorded. In 2019, the Sheriff's Office held public forums, giving residents an opportunity to engage agency leadership about the BWC Project.

A policy was developed and implemented following the testing phase and after receiving public input and agency feedback, the program was launched.





BODY CAMERAS

In an effort to foster more community trust, Sheriff Higgins understood that agencies must strive to reduce discrimination and disparity both within an organization as well as the actions taken by its members. As a result, the Sheriff's Office implemented its body camera program, equipping all sworn deputies, lieutenants and below, with a body worn camera.



INCREASING EFFICIENCY

NEW PRECINCT

SOUTHEAST Precinct

The Sheriff's Office partnered with the Pulaski County Special School District to re-open the Southeast District Office in the Sweet Home Community. The building is over 1900 square feet and strategically located to serve the communities of Sweet Home, Higgins, Wrightsville, Woodson and Hensley



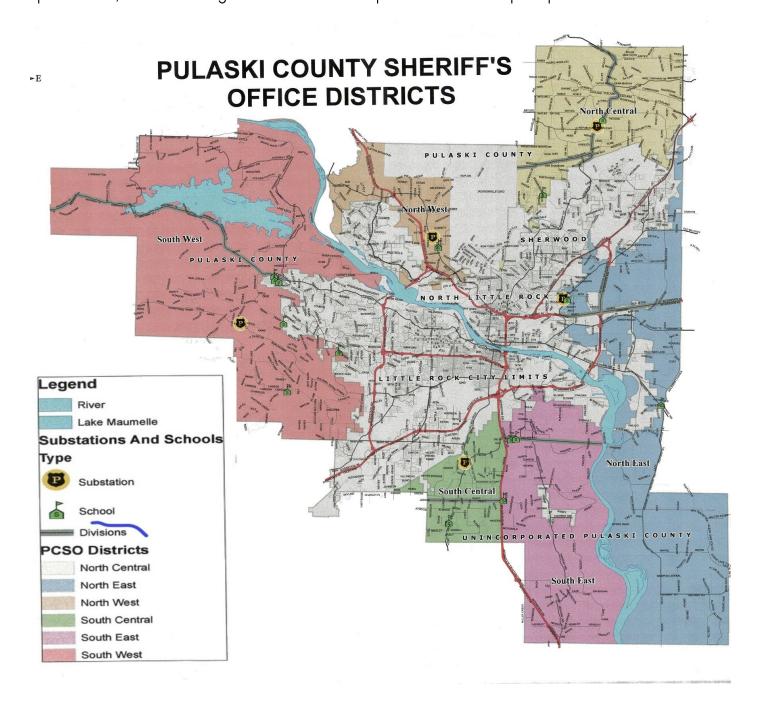
NORTHWEST Precinct

Previously housed in a dilapidated building, the Northwest Patrol District received an upgraded building. The project was facilitated by the Oak Grove Crime Watch group working closely with the Sheriff's Office.



INCREASING EFFICIENCY

In 2020, as a result of data obtain through monthly compstat meetings, each district was re-zoned. The rezoning was based off response times and the need and desire to improve them. The vast size of many of the six patrol districts can, at times, require responses from long distances. The districts were divided into smaller zones, ensuring the presence of a patrol unit, thus reducing both initial unit response and back up response times.



BUILDING TRUST AND LEGITIMACY POLICY AND OVERSIGHT



DUTY TO INTERVENE

In the wake of George Floyd's death, several unforeseen events involving civil protesters and organized groups occurred nationwide requiring the presence of law enforcement to maintain a peaceful and safe environment for our communities. Debates over police reform and the push to ban chokeholds were the topic of every local and syndicated newscast.

Sheriff Higgins, believing that reform was and is needed, immediately ordered the creation of a new policy, "Duty to Intervene."

The policy now requires all Sheriff's Office sworn personnel to intervene in the midst of police misconduct and abuse of power.

PROHIBITING CHOKEHOLDS

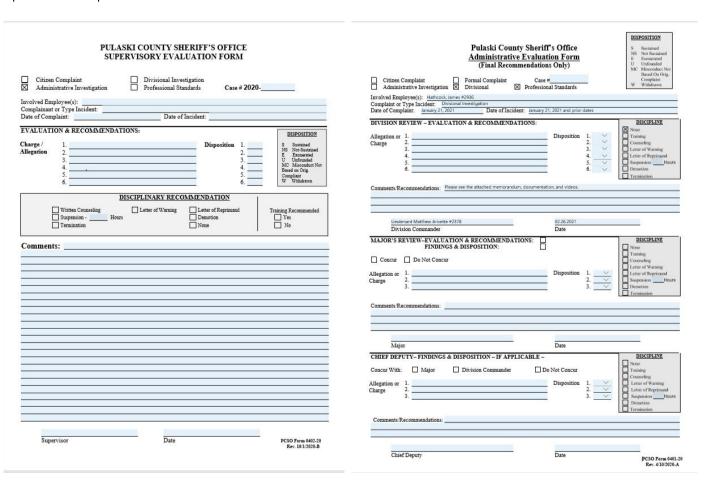
Sheriff Higgins went a step further by also ordering the revision of the agency's use of force policy prohibiting the use of choke holds, unless deadly is necessary. Sheriff Higgins, being one of the first agency heads to officially denounce actions resulting in the death of George Floyd, announced the policy changes during a peaceful protest at the State Capitol. The event was billed as a show of unity between local central Arkansas law enforcement with Sheriff Higgins being one the keynote speakers.



BUILDING TRUST AND LEGITIMACY POLICY AND OVERSIGHT

SUPERVISOR REVIEW PROCESS

To ensure supervisor accountability at every level, in 2020, the sheriff implemented a "Supervisor Review Process." This new procedure would require supervisors at each level to provide written commentary, opinion, and recommendation on any member under their command involved in the administrative disciplinary review process. Supervisors, at each level in the chain of command, would be required to provide a documented position regarding a subordinates actions or inactions which may result in potential disciplinary action. The process places ownership of the organizations culture and the level of integrity it attains upon each supervisor.





Embracing new technology



PCSO DRONE PROGRAM

Prior to Sheriff Higgins taking office, the Sheriff's Office's drone program consisted of two drones and two pilots. The agency's use of this equipment primarily involved search and rescue/fugitive searches and surveillance. After experiencing severe flooding in Pulaski County, where PCSO was able to assist County Road & Bridge and the Office of Emergency Management with damage assessment, a clear value of the tool was evident. The Enforcement Branch program now consists of seven drones and ten certified pilots deployed around the county, to include the Detention Facility Complex. These pilots are available to provide coverage twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

2019 Flood Southeast District





Embracing new technology

JUSTICE BRIDGE VIDEO COURT

In an effort to increase security, for not only detention deputies but also the community, the Sheriff's Office adopted technology to facilitate video court appearances. "Justice Bridge" allows detainees to attend court appearances without leaving the facility. It also enables communication with legal counsel, ensuring timely due process. This extremely useful tool became even more crucial as the Coronavirus Pandemic impacted the country. Without the ability to adjudicate cases, the detainee population would continue to increase with no releases due to no in-person court appearances. These factors would also serve to delay and possibly extend incarceration.



SECURITY CAMERAS

The sheriff saw an urgent need to upgrade the security camera system from analog to digital throughout the facility. The upgrade eliminated multiple blind spots and increased clarity and quality of the video that was needed for monitoring staff, inmates, and for investigative purposes. Viewing software was also upgraded to maximize the effectiveness of the new digital cameras.





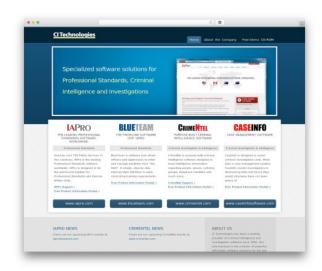
KIOSKS

Kiosks were placed in each unit, allowing detainees digital access to forms, the law library, e-mail and video visitation. Tablets were also made available to the General Population units to provide detainees with these basic but albeit important amenities.

Embracing new technology

IAPro- Professional Standards & Internal Investigations

This advanced software tool is utilized to manage internal investigations and professional standards measures. The software generates advanced statistical and detailed reporting for agency and administrative use. Another key feature includes the "Early Identification and Intervention Tool," which consists of analytical interfaces, threshold-based alerts, peer group analysis, and a variety of ranking and comparison reports. Early identification allows supervisors to address personnel concerns and track infractions.



FARO

FARO ensures accuracy in crime scene forensics. When collecting evidence from a crime scene, detectives race against the clock and the environment. Every second that passes increases the risk of evidence contamination. In the case of motor vehicle accidents, there is always pressure to clear traffic lanes as quickly as possible. FARO scanners dramatically reduce the time needed to capture any scene and help detectives stay safe.



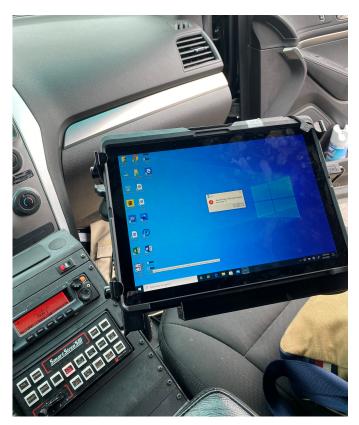
Embracing new technology

LAPTOPS

When Sheriff Higgins assumed office, the Patrol Division only had 24 vehicles equipped with computers. By January 2020 every patrol vehicle was equipped with a tablet. This upgrade was also necessary for the In-Car Camera system to function properly.

GPS/AVL

Along with the Body Worn Cameras (BWC), the Sheriff's Office equipped all patrol and detention transport units with Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) and Global Positioning System locators. This advancement in agency technology is, and will be, vital to maintaining the safety of deputies as they travel throughout the 808 square miles of Pulaski County. Data is collected which allows dispatch to track the locations of Sheriff Office vehicles and more effectively, dispatch units to calls.



LICENSE PLATE READER

In 2020, the equipment for this initiative was ordered. The program, which enables the possible identifying of stolen and wanted vehicles, was up and running by January 2021. The program technology not only assists with criminal patrol but also missing and/or lost person investigations.



TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA

In January 2019, Sheriff Higgins created the Public Affairs Unit and tasked them with increasing the agency's digital and public presence through the use of increased social media activity and the implementation of a more interactive agency website. The Sheriff's Office has been able to disseminate information,

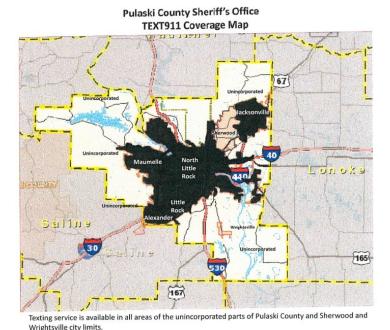




issue crime alerts, receive and share crime reports and provide investigative tips.

Above all, the agency has been able to communicate information about the Sheriff's Office such as crime data by address. The website provides information about the detention facility, detained booking, commissary, and the video call application. The platform also provides real-time agency news updates, and most importantly, crime victim resource information.

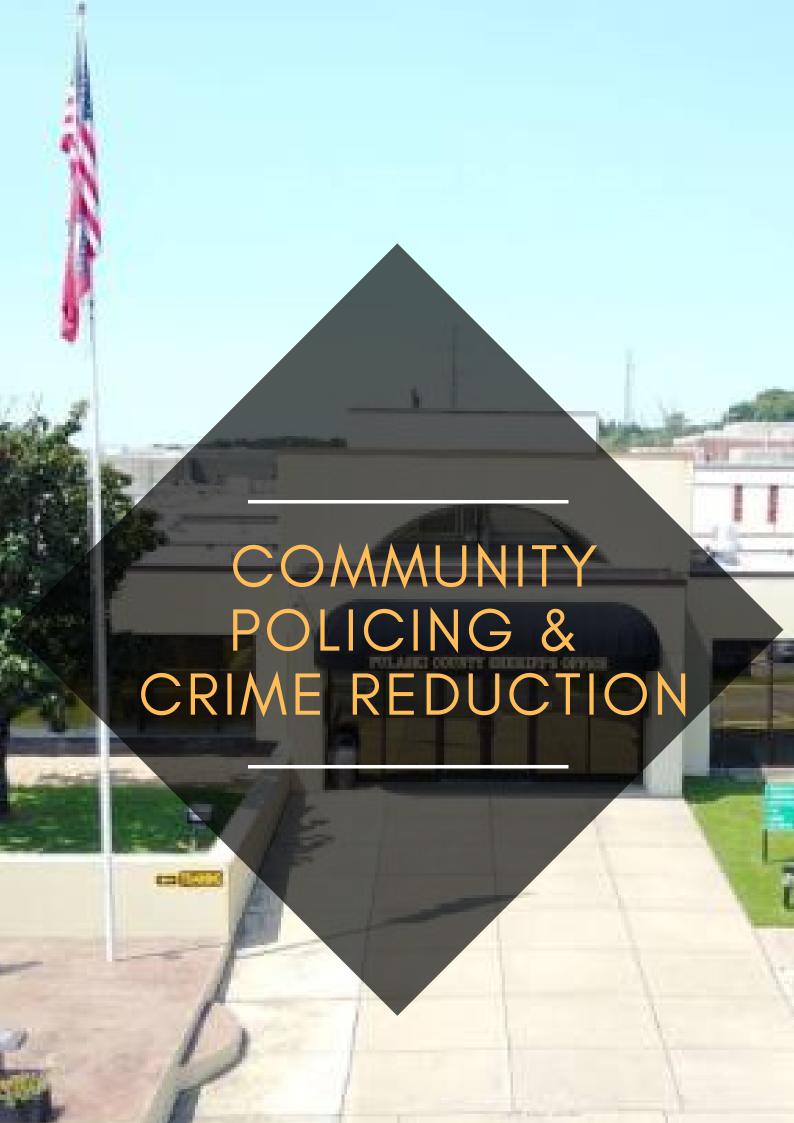
NEXGEN 911



At the beginning of 2020, Sheriff
Higgins held a meeting with staff and a
Civilians Advisory Group to hear
concerns and answer questions
regarding the department. During the
meeting, a citizen asked if the Text-to911 system would be upgraded. The
discussion led to a process of
upgrading the Sheriff's Office

Communications Center to the NexGen 911 technology. Pulaski County Sheriff's Office is now one of the first Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) with all components that are approved in the state of Arkansas. The components include:

- A. Rapid Deploy (detailed 911 mapping system that provides accurate locations of citizens in an emergency.)
- B. Text to 911 using TCC (Text control Center)
- C. I-Cloud Capability
- D. Recorder System



Prioritizing Community Engagement

In 2019, Sheriff Higgins immediately began establishing the Sheriff's Office as a resource to the community. He increased deputy and resident interaction by supporting events and programs sponsored by civic organizations and businesses throughout the county. Some of these events include:

Easter Egg Hunts
Parades
Fire Safety Days
Trunk or Treat
Cereal Drives
National Night Out
Fall Food Drive
DEA Drug Takeback
Homeless Veterans Program

The Sheriff also established community focused events such as "Supper with the Sheriff,"
"Coffee with a Cop," and "Supper with the Sheriff's Office" to familiarize the community with both himself and agency staff.





During the pandemic Sheriff Higgins expanded community engagement in the form of humanitarian assistance. Through partnerships with AT&T, Arkansas Foodbank, and CityServe, Pulaski County Sheriff's Office equipped all patrol units with food packs aptly named "Patrol Packs." Patrol deputies would have the ability to identify families in need during their shifts and provide some immediate relief. Due to the overwhelming response, the patrol packs program was expanded throughout the agency.



Prioritizing Community Engagement

In an effort to address community concerns, Crime Watch Meeting attendance is now mandatory in all districts and each group has at least one member and a Lieutenant attend the monthly meetings.

In 2020, the Violent Crime Task Force of Central Arkansas was created in conjunction with other law enforcement agencies to allow agencies to present and share criminal case information in an effort to solve and reduce crime. This initiative was expanded to include Faulkner and Saline Counties and the Pine Bluff Police Department.



During the pandemic Sheriff Higgins partnered with Life Abundant Ministries, CityServe, the OK program and other organizations throughout the county to provide food to those in need. The Feed the City initiative provided families with food boxes that contained milk, canned goods, meats and non-perishable food items.







Prioritizing Community Engagement.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

Sheriff Higgins saw the need to reach out to the youth of the community and therefore, he reinstated several previously disbanded programs.

The School Resource Officer Program was expanded by assigning a sergeant to supervise the program and placing an additional deputy at Mills Middle School.

The S.R.O. sergeant and deputies coordinate daily with the Sheriff's Office and the two school administrations, providing a safe and productive environment for PCSSD and North Pulaski staff and students. Monthly reports and statistics are produced to provide updated information to all three stakeholders.

The S.R.O. sergeant and deputies engage in daily school activities such as: mentoring programs, sporting events, dances, youth clubs, classes, and other school activities.







JR. DEPUTY PROGRAM

In 2019, Sheriff Higgins reinstituted the Jr. Deputy Program. The program is designed for our youth interested in law enforcement, working closely with the School Resource Officer Program. The goals and objectives were to renew the partnership with the Junior Deputy Babe Ruth Baseball League, developing positive working relationships with the participants and growing the program to be sustainable into the future.

The First Inaugural Jr. Deputy Banquet was held at the Clinton Presidential Library.

Deputy
Olive Clark
Female
Program

Deputy
Charles Bussey
Male
Youth Program

Explorer Program

Cadet Program

Youth Camp

RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

Considered a crucial area for ones quality of life, Sheriff Higgins began focusing on the reduction of crime. Sheriff Higgins understands that reducing crime does not come from arrest and incarceration but from reduced recidivism and the absence of crime. In 2019, the sheriff began the process of obtaining fiscal resources and personnel. The program was constructed and presented to the Quorum Court to create several key agency positions to facilitate the program.



The program consist of two phases. The first phase includes 12 weeks of intensive course study covering topics such as:

- Getting Ahead While Getting Out
- Conquering Chemical Dependency
- Embracing Purpose
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Inside Out Dads



The second six-week phase prepares inmates to return to the workforce-offering a bridge out of poverty by providing the following types of job training:

- Welding Program
- Peer Specialist Recovery
- Industrial Manufacturing
- Culinary Arts & Retail Management



The early interest and success of the Re-Entry Program has helped foster partnerships with the Arkansas Department of Corrections and Pulaski Technical College. These partnerships will allow future parolees to participate in the program prior to release from prison.

In addition to the Re-Entry Program, the Sheriff's Office also began a PACT Program (Peers Achieving Collaborative Treatment) by utilizing an **Opioid** Grant funded Peer Specialist, who, to date, has successfully graduating five "Celebrate Recovery Classes."

PACT recovery program coming toPulaski Co. jail, aims to fight opioid crisis

The PACT Project is a controversial plan that matches recovering addicts with recently arrested addicts.



Author: Rolly Hoyt Published: 7:37 PM CST March 4, 2019 Updated: 7:37 PM CST March 4, 2019





The Pulaski County Detention Center is about to embark on a new recovery program aimed at fighting the opioid crisis. It comes two months into the job for sheriff Eric Higgins. The PACT Project is a controversial plan that matches recovering addicts with recently arrested addicts.

With so many people locked up, addicted and withdrawing while awaiting trial by a jury of their peers, this new system uses trained addicts in recovery and makes them counselors, offering guidance from people who truly are their peers.

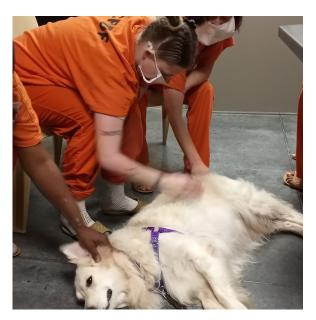
Addressing recidivism was not the only area Sheriff Higgins focused on regarding detainees. He also wanted to create some incentives within the facility to help foster a safer environment for both detainees and employees. The "Tiered Housing Units" were one result, requiring detainees to be accountable for their behavior and the resultant consequences for violations. Detainees would be placed at different tiered levels based on behavior, allowing additional access to recreational activities and other social amenities as a reward for good behavior. The mental and physical health of detainees were also addressed through partnerships with outside organizations such as: PAWS in Prison, CrossFit MidPoint, Accalia CrossFit and Navigate Health & Fitness to provide health and wellness sessions within the facility.



DETAINEE WELLNESS SERVICES









TRAINING AND EDUCATION

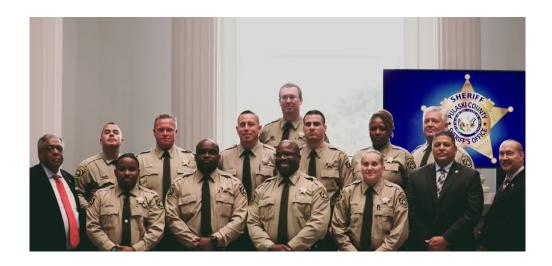
HOW CAN WE BE THE CHANGE?

TRAINING DIVISION

The Training Division is where professionalism begins. It is in the Training Division where both Detention and Enforcement employees begin their professional careers by receiving training about the agency and our policies. When Sheriff Higgins was elected, training was handled by either Detention or Enforcement Training areas separately. He wanted both Detention and Enforcement training unified. In March of 2020, both divisions moved into one office to streamline the training processes. In addition to handling training, the division handles all new hires, issuing of equipment, and Reserve Deputies and their assignments.

Sheriff Higgins instituted a United Training Division where both Detention and Enforcement Training would be implemented with the tenants of the 21st Century Policing Model Pillars at the forefront of the educational standard. To better ensure that our communities are served with compassion and professionalism, training must be effective and centered on "best practices." Today the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office is a model agency because of the training that has been instituted by Sheriff Higgins. All deputies currently receive 48 hours of in-service training which exceeds the 24-hour minimum required by the State. It has dramatically improved safety for the deputies and the community, with a focus on mental health issues.

Deputies are required to attend Crisis Intervention training. The training allows the Sheriff's Office to deploy trained deputies to assist with members of the community involved with mental crises. These trained deputies are knowledgeable on the legal requirements of Act 423 and can provide mental health assessments and direction to diversion programs in lieu of incarceration.



TRAINING AND EDUCATION

HOW CAN WE BE THE CHANGE?

ACADEMY

Sheriff Higgins also wanted to ensure that the Sheriff's Office standard was focusing deputies, on day one, on 21st Century tenants. As such, he tasked the Training Division with creating a state certified Recruit Training Academy to ensure accomplishment of this goal. In 2020, a 13-week academy began with the "Unified Training Initiative: where deputies working in the detention facility could attend the course while continuing to work in their current capacity, providing them an opportunity to move from detention to enforcement.

The Academy leans on instructors with years of experience in the particular classes they are tasked with teaching; the minimum experience being three years with a majority having over ten years in their subject matter. These instructors and their classes give recruits a unique view of law enforcement from classes that deal with a variety of topics such as: Ethics, Criminal Law, 4th Amendment, Juvenile Law, Use of Force, Social Media, Civil Rights, and Civil Liability, Domestic Violence, Defensive Tactics, Firearms, Crisis Intervention, Policing People with Disabilities, Crowd Control, Investigations of Person and Property Crime, Accident Investigations, Cultural Diversity, Implicit Bias, Racial Profiling, Alcohol Patrol, Gangs, Emergency Driving, Active Shooter, Drug Enforcement, and Hazardous Materials and many more. All these topics are presented with a 21st Century Policing Pillar philosophy providing recruits with a solid foundation to support the community.





OFFICER SAFETY & EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

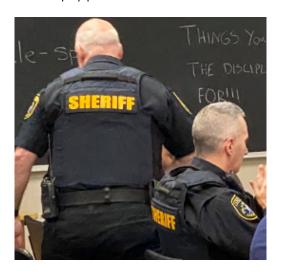
EMPLOYEE SHIFT HOURS



The Sheriff's Office has had a historical retention problem which has plagued past administrations. Sheriff Higgins, in an effort to determine the cause(s), commissioned employee advisory groups in both branches of the Sheriff's Office. These groups meet with agency administrators on a monthly basis. One factor derived from the Detention Advisory Group was work shifts. Prior to 2019, detention deputies were working 6 days a week. The command staff determined that 12 hour shifts would allow for more time off and make adjustments for manpower shortages.

BULLET PROOF VEST

In 2019, it was determined that deputies in the Detention Facility tasked with detainee transports, were doing so without bullet proof vests. It was further determined that they were doing so because they had never been issued vests. Sheriff Higgins issued a mandate that this discrepancy be corrected immediately. As a result, every detention deputy required to transport detainees outside of the facility has been equipped with a vest.



INTAKE BREAKROOM



The Intake Division has created a new break room for employees, placing the required OSHA posters in staff eyesight.

OFFICER SAFETY AND EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

DESK DEPUTY & & FACILITY ACCESS

While the Sheriff's Office is tasked with community protection, it must also protect the many civilian employees within its walls. In 2020, Sheriff Higgins permanently assigned a deputy to man a post in the main lobby of the Sheriff's Office. The deputy is responsible for assisting public visitors, taking phone reports, overall security and access to the building.

The main entrance and CID entrance were secured with a key fob lock for controlled access to that part of the building. An intercom system was added so the secretary could communicate with citizens at the door without having to have face-to-face contact.





GYM

Our gym area in the facility has been improved and can be utilized by employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This area is cleaned on a regular basis and includes restrooms and a shower for those who use it. The gym includes a half basketball court, nautilus machines, treadmills, exercise bikes and various equipment to accomadate functional training.





Facility Adjustments



As with every other citizen of the United States, the COVID-19 Pandemic has also been difficult for law enforcement, other first responders and front line workers. It has been especially stressful for incarcerated persons and the men and women tasked with overseeing them.

On March 8, 2020, after being made aware of the potential effects of the Coronavirus Disease, Sheriff Higgins immediately began meeting daily with Command Staff to formulated a plan of action. It was clear several areas of vulnerability would have to be addressed i.e., staff, detainees, and facility. The command staff assessed their respective areas and a consolidated operations plan was implemented. Here are some of the changes/adjustments:

- March 13, 2020, in-person visitation was suspended.
- Monday March 16, 2020, video visitation was made available to all detainees, with 30 minutes of free video time per week.

To date:

- 32,077 Free Video Visits
- 111, 461 Video Visits
- 793,665 emails
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supply chains were established to stockpile masks, sanitizer, and other cleaning supplies.
- Medical screening of all arrestees and officers was implemented.
- CNAs were hired to conduct temperature checks and the pulse-ox of every individual entering the facility. This included inmates, personnel, bondsmen, law enforcement, attorneys, etc. Any Inmate entering with law enforcement with a temperature above 100.5 was immediately sent to outside medical (UAMS) for further assessment and treatment as a precaution to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 into the facility.

In addition to purchasing PPE through normal routes, Sheriff Higgins wanted to increase availability of mask for both staff and detainees. In-house mask production began using donated sewing machines and volunteers, producing enough masks for each detainee to receive two. Boxes of water were also donated to the facility from community organizations.

Sheriff Higgins determined that quarantine units would have to be developed with arrests still being made by central Arkansas agencies. Initially, two housing units were cleared out to isolate arrestees for 14-day precaution and also 14-day quarantine isolation for those with possible COVID-19 exposure. These added measures proved to be critical in stemming the virus from proliferating throughout the facility. Detainees 65 and older were isolated along with detainees with other underlying medical issues.

Facility Adjustments



At the time of the first positive case being discovered, Sheriff Higgins wanted to determine the status of the whole facility. As a result, the Sheriff's Office reached out to the Arkansas Department of Health to arrange mass testing within the facility. Mass testing would be completed two more times in 2020.

On January 6th the vaccine was offered to law enforcement agencies through Baptist Health Hospital. Sheriff Higgins, Administration and deputies received the vaccination.

On-site vaccination clinics were also scheduled for Sheriff's Office Personnel through a partnership with Freiderica Pharmacy. The Moderna vaccine was offered to 74 personnel on January 19th and personnel received the second dose of the vaccine on February 23rd.

Sheriff Higgins utilized social media to conduct Facebook Live videos informing the public of agency adjustments and ensured Sheriffs patrol deputies would continue to take calls and respond to emergencies as normal. The Sheriff's Office also added a COVID-19 tab to the agency website informing the public of any positive cases within the facility, which included the numbers of inmates and personnel.



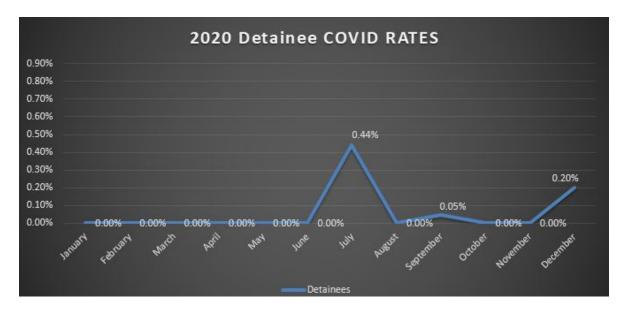


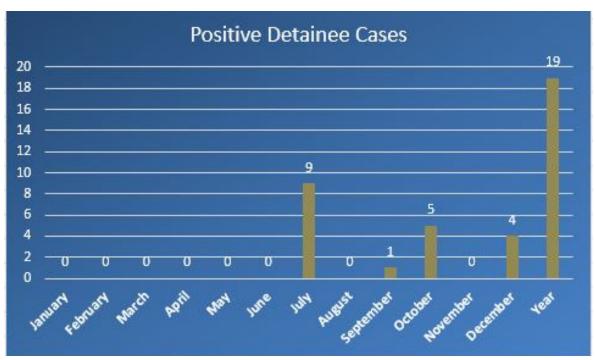
Facility Adjustments

COVID-19 RESPONSE



As a result of timely action, collaborative thinking and team action, the Sheriff's Office was able to see minimal effects of the virus in the facility. Some federal, state and other local correctional facilities around the state suffered mass infection rates. Pulaski County, though being the largest jail facility in the state (1210 beds), booked in 16541 detainees into custody in 2020, and was able to keep the infection rate, at its highest, below 0.5%.

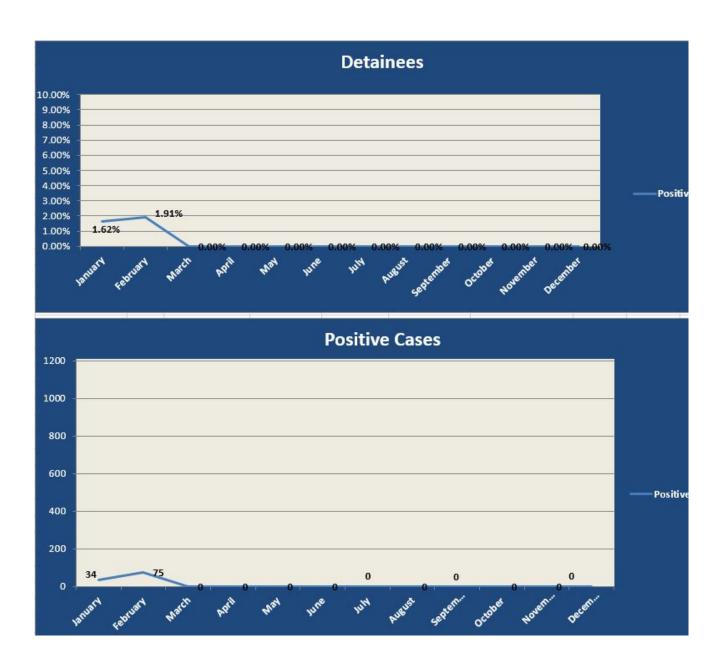




Vaccination

COVID- 19 RESPONSE Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The actions taken in 2020, have allowed the Sheriff's Office to develop "best practices" which are being implemented in 2021. As an agency, the Sheriff's Office currently has no positive COVID-19 cases. In addition, the detention facility has no cases.



NEXT PHASE

EMPLOYEE PAY

Sheriff Higgins has stated that his goal in 2021, is to address the pay and compensation for both sworn and non-sworn members of the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Higgins believes by providing a living wage and rewarding longevity will help eliminate the organization's historical battle with retention. In addition to focusing on pay, the Sheriff has communicated his goals of addressing the extremely high County health insurance and the inability to obtain spousal coverage. The high cost of insurance and the lack of spousal coverage has been one the leading reasons for employee exodus. The lack of a competitive wage, coupled with the high cost of health insurance, hinders the Sheriff's Office from attracting highly qualified candidates.

FACILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The detention facility has experienced widespread deterioration over the span of it's existence. Many structural and mechanical deficiencies have gone unaddressed for years, either due to a lack of funding or lack of planning and execution. Sheriff Higgins spent the last two years working with the Pulaski County Quorum Court to address the issues in the Detention Facility. Quorum Court members were invited to tour the facility, with some of them doing so.

Sheriff Higgins most recently made head way by gaining support from the Quorum Court to commit funds to replacing the control board used to operate the security measures within the facility. Funds were also allocated to address a great number but not all of the outdated malfunctioning cell locking mechanisms. These facility problems highly compromise the security of the facility and all persons within it's walls, employees and detainees alike.

Sheriff Higgins has met the majority of the goals he set fiscally through budget neutral action. The Sheriff's Office will continue to move forward even given the present fiscal constraints. Sheriff Higgins has vowed to continue to search for new and innovative ways to achieve the agency's goals and meet the community's expectations..

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