

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

Lehigh County Pennsylvania

Joseph N. Hanna
Sheriff

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 17, 2021

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Lehigh County Sheriff's Office Awarded State Accreditation

Allentown, PA- Sheriff Joseph N. Hanna announced today that the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office was officially awarded State Accreditation following a unanimous vote from PLEAC (Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission) at a formal meeting held on July 20, 2021 at the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Annual Conference.

Sheriff Hanna proclaimed that one of his immediate goals when he took office was to work toward obtaining Pennsylvania State Accredited Certification for the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Hanna reported that the vigorous process of Accreditation began during the first year he took office in 2016. The Sheriff's Office completed the process on April 8, 2021, following a complete top-to-bottom review of the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office, which included preparatory and official on-site assessments by the Pennsylvania Police Chief's Association.

Sheriff Hanna reports that in an effort to comply with all the necessary requirements of Accreditation through PLEAC, his office had to develop policies and procedures and demonstrate daily compliance with the hundreds of professional law enforcement standards and sub-standards. Those standards have been adopted by the PLEAC Commission under the umbrella of the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association.

Sheriff Hanna expressed his gratitude for the overall commitment of personnel throughout the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office, who not only embraced the concept of Accreditation, but practiced it during their daily operations and services to the public.

Sheriff Hanna reports that he is humbled that the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office is now a part of an exclusive group of 134 accredited law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth. He noted that of the 67 Sheriff's Offices and Departments in the State, the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office is the 6th Sheriff's Office to attain accreditation. This places the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office in the top 9% of all Pennsylvania Sheriff's Offices or Sheriff's Departments through the state who are accredited.

Sheriff Hanna acknowledged the tireless work of his staff who prepared the framework necessary to complete this monumental task including the efforts of Chief Deputy of Administration David Faust, the Accreditation Managers, Lt. Lita Bechtold and Karl Geschwindt (Emmaus Police Department – retired) as well as all of the Command Staff and Deputies.

The Sheriff remarked that subscribing to the edict of professional law enforcement involves daily practices as well as demonstrating professional law enforcement standards each and every day.

The official Certification of Accreditation was presented to Sheriff Hanna by James Adams Accreditation Program Coordinator from the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association.

This event included a cross-section of rank-and-file and personnel from the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office who participated actively in the on-site and preparatory assessments.

On September 17, 2021, a press conference was held at the Lehigh County Government Center to officially announce the office's accreditation status. Honored invited guests included District Attorney James Martin, County Executive Phillips Armstrong, Lehigh County Board of Commissioners, Thomas Maioli Jr., PA. Sheriff's Association Executive Director, James Adams, Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association Accreditation Program Coordinator, Police Chief Charles Roca, Allentown Police Department and Representatives from the Pennsylvania State Police and Police Chief's from various Lehigh County Police Departments.

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