



**Dekalb County (GA) Sheriff's Office  
Assessment Report**



**2015**

**DeKalb County Sheriff's Office  
Assessment Summary  
March 23 – 26, 2015**

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**A. Agency name, CEO and AM**

DeKalb County GA Sheriff's Office  
4415 Memorial Drive  
Decatur, GA 30032

Sheriff Jeffery Mann  
Accreditation Manager Melissa Manrow

**B. Dates of the On-Site Assessment**

March 23-26, 2015

**C. Assessment Team**

1. Team Leader: Rob Sofie, Chief of Police, retired  
Douglas County Sheriff's Office  
3601 North 156 Street  
Omaha, NE 68116-2025
2. Team Member: Darrin Abbink, Lieutenant  
Colorado Springs Police Department  
705 South Nevada Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

**D. CALEA Program Manager and Type of On-site**

Regional Program Manager Vince Dauro; Assessment Manager Karen Shepard  
Gold Standard Assessment, Law Enforcement Advanced Accreditation, fifth re-  
accreditation, Edition 5.19  
D size agency (authorized 311 personnel, 221 sworn, 90 non-sworn)

**E. Community and Agency Profile**

**1. Community profile**

DeKalb County was created in 1822, and is primarily a suburban county, covering 271 square miles that includes a portion of the city of Atlanta and eight other municipalities, including Avondale Estates, Chamblee, Clarkston, Decatur, Doraville, Lithonia, Pine Lake and Stone Mountain. Its county seat is Decatur, and is recognized as a rapidly growing multi-ethnic urban county within the greater metropolitan Atlanta area. Since its founding, DeKalb County has grown from a quiet village of approximately 2,500 to a bustling and diverse metropolitan county of more than 700,000 residents. The county has enjoyed a robust local economy, employing one out of eight workers in the state. The third most populous county in Georgia, the 2013 population is estimated at 713,340, an increase of seven percent over the 2000 Census, and is among the most culturally diverse populations in the southeastern United States. More than 64 languages are spoken by DeKalb citizens, and the county has become home to many residents seeking refuge from other countries. In recent years, some communities in north DeKalb County have incorporated, following a trend in other suburban areas around Metro Atlanta.

The DeKalb County government is administered by a seven-member Board of Commissioners and a full-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The seven Commissioners are elected by Districts for four year staggered terms, and the Board elects one Commissioner to serve as Presiding Officer annually. The CEO is elected countywide and has the exclusive power to supervise, direct, and control the administration of County Government. Burrell Ellis was elected to his second term as CEO in 2012, but was suspended in 2013 pending trial for political corruption. The District Five Commissioner, Lee May, was the presiding officer of the Board of Commissioners when CEO Ellis was suspended, and was named Interim CEO by Georgia Governor Nathan Deal in July 2013. Commissioner May's seat remains vacant. Commissioners' responsibilities are to adopt an annual budget and to levy a tax rate/ service charge structure sufficient to balance the budget; to rule on requests to rezone property; and to adopt and amend the County Code.

The County Board of Commissioners designates the DeKalb County Police Department (DKPD) as the primary police/response agency for patrol and criminal investigations in unincorporated DeKalb County. The DeKalb County Sheriff's Office (DKSO) is responsible for serving criminal warrants and securing the courts and county jail, and the DeKalb Marshal's Office which serves civil processes issued through state court.

## **2. Agency profile**

The DKSO is a limited service law enforcement agency that generally does not provide response to calls for service and or investigate criminal offenses; these efforts are generally conducted by the DKPD. The DKSO operates under the administration of a Sheriff elected to a term of four years. Sheriff Jeffrey L. Mann was appointed interim Sheriff in February 2014 after Sheriff Thomas Brown retired to participate in a congressional election. Sheriff Mann won election for the remaining two years of Sheriff Brown's term in July 2014. The DKSO has been awarded the National Sheriff's Association Triple Crown Award, for being accredited through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), the American Correctional Association (ACA), and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC).

Sheriff Jeffrey L. Mann, along with Chief Deputy Reginald Scandrett, and Chief of Administration and Legal Affairs Xernia Fortson, provide senior command for the organization. The total authorized strength of the entire DKSO as approved by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners is 861, including 659 sworn and 202 non-sworn personnel who are assigned to the Court, Field, Jail, Administrative, and Training/Background/ Recruitment Divisions. Each Division is under the day-to-day command of a Major. The Field Services Division is responsible for activities related to serving criminal warrants, a Fugitive Apprehension Squad, SWAT Team, and service of certain legal process. The Court Services Division provides courthouse security for more than 30 Judges in the various courts, transportation of inmates, and over 8,000 civil process orders annually. The Administrative Services Division provides vital support to all other DKSO Divisions and to more than 700 employees. An Office of Professional Standards (OPS) has direct reporting authority to the Office of the Sheriff.

### 3. Demographics

The demographic composition of the service area and agency are represented in the following table:

	Service Population		Available Workforce		Current Employees		Current Female Employees		Prior Assessment Employees		Prior Assessment Female Employees	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Caucasian	245682	33	88146	29.8	19	9	2	1	18	8	2	1
African-American	398773	54	203374	68	193	87	58	26	201	88	56	24
Hispanic	69676	9	4877	1.6	5	2	1	0	5	2	0	0
Other	30296	4	1818	0.6	4	2	0	0	5	2	0	0
Total	744427	100	298515	100	221	100	61	28	229	100	58	25

As depicted in the demographics data table above, the agency continues to not be in approximate proportion as compared to their available workforce, presently:

- 19% over-represented in the 'African-American' demographic category;
- 20% under-represented in the 'Caucasian' demographic category;
- nearly mirrors their Hispanic and Other demographic categories; and
- has a remarkable 28% female presence within their sworn ranks.

The agency has adopted and maintained a Recruitment Plan, with a stated recruitment objective of, ". . . to achieve our goal of an ethical and well diverse racial and gender workforce composition in the sworn law enforcement ranks. The Sheriff's Office strives to maintain proportionate diversity in our workforce which reflects the community we serve by utilizing the DeKalb County Work Force Development to assist in publishing our open positions directly to the citizen within our community." The Recruitment Plan states their County Work Force Development overall purpose is, ". . . to provide a collaboration of service organizations providing unified education, training and employment programs for job seekers and provides service to our widely diverse community."

### 4. Future issues

Future issues facing DKSO include the in-progress transition from the 14-year administration of Sheriff Brown to the administration of newly-elected Sheriff Jeff Mann, who served as Sheriff Brown's Chief Deputy for ten years. Upon election, Sheriff Mann is re-organizing the agency and has set five future goals at the outset of his administration:

1. Onboard more staff while improving staff pay;
2. Reduce active warrants;
3. Increase inmate programs;
4. Improve information technology infrastructure; and
5. Increase community outreach.

The agency reports the first goal may well be the most challenging, given the length of time required to vet and train law enforcement applicants. A newly reconfigured Training, Background and Recruitment Division are rapidly absorbing the recruitment and background investigative functions from the Office of Professional Standards.

The Court Division is in the process of separating out the detention area monitoring systems from the building security monitoring systems. The Field Division has embarked upon a new traffic enforcement emphasis, particularly regarding traffic around stopped school buses.

The agency also reports the State of Georgia is considering changes to the law regarding state asset forfeiture funds, with unknown future impacts for law enforcement agencies.

#### **5. CEO biography**

Jeffrey L. Mann was elected as the 49<sup>th</sup> Sheriff of DeKalb County, Georgia in July 2014 in a run-off election to fill the unexpired term of former Sheriff Thomas Brown. Mann had served as Chief Deputy, second in command with Sheriff Brown for nearly a decade, where he was responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Jail, Field, Court and Administrative Divisions, as well as the office's \$78 million dollar budget.

After serving honorably for four years in the United States Air Force, Sheriff Mann received his Bachelor of Political Science degree from the University of Illinois and his Juris Doctorate Degree from the University of Michigan Law School and went into private practice litigating employment and labor law. In 1993, Mann joined the DeKalb County Law Department as an Assistant County Attorney. During his tenure, he served as the lead trial attorney for the DeKalb County CEO, the Board of Commissioners and the agency and department heads. Sheriff Mann began his career in law enforcement in 2001 when newly-elected Sheriff Brown asked him to serve as the new Director of Labor Relations and Legal Affairs. In 2004, he was promoted to Chief of Staff. In 2006, he was named Chief Deputy, the highest non-elected position within the DKSO. Sheriff Mann is a graduate of the Leadership DeKalb Class of 2000, has served as the president of the DeKalb Lawyers Association, and has been a mentor for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program of Atlanta. He maintains his membership with the State Bar of Georgia as well as the DeKalb County Bar Association.

#### **F. Public Information Activities:**

Public notice and input are a corner stone of democracy and CALEA accreditation. This section reports on the community's opportunity to comment on their law enforcement agency and to bring matters to the attention of the Commission that otherwise may be overlooked.

##### **a. Public Information Session**

A public information session was advertised for Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015, at the Decatur Recreation Center, at 6:30 pm. There were no attendees.

##### **b. Telephone Contacts**

A public telephone call-in session was conducted from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The assessors received no phone calls.

##### **c. Correspondence**

No correspondence was received.

d. Media Interest

No media interest was received prior to, during or following the on-site. The agencies public information plan was publicized in both the *Decatur-Avondale Patch* and the *DeKalb Neighbor* newspapers in early March.

e. Public Information Material

The agency distributed public notice/news releases announcing the on-site assessment to local media and Public Notices were distributed and posted in over 40 locations, including area libraries and public buildings. The assessment team observed Public Notices posted in employee break areas.

f. Community Outreach Contacts

As part of the GSA process, the assessment team met with and/or interacted with over 100 external contacts and agency members. Assessors conducted interviews with several external and community contacts, including County Chief Operating Officer Zachary Williams; Chief Juvenile Court Judge Desiree Peagler; Judge Gregory Adams; County Attorney OV Brantley; Ace III Communications Media Representative John Hewitt; Dunwoody Police Department Chief Billy Grogan; Owner Greg Levett, Levett & Sons Funeral Home, David Campbell, Georgia Southern Power; and Solicitor General Sherry Boston.

**G. Essential Services**

The agency does not perform all the services that most traditional patrol units would perform in the policing industry. The major functions of the Field Services Division are warrant service, transports for medical and mental health issues, as well as sex offender registration and domestic violence protective orders service. The Field Services Division performs some services that are most traditionally associated with patrol. The unit provides 24 hour coverage for the county, but primarily covers two shifts of 10.5 hours. The hours in between the two primary shifts are covered by a couple of deputies and a supervisor so that the agency has someone available to conduct a transport if needed, but the majority of the staffing is assigned to the two main shifts.

The Field Services Division does perform some traffic activities, but the more traditional calls for service associated with patrol divisions are handled mainly by the DeKalb County Police Department (DKPD). Deputies are able to listen in to police dispatch channels, and important information, such as information on crimes that have just occurred, is aired to deputies on the radio. Deputies can and often do respond to crimes occurring close to their locations, as the public image of a sheriff's vehicle passing a crime or traffic incident would not be favorable. When deputies do become involved in traditional patrol activities, they must complete reports for the agency, and copies are provided to the DKPD so that accurate crime statistics can be kept by that agency. The DKPD in turn provides the DKSO with data on high crime locations and problems so that deputies can be deployed to these locations, adding to the visibility of police presence in these troubled locations.

The agency was just awarded a federal grant to implement a program for dealing with the increase in crimes against at-risk adults. The grant will allow the agency to coordinate a



multi-jurisdictional approach to the problem of elder abuse. Members of the Police Department, Adult Protective Services, Sheriff's Office and other local partners will coordinate with each other to provide training to responders and develop a multi-layered approach to this national problem.

All DKSO employees are bound by a code of ethics tailored to fit their duties and responsibilities, and receive ethics training, at a minimum, biennially. Ethics training was last provided in 2013. DKSO has three separate codes of ethics: one for sworn personnel, one for detention personnel, and one for non-sworn members. The Code of Ethics is complemented with 26 'Suggested Standards of Behavior', which espouse:

- ethics, honesty, openness and fairness in professional and personal lives;
- value respect, honoring the rights and dignity of each person we are called upon to serve; *and*
- Motto: "Treat people as you would want to be treated."

The agency conducts a workload analysis on each major component once every three years, examining the available hours of work each year for individual assignments and adjusts for known availability reductions such as vacation time, training requirements, and average sick leave. Using the total hours available, the amount of work each employee can be expected to conduct is evaluated against the estimated volume of work the agency projects will need to be completed to establish the staffing needs of the unit. Staffing is then distributed to help the agency achieve the established goals of each unit.

The agency has a long term plan that lists goals for the agency and the anticipated dates that the goals should be accomplished. The Sheriff has determined that his top five goals are technology growth, staff development and increased job satisfaction, new inmate programs, community service, and warrant reductions. The agency in turn breaks down the needs of the agency as they relate to the sheriff's goals into shorter range as well as long range goals. Their plan evaluates anticipated workloads, population trends, capital improvement and equipment needs. They anticipate that population levels will stay fairly static as evidenced by their recent history, and predicts that their workload trends will stay relatively flat with only small variations. The agency attributes this to the nature of the agencies main functions of warrant service and court operations. The main policing services being provided by municipal and the county police agencies are most affected by any changes in population. As more areas of the county have incorporated, the role of the county police has changed, but the functions of the Sheriff's Office remain the same. Each divisions goals and objectives are reviewed annually through project progress reports and meetings with the Sheriff. In 2015, the agencies major initiatives include an upgrade to the video systems in the courthouse, developing a new recruitment plan to help reduce vacancies to zero, and to seek CALEA re-accreditation.

Sworn personnel are required to perform a physical efficiency battery test annually, and all members are required to attend one Health and Wellness class on an annual basis. The program is coordinated by the DKSO Training Director who is required to be certified as a Health and Wellness instructor. Members are provided education and support on general wellness in addition to the job specific requirements for physical fitness. The agency encourages members in their fitness by offering partial reimbursements for health club memberships, and also provides a well-equipped gym for member use. The training

section is currently in the process of purchasing new equipment for the gym which will modernize the facility and hopefully encourage more employees to use the facilities.

The agency operates a K-9 unit, which currently has one dog/handler, used for drug detection, building searches, field searches, vehicle searches, criminal apprehension, tracking and public displays. The agency is seeking a second K-9 to replace one that passed away to bring the K9 unit back to authorized strength. The agency issues specialized equipment to each K-9 Deputy, including ballistic protection for the animal. The K-9 vehicle is equipped with an automated safety system to help reduce the possibility that the compartment can overheat and endanger the dog.

The Field Services Division is expanding its role in the community and is looking for more opportunities to interact with their services communities. Deputies are now encouraged to spend time each shift in schools zones performing not only enforcement of traffic laws, but meeting with school officials and interacting with students. The local schools have been very receptive to this new interaction with the Sheriff's Office because the local police department has concentrated its efforts in the schools on working with the high school population. The agency feels that the program has been a positive influence on deputies because they get to interact with the population in a more positive environment than has been the traditional norm.

The Field Services Division has also recently joined forces with the DKPD to address specific problems within the community such as homelessness, shoplifting, gang violence and prostitution. The agency provided two deputies to help with proactive policing strategies aimed at addressing these issues and their root causes. As this is a new initiative, the agency does not yet have any long term data on the effectiveness of the program, but the hope is that the unit will be effective in reducing the impacts of these issues on the community.

#### **Auxiliary Programs**

The DKSO sponsors college juniors and seniors in a law enforcement intern program. The goal of the program is to provide interested students the opportunity for practical law enforcement experience. Interns are assigned to duties in the Jail, Court and Field Divisions in equal time increments. The division commander makes duty assignments within the respective division accordingly. With input from division personnel, the investigator(s) will complete all evaluations/ratings and prepare any other documents required by the student or the university.

The agency uses a reserve program to augment its personnel levels. They are approved to conduct law enforcement operations in the same capacity as full time DKSO deputies. The agency asks reserves to provide at least 20 hours a month of service time to the organization, including working in the courts, field division, detention, community relations and funeral escorts. Reserve deputies also are permitted to work extra duty assignments where they receive compensation from the entity being served. All reserves complete the same in-service training requirements as those of full time deputies. Reserve deputies receive annual evaluations of their performance in the same manner as full time deputies.

The agency also has an auxiliary unit with no law enforcement powers. Members of this unit may assist in support services, records retention filing, communications and other

Policy mandates that a dedicated console be staffed for DKSO communications and services purposes.

### **Crime Scene Processing**

DKSO policy directs that the DKPD or the GBI have primary crime scene processing responsibilities, but DKSO deputies do have some evidentiary responsibilities as part of their normal activities. Deputies frequently deal with firearms and narcotics recovered from arrestees which must be maintained for evidential purposes. They also frequently encounter suspects with stolen vehicles, so their policy covers the processing and recovery of evidence from stolen vehicles. Deputies are provided with appropriate packaging and collection tools for processing the types of evidence they may encounter in their duties.

### **Property and Evidence**

The Field Division Commander is responsible for the management of the agency's property and evidence control function. The Property Room is staffed with an Evidence Technician, under the day-to-day supervision of a Lieutenant. Due to their limited enforcement operations, the agency utilizes a small but secure and very organized Property Room, and typically holds less than 2,000 items. Property acquired through the civil process function is accounted for in agency records, and property left unclaimed after a period of 90 days following its seizure or final conviction in the case becomes subject to lawful disposition. The Property and Evidence Custodian makes application to the Superior Court for a court order to retain the property for official use or discard it as salvage or non-serviceable equipment. Unclaimed currency is required to be transferred to the DeKalb County Treasury General Fund. Contraband is physically destroyed by the Property and Evidence Custodian. Utilizing the GSA on-site model, agency Property staff welcomed a critique of their various audits and inspections process, and readily accepted assessor suggestions/recommendations on how to enhance these audits/inspections.

### **H. Standards Issues:**

This section provides specific information on standards found to be in compliance after on-site "adjustments" were made. Adjustments may include modifying agency policies and directives, creating documentation, and an alteration of the physical plant.

The agency had three standards identified in this section.

*41.2.2 A written directive governs pursuit of motor vehicles, to include: k. conducting a documented annual review of pursuit policies and reporting procedures. (M)*

**ISSUE:** In August 2013, CALEA added new bullet k to this standard. Client agencies had until August 2014 to come into compliance. The agency did not revise their directive to add bullet k nor did it include the documented annual review of pursuit policies and/or reporting procedures until the deficiency was identified during the off-site file review.

AGENCY ACTION: The agency revised their written directive to now include bullet k. The agency also amended their existing 2014 Annual Pursuit Analysis to include the required documented annual review of pursuit polices and reporting procedures.

*42.2.5 If agency personnel participate in formal, long term, multi-jurisdictional investigative task force(s), a written directive describes the task force activities, to include: c. evaluating results and the need for continued operation(s). (M)*

ISSUE: The agency participates in several regional task forces, with written agreements for each. However, none of the existing agreements met the standard mandate for bullet c, and did not contain a provision for "evaluating results and the need for continued operation(s)". The agency also did not conduct the mandated evaluations of the task forces results and need for continued operation. The agency has not updated the written agreements, which all were approved by the previous Sheriff and one which had an expiration date for one year after it was signed in 2006.

AGENCY ACTION: The agency stated they will seek new written agreements for task force participation with updated current signatories and operational dates. They indicated understanding that the new and/or updated agreements must include a mandate requiring an annual evaluation of task force results and the need for continued operations, or be complemented with an internal written directive mandating same. During the on-site assessment, the agency revised their directive to now mandate an evaluation of task force results and completed evaluations of their participation in two task forces for year 2014.

*46.1.10 The agency has a written directive addressing active threats to include: bullets a-e. (M)*

ISSUE: The agency did not have a written directive specifically addressing active threats. This new standard created in November 2013 mandated agencies to have a written directive in place by November 2014. Upon advisement of the deficiency, the Accreditation Manager reported that she was aware of this new standard and conducted an internal review of the agency existing All Hazards Plan and felt it sufficiently included an active threats component. The assessment team then re-reviewed the agency All Hazards Plan but still could find no reference to active threats as defined by CALEA.

AGENCY ACTION: The agency created and issued new written directive 014-006 which covers active threats and all the attendant bullets. The agency will require training in the topic and will conduct annual reviews of the policy and training needs involved.

**I. 20 Percent Standards:**

CALEA agencies must be in compliance with at least 80% of applicable other than mandatory (O) standards. The agency is free to choose which standards it will meet based on their unique situation.

The agency is in compliance with 89% of applicable other-than mandatory (O) standards.

**J. Future Performance/Review Issues**

[This section reports on directives that appear to meet the intent of standards but the directives initial established time line for completion of required activities has not be met ("wet ink"). These requirements are reported to emphasize that these activities must be completed in the appropriate time frame.

No standards were identified as Future Performance/Review Issues.

**K. Table: Standards Summary:**

	<u>TOTAL</u>
Mandatory (M) Compliance	292
Other-Than-Mandatory Compliance	43
Standards Issues	3
Waiver	0
(O) Elect 20%	5
Not Applicable	<u>141</u>
TOTAL	484

**L. Summary:**

Following the agency request to utilize the Gold Standard Assessment (GSA) process, the assessment team reviewed the 87 Law Enforcement standards mutually identified during the GSA conference call with Sheriff Mann and Accreditation Manager Marrow. The assessment team determined that the agency was in compliance with all but three applicable standards. Two of the three standards identified as deficient in this assessment were similarly themed as the agency failed to update their agency directives following revisions to the standards in 2013. The 2012 assessment team had identified no standards in non-compliance or file maintenance; and two standards were identified in Applied Discretion status, including standard 41.2.2/Pursuits, but for different reasons than identified as deficient in this assessment. The agency reports transitioning to PowerDMS Standards in early 2014, and conducting their mock assessment remotely via PowerDMS in January. The agency submitted all three Annual Reports to CALEA.

The DeKalb County Sheriff's Office is a limited service law enforcement agency, primarily fulfilling traditional statutory sheriff's functions of service of legal process and detention. Operationally, the agency provides a superior level of effective law enforcement services. Now well into his reorganization of the agency, Sheriff Mann now has his senior command members strategically positioned to take the agency to the next level. All of the comments gleaned from the external GSA contacts were overwhelmingly positive, with an expressed appreciation for Sheriff Mann not only maintaining excellent public service but also making notable improvements in the organization since his appointment and election as Sheriff. There are no noted bias-based policing concerns, the agency engages in very few pursuits and use-of-force, and has an excellent warrant service success rate. No public input was received through correspondence, public phone or hearing sessions. The agency did not conduct a citizen survey.

Recognition received this review period by the DKSO includes a certificate of appreciation from the Toys for Tots Foundation for the agencies participation in the 2014