



Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation PRESS RELEASE

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Pictured above from left: Chief Chuck Forbis President of TLEA, Chief Don Bandy, MPO Janell Wilson Accreditation Manager

Nashville, TN- The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation (TLEA) Program is pleased to announce that it has granted accreditation status to the Gallatin Police Department. They were awarded this achievement during the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police (TACP) meeting held in Nashville, TN on March 26th, 2015.

To achieve accreditation with TLEA, an agency voluntarily submits to a process of enhancing the agency's professionalism and effectiveness utilizing 160 law enforcement standards and participating in a thorough on-site assessment. For agencies already accredited by CALEA®, the process involves compliance with specific state standards and a thorough on-site assessment of the agency. The standards address a variety of areas including organizational, operational, safety, and budget management practices. Gallatin Police Department successfully accomplished TLEA accreditation by meeting criteria that measured the professionalism, organizational, and overall readiness in law enforcement policy and procedures. The program is intended to encourage cooperation, recognize professional standing, develop professional services and ensure public safety throughout the State of Tennessee.



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Accreditation is a management tool establishing expectations of performance and procedures for an agency to follow. The standards only provide a goal of the finished product. It is up to the agency to establish its own policy and procedures to meet those standards, making them as simple or as complex as the agency feels is necessary. Accreditation provides a written guideline for management to operate the agency effectively, and productively aids in working relationships with other agencies and accountability to the citizens they serve.

What accreditation brings to any agency is the knowledge that written policy is established and followed by all personnel. It is a living document that enables the entire agency to move forward professionally. The employees want the assurance that they are doing their job tasks correctly and are properly trained. Documentation is also a critical part of the accreditation process. An agency asks itself, "Did we do it by policy and did we do it correctly?" The answer should be yes because we followed policy and procedure and documented both for reference and historical fact.

When familiarizing new personnel with the accreditation process, it is explained that accreditation standards require policy development, policy requires training, and training requires documentation. Some policies direct the daily operation of the agency while others only arise in certain circumstances. If questions arise on other issues, policy and procedure can be readily researched through the policy manuals. By following established policy, the employee lives the accreditation process daily without even thinking about it.

When policy exists, employees are more confident in their job tasks. Accreditation creates a better work environment, pride in the agency, and a more professionally productive work force. No agency takes on the challenge of accreditation alone. Those having achieved accreditation and many working toward that goal have resources to share. The results are well worth the challenge!

"The standard of excellence that is met through this process is to be admired. We are proud to recognize the hard work of this department and its staff," stated TACP President Chuck Forbis.

"We are proud to have achieved this goal and are committed to the continued pursuit of excellence in the delivery of police services to our citizens. Accreditation is a great tool to assist in holding ourselves accountable and to demonstrate that we meet the professional standards of modern law enforcement" —Chief of Police Don Bandy

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation Program is a voluntary program that recognizes the excellence and professional achievement in law enforcement agencies across the State of Tennessee. The program began in 2010 through the hard work and efforts of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police. There are currently 56 law enforcement agencies involved in the state accreditation program, 80% of them have less than 50 sworn officers in their departments. Thirty two agencies have achieved accreditation with eleven having achieved re-accreditation. It takes commitment, dedication, and hard work from the agency head, agency personnel and community leaders to meet the standards prescribed by the program. The time commitment involves up to a three-year process. The TLEA program is a valuable and cost effective way to enhance overall agency effectiveness, professionalism and risk management.

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