



Putnam County Justice Center
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State of the Sheriff's Department Year One

One year ago, the citizens of Putnam County put their trust in me, electing me as their Sheriff with an overwhelming 99% of the vote. At that time, I made three promises: 1. To keep our children safe; 2. To be diligent on the fight against drugs and the crime they bring to our community; and 3. To enhance the professionalism of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department. I am proud to say that we have made progress on all of those promises and are continuing to enhance our community every day.

I have not accomplished any of this alone. I have the honor of serving with a leadership team representing the "best of the best" in each of their respective areas. Before I took office, we assembled a transition team of very talented, active, and retired law enforcement officers whose members had worked in local, state, and federal agencies and had experience in teaching at universities and academies, terror prevention, drug enforcement, border patrol, as well as other specialties. They brought more than 350 years of law enforcement experience to the Putnam County Sheriff's Department, and all of them are still serving our Department in various capacities today.

I have also had the privilege to serve with a group of leaders in business, management, education, public relations, finance, and with former public office holders. This dedicated team has helped guide and shape the non-law enforcement side of the Sheriff's Department. With their input and guidance, we developed a **Vision** "to provide exemplary law enforcement protection for the citizens of Putnam County and conduct our affairs in such a way that will grow respect and trust among the citizens of Putnam County." From this came our **Motto**: "Earning the Public's Trust Every Day."

We also developed a **Core Values** for the Department: Integrity, Courage, Compassion, Professionalism, Accountability, and Respect. These are not just words on paper. They are words we live by and live out in our daily lives. They serve as a unifying commitment among all of the deputies and volunteers who serve in our Department.

And, finally, a **Mission Statement** that describes this commitment: "The men and women of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department are committed to the protection of life and property among the citizens of the county, and are committed to providing law enforcement, corrections, and criminal justice services through a partnership with the community that builds trust, reduces crime, creates a safe environment, and enhances the quality of life."

Since my first day in office, we have "hit the ground running" and have never stopped. From benchmarking data to setting goals and tracking them, we have been striving to do the "right things right." Here's a quick breakdown on our progress on our three main goals:

Keeping Our Children Safe

- Within first week of office, implemented three new School Resource Officers, bringing us to a total of six SRO's working within the county's three high schools and two largest middle schools.

- In the 2015 budget, I received approval to add two additional School Resource Officers
- Added daily patrols to ALL schools by uniformed patrol deputies, especially those without SRO's
- Participated in "Teens and Trucks Share the Road"
- Participated in "Distracted Driving Awareness Week"

Tough on Drugs/Crime

- New Zone System for Patrol has reduced average response times and increased the number of calls handled during each shift.
- New motor unit and motor school which has increased the visibility and reach of the Sheriff's Department. We are also training motor officers from other municipal police departments.
- New K9 team/dogs – with our new bloodhound (Maggie) and a new drug dog (Bolt) we now have 5 K9 units. All of our dogs and their trainers have obtained certification through the USPCA.
- Increased training/certifications for K9, Motors, POST certified in-service, as well as the Tennessee Law Enforcement Academy.
- Improved training and standards for Reserves. We now have 12 – 15 reserve officers who have helped us in myriad ways (events, natural disasters, mental health transports).
- SWAT Team/Warrants Division: for the first time in a decade, we are current and up-to-date on serving Civil Warrants. We had a backlog of more than 9,000 Criminal Warrants when we started, but we are now steadily making progress in this area on a day to day basis instead of having a backlog.
- Drug Task Force: this dedicated team of undercover deputies, detectives, and warrants officers work tirelessly to track and arrest anyone who is involved in illegal drug activity in Putnam County. They work closely with many other agencies, including TBI, HIDTA, THP, ATF, and our local municipal police departments.
- Jail Improvements – instituted female work crews, painted the jail interior, added some new kitchen equipment in order to make meal preparation more efficient, and other new programs.
- Female Work Crew – for working in and around county buildings for cleaning, painting, and general improvements.
- Prescription Drug Box was added in the lobby and quarterly Prescription Drug Take-Back Events have been conducted throughout the county to promote the safe disposal of RX drugs.

Enhancing Professionalism

- TLEA Accreditation: Within our first week, we applied for the Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation program and were accepted. We expect to receive our certification in early 2016 – about 1 – ½ years ahead of schedule, making us 1 of only 3 TLEA Accredited Agencies in the State of Tennessee. In fact, among the 95 Sheriff's Offices in Tennessee, we will be one of only 7 agencies accredited by either TLEA or CALEA (the state and national accreditation programs).
- Benchmarking: We conducted a community survey with the help of TTU staff and students to ensure that we know how you feel about us and what you expect. An overwhelming 92% of you said that you feel safe in your home and 75% of you claimed crime prevention as one of your top priorities for the Putnam County Sheriff's Office.
- New equipment for the safety and effectiveness of our deputies including new cars, uniforms, guns, bulletproof vests, LoJack tracking system, AVL's, dogs for K9 team, trucks, storage trailers, flashlights, medical kits, cameras, laptops, etc. Some of these items were budgeted and others were obtained through programs like GovDeals.com surplus sales which netted \$72,000 for the Department, as well as grants (Ben Roethlisberger Foundation K9, NRA, and Walmart/Sam's Club) and partnerships (i.e., FOP, Pilot Club, and local churches).

- First Citizen's Academy was completed in May with approximately 30 graduates.
- Formed volunteer groups, such as Sheriff's Volunteer Corps, Citizen's Resource Group (a 501©3 non-profit organization), Neighborhood Watch, and Senior Citizens Advisory Council (SCAN).
- Improved morale within the Department by increasing training and job opportunities, improving communication, and instituting a system of performance awards.
- Employee recognition and incentive programs, such as the Jerry Dale Abston Employee of the Year, and first ever wellness/fitness incentive program.
- Employee scholarships through Bethel University and Cookeville Higher Learning Center (formally Nashville State).
- Improved Communications: hired PIO, developed new website, and added Social Media on FaceBook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

In conclusion, I would just like to say how proud I am of every member of our Department. They have worked tirelessly to accomplish so much in a short period of time. We would not be where we are today without the commitment and dedication of each and every employee at the Putnam County Sheriff's Department. Of course, we still have goals to accomplish and I look forward to serving you in the years ahead with the assurance that we are on the right path, with the right people, in the right place...Putnam County. I truly value and appreciate the involvement and suggestions that we have received from so many of you to help us become and reach our ultimate goal of becoming the best Sheriff's Department in Tennessee. I enjoy living here and working with each of you to ensure that our growing community continues to be a safe place to live.

Thank you for your trust,

Sheriff Eddie Farris