

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The safety of all South Carolinians is of paramount concern to the Department of Public Safety. By participating in the process to become nationally accredited, we are demonstrating our ongoing efforts to be a more efficient, focused and professional law enforcement agency.

The standards set forth by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) outline effective ways of conducting the managerial and operational aspects of the Department and have been studied, tested and accepted by law enforcement agencies nationwide.

Throughout the accreditation and re-accreditation process, the Department will continue to review all operations with an eye toward finding new and innovative ways to work smarter while enhancing public safety. The Department is committed to meeting the expectations of all South Carolinians for professionalism, excellence and competence in the performance of our duties. Accreditation symbolizes this commitment.



South Carolina Department of Public Safety

SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
10311 Wilson Blvd., Columbia, SC 29016



SOUTH CAROLINA
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LAW ENFORCEMENT
ACCREDITATION

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LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

The South Carolina Department of Public Safety has voluntarily chosen to undergo a rigorous process of demonstrating its professional commitment to public safety and delivering a high level of service to the citizens of South Carolina. By participating in national law enforcement accreditation, DPS is documenting its compliance with professional standards called for by the law enforcement community and profession.

The accreditation concept and practice are not new ones. For many years, hospitals, universities and other professional fields have undergone accreditation to prove compliance with a set of professional standards. Accreditation, however, is relatively new to the law enforcement field.

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., is a national program which was formed in 1979 and is currently sponsored by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the National Sheriff's Association (NSA), the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). This commission has developed a comprehensive set of written standards covering every aspect of law enforcement policies, procedures, practices and operations. These standards were designed to:

- Increase law enforcement agency capabilities to prevent and control crime.
- Increase agency effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of law enforcement services.
- Increase cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.
- Increase employee and citizen confidence in the goals, objectives, policies and practices of the accredited agencies.

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

PHASE I: APPLICATION

The agency applies to the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. Details regarding the agency's size, responsibilities, functions, facilities, crime statistics, etc., are provided by the agency through a questionnaire. From the data, the Commission determines how many and which of the professional standards must be met by the agency to become accredited.

PHASE II: WEB-BASED ASSESSMENT

Once the Commission determines the standards with which the agency must comply, the agency reviews these standards and begins an in-depth analysis of its policies, procedures and day-to-day operations. This review provides the agency with a healthy examination of its entire operation and helps to determine the agency's ability to comply.

PHASE III: SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT

When the agency feels it has achieved compliance with the applicable standards, the Commission is notified. An outside team of assessors and auditors is appointed by the Commission, examined by the agency to avoid conflict of interest and sent to the agency to conduct an extensive review of the agency's documented proofs of compliance with each standard.

PHASE IV: COMMISSION REVIEW & DECISION

The Commission schedules a hearing to review the team's written report and hear testimony from agency personnel and others. If satisfied that the agency has met all compliance requirements, the Commission awards accreditation.

PHASE V: RE-ACCREDITATION

Once accredited, a review is conducted every year in order to maintain accredited status. The agency must remain in compliance with applicable standards and submit annual reports to the Commission. At the conclusion of the four-year period, the Commission offers the agency an opportunity to repeat the process and continue accredited status into the future.

BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION

1. Accreditation requires an in-depth review of every aspect of the agency's organization, management, operations and administration which includes:

- Establishing agency goals and objectives, with provision for periodic review.
- Evaluating the use of agency resources in accordance with agency goals, objectives and mission assignments.
- Evaluating agency policies and procedures, especially as documented in the agency's written directive system.
- Allowing the agency an opportunity to correct deficiencies before they become public problems.

2. Accreditation provides recognition that the agency's managerial and operational policies and procedures are in accordance with a body of nationwide standards and that the agency has made a concerted effort to obtain professional status.

3. Accreditation assures that agency policies and procedures are in written form and are available to all agency personnel.

4. Accreditation assures agency personnel that every aspect of its personnel system is in accordance with a nationwide standard and that it is fair and equitable.