

COUNTY OF OAKLAND
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

MICHAEL J. BOUCHARD



OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE (OCSO)
EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND PREPAREDNESS DIVISION (ERP)
TRAINING UNIT

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office Emergency Response and Preparedness Division is comprised of several very diverse and specialized units. Each unit provides vital and unique services to the Sheriff's Office and other local law enforcement agencies. The **OCSO Training Unit** is one of the most active, complex and pivotal areas of emergency response and preparedness.

The mission and philosophy of the OCSO Training Unit is to develop and host training that exceeds recognized and established standards, encourages training reform, identifies best practices, supports transparency, remains tactically and technically sound, and focuses on de-escalation, cultural diversity, mental health and leadership. The Sheriff's Office conducts this training by adhering to a strict budget, utilizing a wide range of training platforms, being fiscally responsible, and utilizing minimum staff in a creative and effective manner. The OCSO continues to adapt and provide training that outpaces current trends and societal recommendations, forging the way for more effective law enforcement engagements in our communities.

The Sheriff's Office is one of the most highly trained law enforcement agencies in Michigan, with training requirements that far exceed the mandatory levels set by the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) and the Michigan Sheriff's Coordinating and Training Council (MSCTC). Topics include CPR and First Aid, Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) certification, weapons qualification and training, and bloodborne pathogen safety.

OCSO Patrol Services Division Deputies complete an 18-week basic police academy, which exceeds the state-mandated requirement of about 14 weeks. OCSO Corrections & Court Services Division Deputies attend a state-approved eight-week corrections academy, doubling the hours required by the state. Additionally, each Road Patrol Deputy must complete a 14-week field training program and each Corrections Deputy must complete a 10-week corrections training program. The OCSO is a state-approved Corrections Academy site.

The Emergency Communications & Operations Division (dispatch) is essential to law enforcement. The OCSO Training Unit oversees and tracks training for new and established dispatchers. Each dispatcher completes over 50 hours of training every two

years for certification purposes in three different skillsets: fire, medical and police. The state requires a new dispatcher to receive one week of training for initial certification. The OCSO Dispatcher Academy is currently three weeks – far exceeding state requirements. In addition, each dispatcher must complete an **18-week** communications officer training program.

The Sheriff's Office requires every sworn Patrol Services (Road Patrol) and Corrective & Court Services Deputy to complete multiple hours of in-service training every year on various topics. Each Deputy completes **Response to Resistance** training every month, which includes de-escalation and the safe, tactical use of firearms, and intermediate less-lethal options.

Besides in-service training, the Training Unit sends hundreds of deputies to MCOLES and MSCTC approved training classes for specialized instruction on numerous law enforcement topics. The Training Unit regularly distributes additional training bulletins, training articles, legal updates, training videos, officer safety notices, and legislation change documents. These resources ensure that communication and training occur at every level of law enforcement throughout the year, beyond mandated requirements. These items are essential to the continued growth of the OCSO and educate deputies in law enforcement best practices, reform and case law. The most recent training highlights include mental health and autism awareness. This training is designed to identify, understand, and respond to someone in a mental health crisis or someone who displays the signs and symptoms of autism.

The Sheriff's Office:

- Provides Deputies with de-escalation kits for use during interactions with persons with autism. These kits are in every patrol vehicle.
- Established and published training bulletins that address juvenile mental health and Rides to Recovery, which provides transportation to a substance abuse treatment program for anyone who needs it.
- Was one of the first agencies in Michigan to train Deputies in the use of Naloxone (Narcan) to help limit heroin overdoses. More than 500 Deputies have been trained and issued Narcan. In 2020, 67 lives were saved, bringing the number to more than 400 lives saved since inception of the program in 2015.
- Was one of the first in the state to host Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), which now gives the Sheriff's Office 24/7 coverage. To meet ongoing demands, additional Deputies are scheduled for training in 2021.
- Uses a “virtual academy” to train over 900 Deputies in recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness and suicide awareness and in 2019 addressed training in the areas of LGBTQ and the Prison Rape Elimination Act.
- 300 Corrections Deputies are being trained in mental health first aid. This training will also be held for all Patrol Services Deputies.

OCSO training focuses on cultural competency (racial profiling and implicit bias), de-escalation and response to resistance.

- In 2020, the Training Unit published a training bulletin that addressed Agonal Breathing (understanding “*I Can't Breathe*”).

- The Sheriff's Office requires every sworn Deputy to receive annual scenario-based training utilizing virtual simulation that addresses conflict resolution, de-escalation, and cognitive threat identification. This training enhances the ability to think "outside-the-box," respond to resistance and maintain and employ tactical solutions when applicable.
- The current in-service training cycle includes racial profiling and implicit bias training for every sworn Corrections and Patrol Services Deputy. Training is to be completed in May.
- The Sheriff's Office has seven trained law enforcement active de-escalation strategies instructors and will be certifying several more in a realistic de-escalation instructor course later this fiscal year. These instructors will continue to provide and develop training plans and scenarios where de-escalation is always the first option when tactically applicable.

Tactically and technically, the OCSO continues to train in defensive tactics, emergency vehicle operation, response to resistance and the safe use of firearms and less-lethal options. Deputies must understand when and how to utilize these options and be accountable to already established policy and law. Training continues in crowd control, legal updates, tactical first aid and active assailant and crisis response.

The Sheriff's Office assists other county police agencies meet their training goals. It offers instruction and training assistance – at no cost to them – through the OCSO temporary regional training center in Brandon Township.

Recent highlights of this regional training concept include:

- Emergency Vehicle Operation and Pursuit Termination Techniques training (Southfield Police Department)
- Evidence Technician Course (Franklin Police Department, West Bloomfield Police Department, Waterford Police Department and several others)
- Police Motorcycle Operators Course and Recertification (West Bloomfield Police Department, Michigan State Police and several others)
- Building entry tactics (FBI, U.S. Marshalls, and Waterford Police Department)

The OCSO is a founding partner and member of OAKTAC (Oakland County Tactical Response), **which consists of every local police agency in Oakland County** and has auxiliary members from Beaumont Health and several county fire departments. Its goal is

to ensure that Oakland County agencies maintain uniformity in active shooter response, training opportunities and mobile field force (crowd control).

The OCSO Training Unit oversees the training and administration of mobile field force team members, which includes members from other Oakland County law enforcement agencies. It maintains and stores OAKTAC mobile field force equipment and created and disseminated the OAKTAC mobile field force policy.

The Training Unit is dedicated to a robust community outreach program. It offers multiple safety and preparedness courses to the public or non-county employees. Those classes include ATV Safety, Boaters Safety, Hunters Safety and Concealed Pistol License certification. To prepare and prevent mass casualty incidents, the Training Unit has supported and taught Civilian Active Assailant Response to multiple churches, schools, businesses, Oakland County employees and municipal offices. This training is conducted throughout the county at no cost to the attendees. Some examples include:

- Holly Public Schools, Clarkston Public Schools, Walled Lake Schools
- Our Lady Queen of Martyrs (Beverly Hills), Clarkston United Methodist Church
- Village of Beverly Hills Township Offices, City of Pontiac – Senior Center
- General Motors - Pontiac Stamping, Fox News Detroit, Signature Associates

The Training Unit continues to plan for future challenges and is committed to proactive law enforcement reform. Future training will build upon programs already in place and focus on a new “total deputy” wellness mindset. It is imperative that the OCSO employ and train Deputies who are mentally and physically fit to ensure effectiveness and improve community and law enforcement relationships. Continued focus will be given to the OCSO “Peer to Peer Program”, a Leadership and Law Enforcement Cultural Reform Initiative, officer wellness and functional fitness.

The Training Unit will utilize current efforts and programs to recruit and hire the very best law enforcement candidates available to:

- Enhance an OCSO recruiting culture that recognizes the value of diversity.
- Target community outreach programs that intentionally encourage people of various backgrounds and ethnicities to consider a law enforcement career.
- Increase the use of social media platforms to recruit and communicate with a diverse community
- Encourage community members to get involved in the hiring process to increase recruitment.

The Training Unit supports this mandate by overseeing the OCSO Recruiting Team, internship program, cadet program and the Oakland County Sheriff’s Office Ride-Along Program.

###