



Kern County Sheriff's Office

Policies and Procedures

TITLE: MENTOR PROGRAM			NO: A-0600
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
REFERENCE:			
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APPLICABILITY

The Mentor Program is available to Kern County Sheriff's Command Association (KCSCA), Kern Law Enforcement Association (KLEA), and Kern County Detentions Officer Association (KCDOA) bargaining unit employees.

PURPOSE

The Mentor Program is dedicated to supporting employees in their transition to or within the Kern County Sheriff's Office by providing an understanding of the Sheriff's Office's culture, policies, and procedures. This will be accomplished by creating a welcoming, positive, and professional work environment. The Mentor Program will also help employees outline their career development goals and objectives.

The Mentor Program will work in cooperation with present and future training programs to improve and maintain the high professional standards of the Kern County Sheriff's Office. The Mentor Program and Mentors shall not interfere with or undermine the Field Training Officers or other personnel assigned to train or supervise the Protege.

Supervisors are encouraged to actively refer staff to the Mentor Program, which the Administrative Services Division Commander ultimately oversees. The Mentor Program will focus on the following areas: new employees, employees seeking promotion, employees seeking alternative assignments, and recently promoted employees. The ranks of Deputy, Senior Deputy, Sergeant, and Lieutenant should be assigned a Mentor during their probationary period. This program shall remain optional, and a Protege may decline involvement after an initial contact with a Mentor. The Protege may also request a different Mentor after consulting with the Mentor Coordinator.

To maintain the value and integrity of the Mentor Program, The Mentor/Protege relationship shall always remain professional. All individuals involved in the Mentor Program shall ensure that all KCSO Policy and Procedures are followed at all times. Failing to do so may result in removal from the Mentor Program. A Mentor and Protege shall not become intimately involved while engaged in the Mentoring Relationship. Doing so is a violation of this policy and will result in the immediate removal of both the Mentor and Protege from the Mentor Program.

DEFINITIONS

Mentor – a full-time, non-probationary employee who volunteers to be formally assigned to an employee to guide and support that employee through their transition to or within the Sheriff's Office, as well as outlining paths of career development.

Protege – an employee who is formally assigned to a Mentor who receives guidance and support for Sheriff's Office assimilation and career development.

Mentor Coordinator – the person responsible for the administration of the Mentor Program. The Administrative Services Division Commander shall appoint the Mentor Coordinator.

Mentor Advisory Committee – this select body of employees will assist the Mentor Coordinator with the administration of the program. This Committee is subject to appointment by the Administrative Services Division Commander and Mentor Coordinator.

Mentor Team – the team comprises the Administrative Services Division Commander, Mentor Coordinator, Mentor Advisory Committee, and Mentors.

MENTOR TEAM DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Mentor Team candidates should possess the following characteristics:

- A role model and example setter. (Only those with "standard" overall or better evaluations within the last year will be considered. An emphasis will also be placed on the Ideal Candidate Profile dimensions contained in the EPR.)
- Have no sustained misconduct within the last year resulting in disciplinary action. However, minimal discipline, such as written reprimands, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- A genuine concern for employee development.
- A basic level of understanding and a demonstrated commitment to the concept of mentoring.
- Highly motivated and mature individual dedicated to the values, goals, and objectives of the Kern County Sheriff's Office.
- Friendly and strong interpersonal skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Work well in a team environment.

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- Availability for occasional scheduled meetings and training sessions.

MENTOR TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

Employees interested in becoming a part of the Mentoring Team must complete the following process:

- Submit a formal memorandum of interest to the Administrative Services Division Commander via their chain of command. The applicant must have the endorsement of their Division Commander.
- Be subject to a review of their personnel file.
- Be subject to inquiries from their coworkers and supervisors to determine their suitability as a Mentor.
- Participate in an oral interview.
- The interview panel will consist of members of the Mentor Advisory Committee.
- Selected personnel shall attend the training provided by members of the Mentor Advisory Committee.

MENTOR DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The Mentor is expected to fulfill the following duties and expectations. A failure to adequately perform these duties may result in removal from the Mentor Program:

- Upon being assigned to a Protege, promptly contact and schedule an in-person meeting to welcome, introduce, and explain the Mentor Program.
- Offer ongoing guidance and assistance to the Protege throughout the onboarding process, field or other job training, probationary period, promotions, and if they are involved in the mentoring relationship.
- Serve as a trusted outlet where private matters or problems can be discussed. However, violations of policy or law shall be immediately reported to the Mentor Coordinator.
- Consider attending significant moments in the Protege's career, such as a swearing-in ceremony, graduation, award, promotional ceremonies, etc. If attendance is not possible, contact the Protege and explain the absence to them.
- Orient the Protege to the culture and general expectations of their new assignment.

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- Assist the Protege with questions or concerns that are not otherwise addressed through existing policies and procedures, such as complaints, EPR appeals, etc., or that should be directed to Human Resources, Field Training Officers, or supervisors.

MENTOR COORDINATOR DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The Mentor Coordinator should perform the below-listed duties and expectations:

- Recruit, train, and maintain the Mentor Team.
- Assign Mentors to their Proteges.
- Schedule and conduct Mentor meetings.
- Evaluate, troubleshoot, collect feedback from Protege, and make necessary changes to the program.

MENTOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The Mentor Advisory Committee should collaborate with the Mentor Coordinator to fulfill their above-listed duties and expectations.

PROTEGE PARTICIPATION

The Protege should make to participate actively in this valuable program and consider the following:

- Actively seeks to make use of the skills, experience, and guidance of their Mentor.
- Notify the Mentor Coordinator of any conflicts that may arise between the Mentor and Protege.
- Provide constructive feedback on the benefits of the program or areas of improvement.

MEETINGS AND TRAINING

Unless designated otherwise by the Administrative Services Division Commander or Mentor Coordinator, the Mentor Team should meet twice a year to evaluate the progress of the Mentor Program or conduct in-house training exercises.

The Mentor Team should provide optional training annually or at a frequency determined by department needs, which will provide employees with information on promotion and expectations of the next rank or position in their classification.

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COMPENSATION

- Mentors and Proteges are not required to carry a communication device to ensure their availability. They will not be required to respond to non-scheduled Mentor Program-related situations during off-duty hours.
- Mentors and Proteges are not considered to be subject to mandatory call-out or eligible for availability pay.
- Mentor Program-related activity that occurs outside of a Mentor's or Protege's scheduled on-duty hours will be compensated with the Administrative Services Division Commander's or Mentor Coordinator's approval and will bill the Cost Center of their primary work assignment.

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