



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
CONSOLIDATED CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
DUVAL COUNTY

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MIKE WILLIAMS
SHERIFF

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Since beginning my tenure as Sheriff I have been looking closely at the operations of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. One issue has emerged that speaks directly to our desire to be as transparent as possible – our ability to produce emails that may have been requested as a public record and should have been retained by the agency for a period of time defined by law, generally three to five years.

I have learned that we have been unable to produce these agency emails due to a long standing lack of system capacity.

During a scheduled meeting with Frank Denton, Editor in Chief and Mary Kelli Palka, Managing Editor of the *Florida Times-Union* on November 3rd, they pointed out the inability of our Records Unit to produce requested emails in a timely manner, if at all. At that meeting I told Mr. Denton & Ms. Palka that I had been learning of process problems with records requests and was investigating the matter. Now I have come to learn that we don't have the emails retained for the required period, in addition to the process deficits. I immediately began working with my team to rectify this deficiency.

Moving forward, we will be conducting a full internal review of the records request/retention process; researching and procuring necessary software; ensuring our database of records requests is keyword searchable; and hiring a public records manager with experience that includes handling the volume of requests that flow through our agency *each week*, in excess of 500 new requests, on average.

Training in record keeping and retention and transparency will be conducted for all employees of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, and those directly involved in this process will receive necessary additional training. I have confidence in my team to address the problem and fix it. I guarantee it. As of November 5th this agency has established a retention system to capture emails moving forward, as required by law.

As I have said many times, public trust is built through the continued demonstration of commitment to doing all the many things we should do, and doing them well. Transparency is one of the "must do well" commitments and we will fix this.

Mike Williams

Sheriff, Duval County FL

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