

# JOINT MEDIA RELEASE



**Mike Wood, Sheriff**  
Leon County Sheriff's Office  
2825 Municipal Way  
Tallahassee, FL 32304  
(850) 606-3300  
[www.leoncountysos.org](http://www.leoncountysos.org)



**Michael J. DeLeo, Chief**  
Tallahassee Police Department  
234 East Seventh Avenue  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 891-4200  
[www.talgov.com/tpd/](http://www.talgov.com/tpd/)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Thursday, August 18, 2016**

## Tallahassee and Leon County See Dramatic Reduction in Violent Crime

Sheriff Mike Wood and Chief Michael J. DeLeo have made reducing violent crime in Leon County a priority over the past three years. Since 2013, both agencies have focused on reducing violent crime their main concern, specifically gun related incidents.

With the development of the Community Leadership on Gun Violence, addition of another Community Oriented Policing Squad and the creation of the Violent Crimes Response Team, Chief DeLeo has forged a path to reducing gun-related crimes inside the city limits of Tallahassee. TPD has overseen the Operation Safe Neighborhoods program for the past two summers, which strengthens strategic partnerships with the community and has hosted several community forums and town hall meetings to bridge the gap between law enforcement and Tallahassee citizens. Several programs geared to the city's youth, including RAD (Rape Aggression Defense), Splash & Jams, and TPAL Summer Basket Ball League allow TPD members to interact with the future leaders of our great city. With the approval of 33 new TPD officer positions in 2015 by Tallahassee City Commissioners, TPD has brought more resources to the citizens of Tallahassee.

The Leon County Sheriff's Office has also utilized several new programs in order to target violent crime. While also being a partner in the Community Leadership on Gun Violence, the Sheriff's Office spearheaded Operation Legion, a multi agency partnership with local, state and federal agencies, dedicated to targeting criminal street gangs and violent offenders in our community. With the deployment of Crime View, deputies can now determine "hot spots" of crime which allows them to direct patrol efforts more productively. In addition, we focused efforts on domestic violence with our partnership with the Refuge House in the pilot program; INVEST (Intimate Violence Enhanced Security Team). Partnering with the Leon County Board of County Commissioners, the Sheriff's Office was able to over hire to replace retiring deputies in the DROP program to insure there are no drastic gaps in staffing.

A comparison of total Violent Offenses in Leon County from January 2015 to June 2015 and the same timeframe in 2016 shows a **13.4% decrease** in violent offenses including a **20% drop in aggravated assault**. The largest decrease can be seen in the number of **murders which dropped 50%**.

**Lt. Grady Jordan**  
Public Information Officer  
Leon County Sheriff's Office  
Office - (850) 606-3342

**Officer David Northway**  
Public Information Officer  
Tallahassee Police Department  
Office - (850) 891-4255

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“We are making strides in reducing the amount of violent crimes in Tallahassee but more work is needed by all parties involved,” said Chief DeLeo. “We must continue to work with our civic leaders and focus on our community partnerships to solve the issues that we are faced with on a day to day basis in Tallahassee,” said Chief DeLeo.

“Never in my 33 year career has the relationship between the Tallahassee Police Department and Leon County Sheriff’s Office been better,” said Sheriff Mike Wood. “This reduction in violent crime is a testament to the collaborative efforts between these two agencies. We must continue this path forward alongside the community we serve to continue to keep Tallahassee an All America City.”

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