

ST. LOUIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE 2008 BUSINESS PLAN



Ross Litman, Sheriff

VISION

"The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office is dedicated to protecting and serving the citizens of the County and Region with professionalism and pride."

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office is to work in partnership with the community, other County departments, and other governmental units to provide enhanced, high quality, and cost effective public safety services through innovation, leadership, cooperation and the strength of our dedicated people.

THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE NINE AGENCIES

The Sheriff's Office consists of nine agencies or divisions: Sheriff, Boat & Water Safety, Medical Examiner, Homeland Security/Emergency Management, Rescue Squad, Law Enforcement Services, Emergency Communications, Radio Maintenance, and Jail:

I. Sheriff

The Sheriff's Agency has five sub-divisions: administration, patrol, investigations, civil/warrants, and court security.

1. Administration

Management, planning, and budgeting for the Sheriff's Agencies. New employee recruiting, background investigations, and training. Records management for the entire Sheriff's Office operations.

2. Patrol

24/7 response to calls for service and emergencies throughout the unincorporated areas of St. Louis County. Traffic enforcement, service of court papers and warrants, proactive patrol and prevention of crime. Utilization of law enforcement canines for apprehension of criminals and drug interdiction.

3. Investigations

Follow-up of initial crime complaints to ensure prosecution when applicable. Use of technologies such as AFIS for crime/print analysis and suspect identification. Specialized investigative technique for computer crime and investigation of criminal sexual conduct. Management of property room and photo lab for evidence purposes.

4. Civil/Warrants/Transportation

The Sheriff shall execute all processes, writs, precepts, and orders issued or made by lawful authority. (MN Statute 387.03) This includes the service of civil papers, arrest of persons for warrants issued by the Court, transportation of inmates to the state correctional facilities, regional jails, court appearances and civil commitments.

5. Court Security

Provide order and security for the Courthouses located in Duluth, Hibbing, and Virginia. Oversight of bailiffs assigned to attend to the term of the District Court.

II. Boat & Water Safety

The Boat & Water Safety Agency has two business lines: Buoying and boat & water enforcement, including training and accident response.

1. Buoying

St. Louis County hires a private contractor for buoying services on Lake Vermillion, Burntside Lake, and Shagawa for hazard/channel markings to improve watercraft navigation and safety. Currently 290 buoys are placed in these designated lakes as a service to area boaters. Buoying services and supplies are funded via County Levy.

2. Boat & Water enforcement, training, and accident response

The St. Louis County Sheriff, under Minnesota Rules Chapter 86B.105 is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for search, rescue, patrol, and inspection of watercraft on the lakes, streams and rivers in St. Louis County. Deputies and Rescue Squad personnel participate in search and recovery of drowning victims. Deputies participate in watercraft enforcement patrols throughout the county on grant-paid overtime projects. Boats and supplies for search, recovery, rescue and enforcement are primarily funded by the State of Minnesota Boat and Water Safety Grant.

III. Medical Examiner

The Medical Examiner Agency has one business line: To provide a high-level professional service to law enforcement, medical and private communities. St. Louis County currently contracts this service to Dr. Thomas Uncini of Lakeland Pathology, Hibbing Minnesota. Dr. Uncini oversees a team of assistant medical examiners and field investigators.

IV. Homeland Security/Emergency Management

The Emergency Management Agency has one business line: To protect lives, property and environment from natural and/or manmade disasters through preparation, mitigation, response and recovery. This division is tasked with acquiring grants that best serve the public safety needs of the region.

V. Rescue Squad

The Rescue Squad Agency has one business line: To enhance the Sheriff's ability to effectively respond to emergencies and disasters throughout St. Louis County and wherever assistance may be requested. Consisting of 64 members, Rescue Squad personnel volunteer approximately 25,000 hours annually to calls for service such as lost persons, water emergencies, training, accident response, and countless other duties.

VI. Law Enforcement Services

The Law Enforcement Services Agency has one business line: Providing law enforcement services on a contractual basis for the cities of Aurora, Mountain Iron, Buhl and Kinney. The Sheriff's office receives payment for patrol coverage and associated costs for this additional service and staffing requirement.

VII. Emergency Communications

The Emergency Communications Agency has one business line: To provide the public with competent, timely and effective emergency and non-emergency public safety communication services. Two communications centers are operated within St. Louis County: One in Duluth and the other in Virginia. These centers receive 911 calls for emergencies and public calls for service twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week.

VIII. Radio Maintenance

The Radio Maintenance Agency has one business line: To improve and maintain the wireless communications infrastructure within St. Louis County. Radio Maintenance Technicians install and repair squad mounted and handheld radios for public safety entities. They also ensure that the remote radio tower sites, computer-aided dispatch systems, and associated hardware are operating and functional.

IX. Jail

The Jail Agency has one business line: To provide a safe, secure and professionally operated Jail. The Sheriff and Jail Administrator oversee a 197 bed jail in Duluth as well as two 72 hour lockup facilities on the Range: The Hibbing lockup can accommodate 8 inmates and the Virginia lockup can hold 12 inmates. These facilities consistently exceed Department of Corrections requirements and attempt to meet the growing needs of the State Court, Department of Corrections, Public Defender's Office, County Attorneys Office, and other area stakeholders.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The financial information for the Sheriff's Office is presented in the following charts in Agency format. For purposes of avoiding "spikes" in the data, there are no grant budgets included in the Sheriff's Agency budget.

The following chart (1-1) shows the percentage of the total budget (less Sheriff's grants), by agency within the Sheriff's Office. Please note that the Boat and Water Agency budget appears as 0% because it is only .0045 of the total budget.

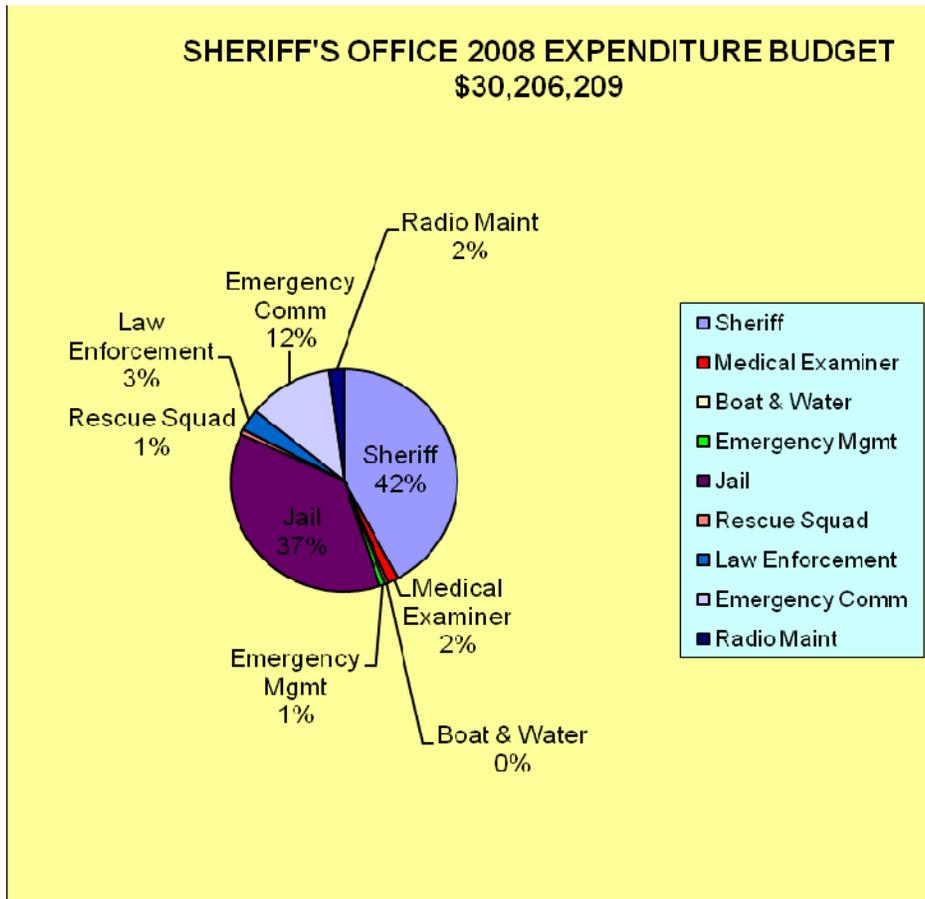


Chart 1-1

The following chart (1-2) shows the percentage of the total levy use by agency within the Sheriff's Office. Please note that the Law Enforcement Agency does not use levy as those costs are totally reimbursed by the cities to which the services are provided. The Boat and Water Agency, again, has 0%, because it's use of the total Sheriff's levy is .0015.

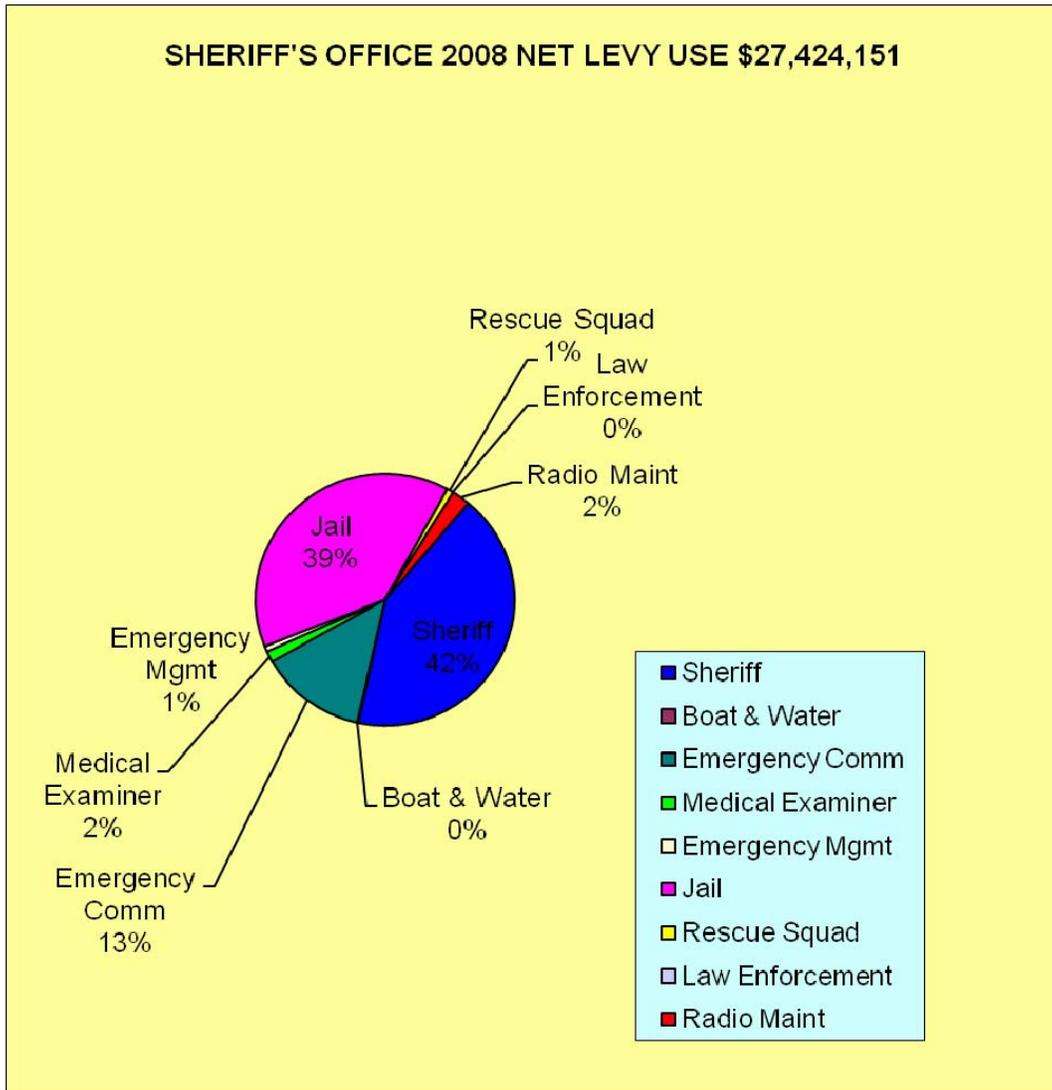
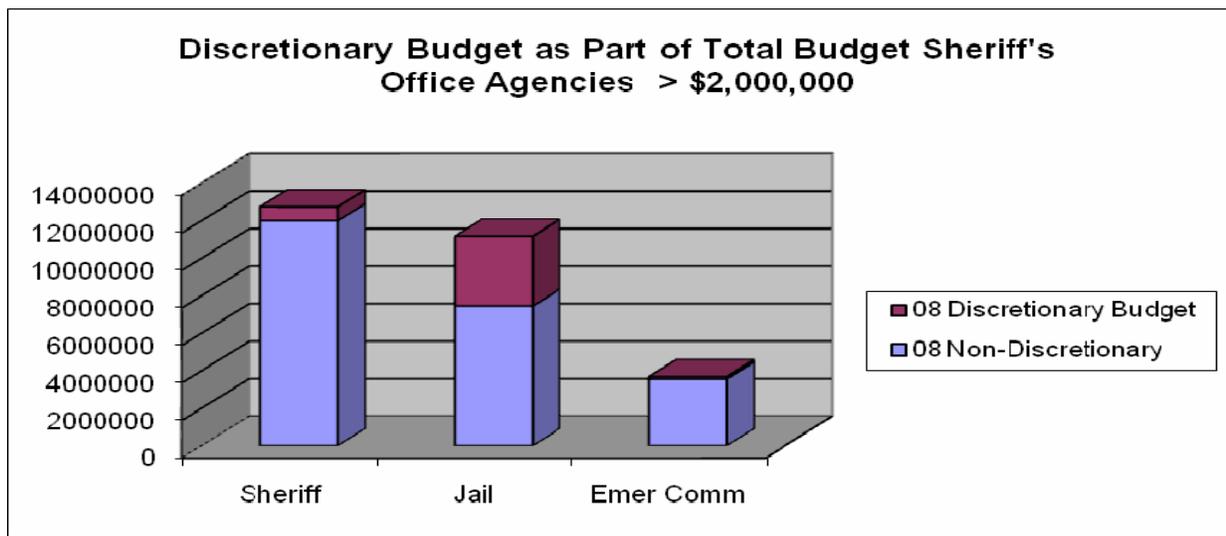
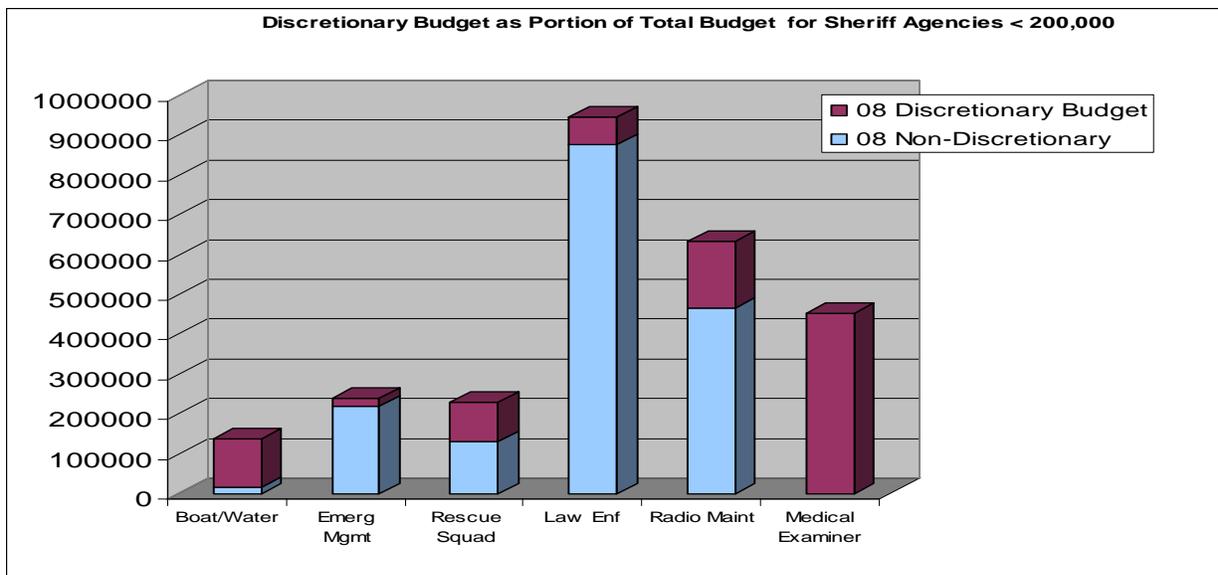


Chart 1-2

The next two charts (1-3 and 1-4) depict the amount of discretionary operating budget in relation to the total agency budget for 2008. The data is divided into two charts; those agencies with budgets less than one million dollars, and those with larger budgets.

The various agencies have differing percentages of discretionary budget to total budget. For example, the Medical Examiner budget is 100% discretionary because it holds only professional service costs, and no assigned, personnel and capital budgets. The Jail's discretionary budget is 33.3% of it's total budget because that area of the budget includes per deim, prisoner medical, and jail food budgets. On the other hand, the Emergency Communications discretionary budget is only 3.2% of it's entire budget.

The important factor is, when a levy decrease is mandated by the Board, that decrease, unless there are layoffs, will most likely mean a reduction in the discretionary operating budget.



St. Louis County Sheriff's Office Organization Charts

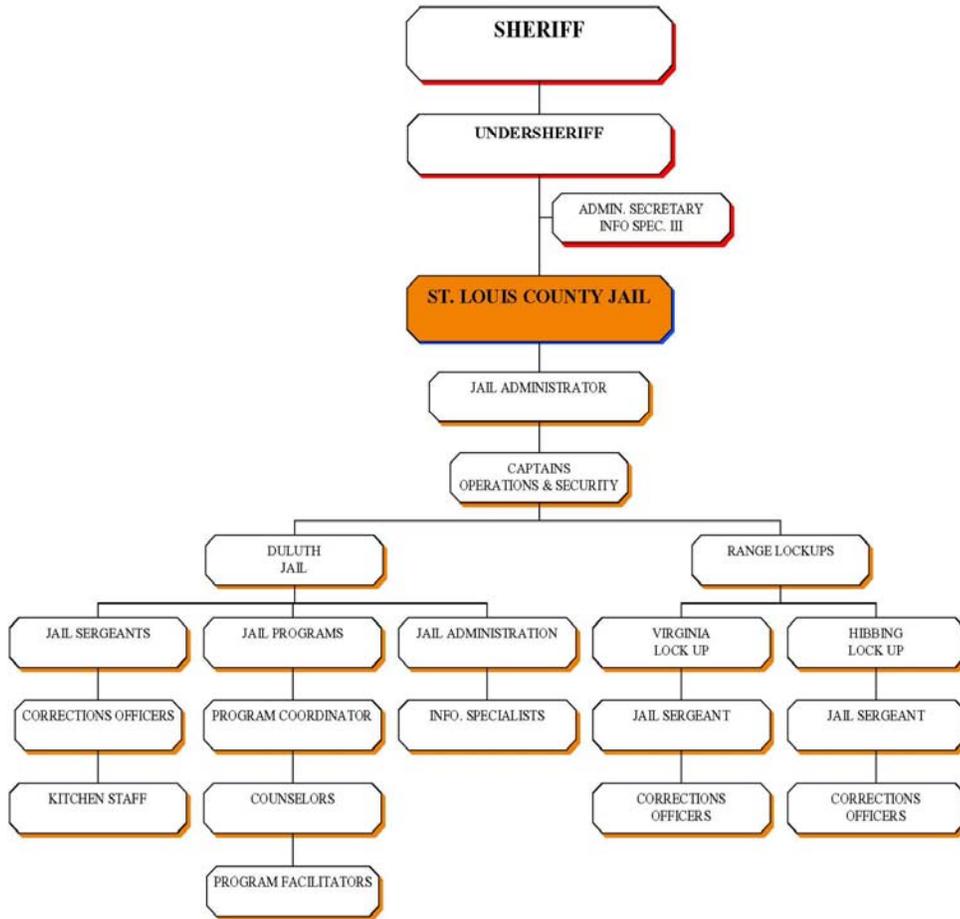
The following charts depict the structure of the Sheriff's Office. First, the nine budgeted agencies assigned to the Sheriff:

St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
Updated 11/8/07



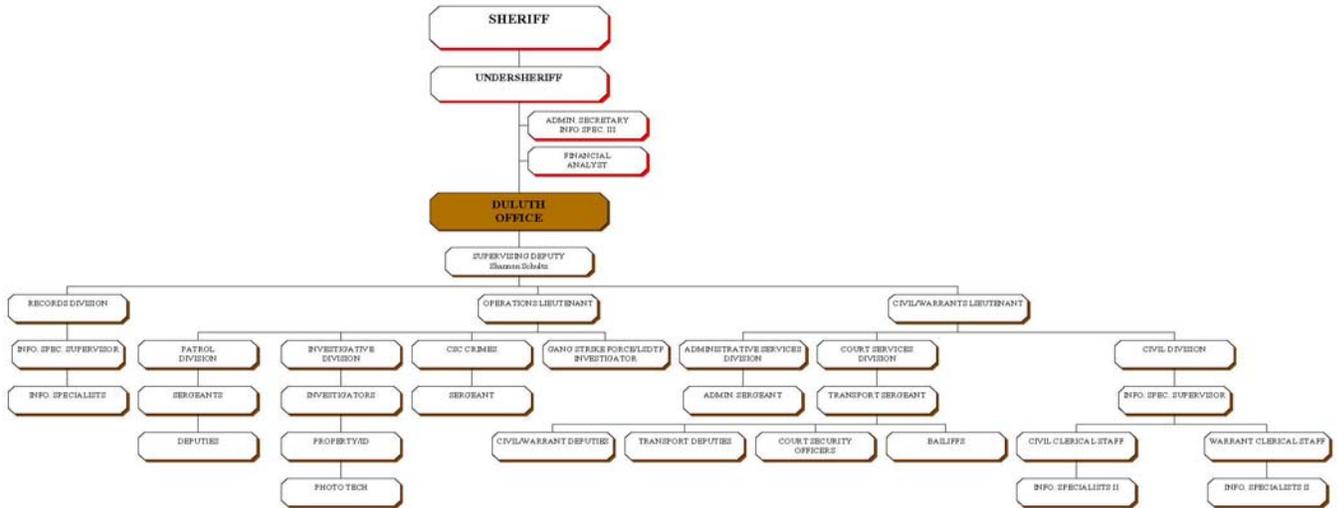
Organizational Chart: St. Louis County Jail:

St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
Updated 11/8/07



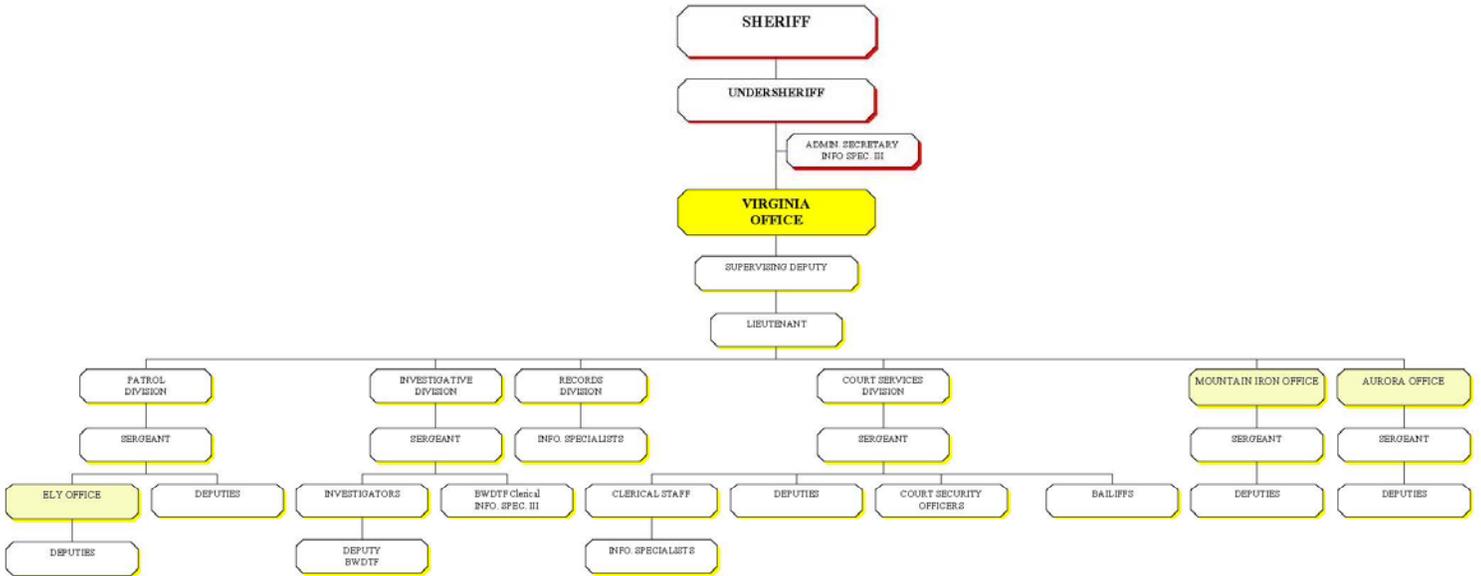
St. Louis County Sheriff's Duluth Office

St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
Updated 11/8/07



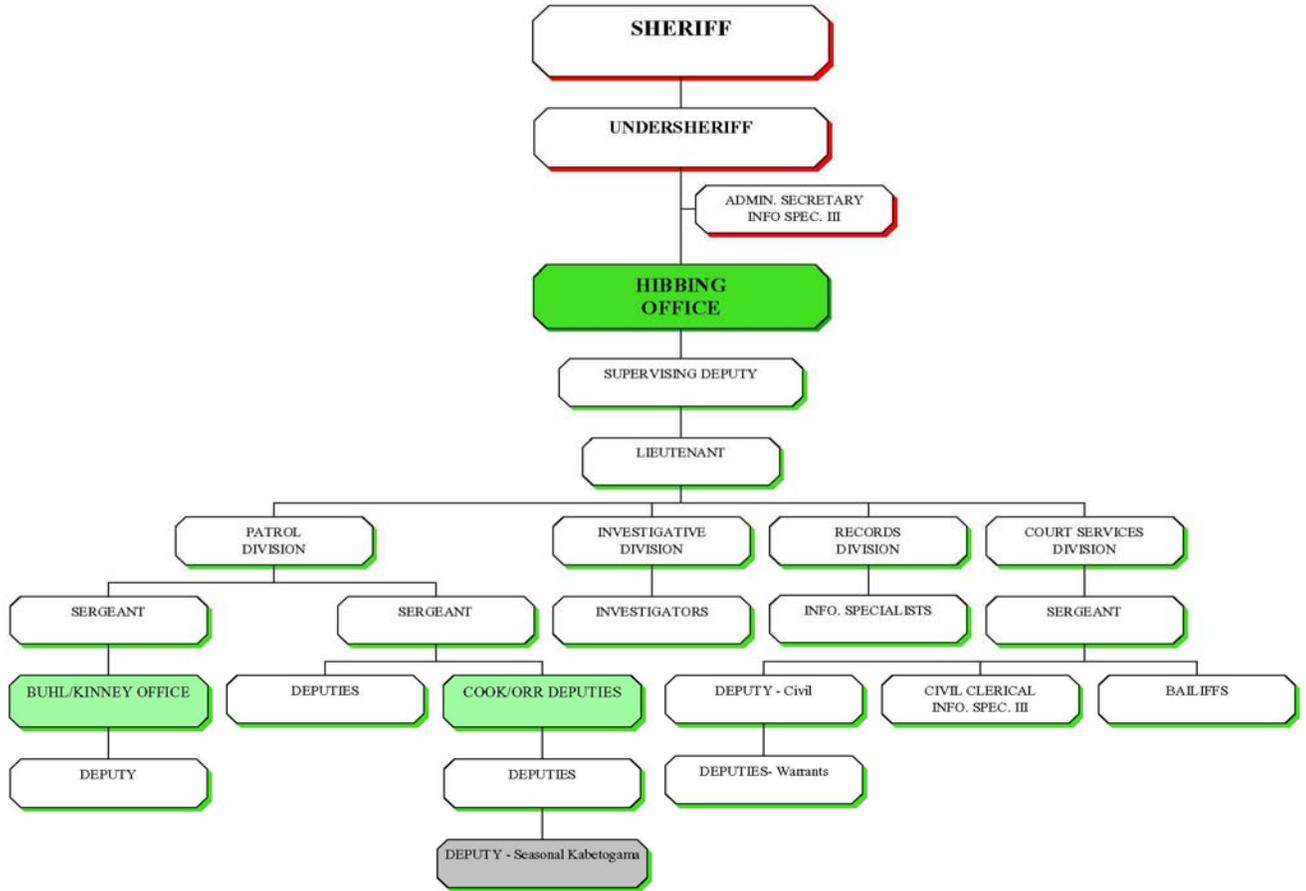
St. Louis County Sheriff's Virginia Office

St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
Updated 11/8/07



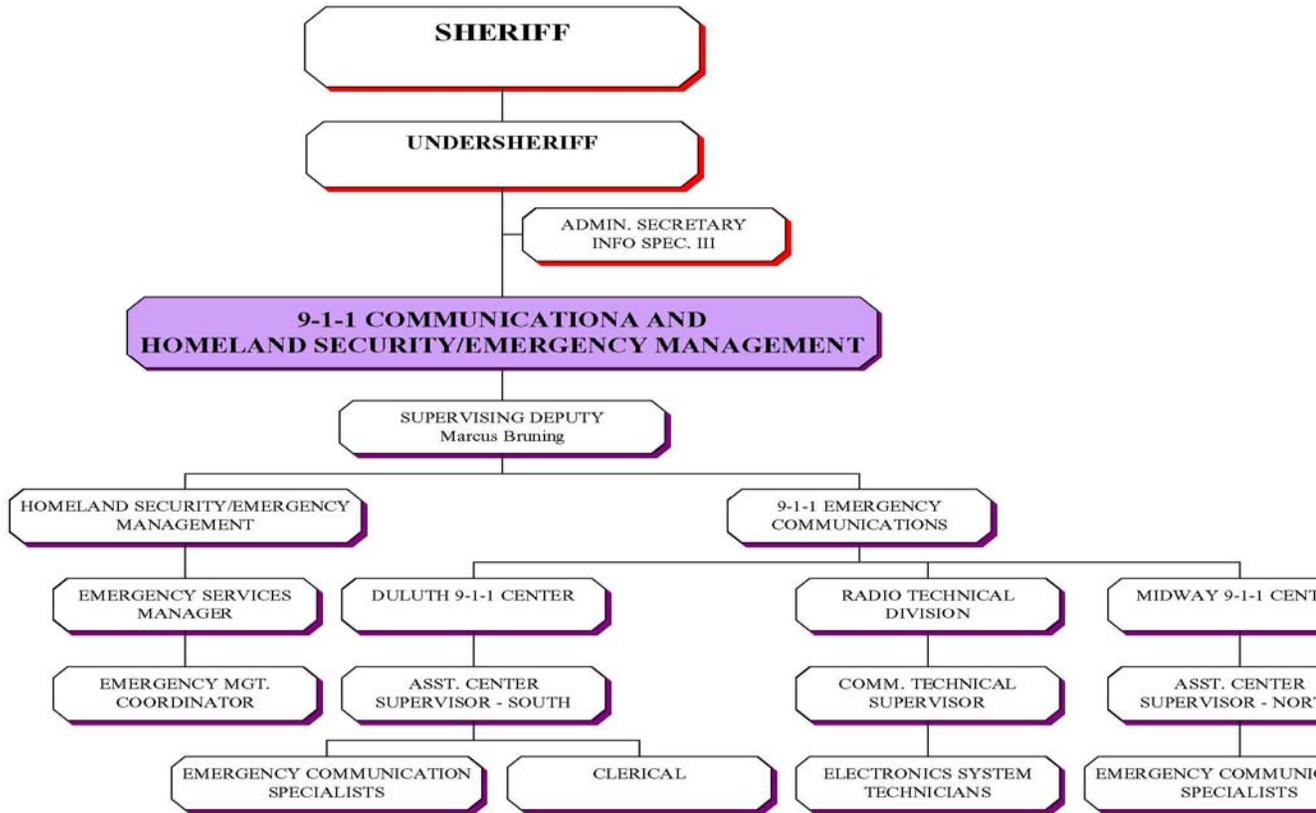
St. Louis County Sheriff's Hibbing Office

St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
Updated 11/8/07



**St. Louis County Sheriff's 911 Division and
Homeland Security/Emergency Management**

St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
Updated 11/8/07



EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

The following external environment issues will impact the various agencies within the Sheriff's Office:

I. There has been an ever increasing demand for prisoner housing, causing jail overcrowding with the only recourse to house inmates in other facilities.

1. The cost of housing prisoners off-site has been rising steadily. In 2006 it cost \$1,250,000 for off-site housing and the projection for 2007, based on activity through September, is \$1,400,000. The budget for off-site housing for 2008 is \$1,350,000 and if the present trend continues that amount will not be adequate. In addition, prisoner transport costs have risen dramatically due to the number of inmates in the Sheriff's custody.

2. A newly formed Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee comprised of members from all areas of the criminal justice system in St. Louis County is addressing issues related to inmates lodged in the County jail and possible systemic solutions to the overcrowding issues.

3. The National Institute of Corrections (NIC), U.S. Department of Justice recently conducted a study of the County's criminal justice system and presented the following conclusions relating specifically to the County:

a. The County has already implemented many of the best practices that are normally found lacking.

b. The prisoner transport issue needs to be addressed immediately. The current shortage of resources creates a dangerous practice to the transportation division. Currently, large numbers of inmates are moved regardless of their security classification. This includes moving low-risk inmates with violent, high-risk, disruptive, or special needs inmates. An increase of two (2) Deputy Sheriff FTE's for transportation will be requested by the Sheriff.

c. The Jail needs more capacity and should consider a feasibility study for a facility on the Range. The Sheriff will request this study in 2007 in preparation for a bonding request in 2009.

d. NIC consultants recommend the addition of a mental health screening and assessment component for inmates prior to release, since nationally this has greatly reduced recidivism. The Sheriff will request one (1) FTE Mental Health Specialist to serve as a liaison to the community for reintegration purposes.

II. There is an ever increasing need and opportunity to be part of the establishment and enhancement of local governmental and even State-wide infrastructures for emergency and enhanced communication systems, criminal justice information systems, an automated fingerprint identification system, port and border homeland security, etc., that are often funded through Homeland Security Grants and do not impact levy.

AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) The AFIS system is a joint effort with the State of Minnesota, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, and the states of North and South Dakota. St. Louis County's portion of this project is funded with a \$5.2 million Federal grant that is disbursed through the State of Minnesota Homeland Security Department. The AFIS system is a powerful, state-of-the-art finger print system that can check a print against over 4 million records in a matter of a few seconds. It has also proven to be a highly successful example of intergovernmental cooperation.

Another example of modernizing and regionalizing a shared approach to improved public safety is the success of NEMESIS (North East Minnesota Enforcement Safety Information System) project. NEMESIS is designed to provide shared/integrated resources for regional public safety agencies to track information regarding suspects, incidents, and cases throughout the criminal justice system. NEMESIS connects local and statewide criminal and court systems to strengthen public safety in Minnesota. This project currently includes the six Northeast Minnesota counties of Carlton, Cook, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis. Components of NEMESIS include:

1. **SHIELD** is a regional law enforcement record system that enables multi-jurisdictional sharing of criminal record information.
2. **CAD** (Computer-Aided Dispatch) is another example of a system that enables regional sharing of data and communication.
3. **JMS** (Jail Management System) also provides regional sharing of information.
4. **DAMION** Prosecution Management System provides case sharing capacity between County Attorneys, Courts, and the Criminal Justice System.

III. Unfunded mandates from the State of Minnesota can negatively impact Sheriff's cost of operations. Such as:

1. Short-term Offender Housing, which is mandated by the State and for which only a small part of the actual costs are reimbursed to the County.
2. Changes in laws which mandate services that may not be fully covered by the attached revenues.

IV. Volatile prices on necessary items can have a negative effect on the Sheriff's budget. For example:

1. The dramatic increase in the per barrel price of oil and its impact on the County.
2. The double-digit increases in employee and inmate medical cost.
3. The increased costs of ammunition and safety equipment such as bullet-proof vests. These increases and availability problems are, according to suppliers, related to world-wide military deployments.

World events have also taken their toll in local staffing and coverage as military reservists and National Guard units are called to active duty. This has recently affected Jail, Patrol, and Investigations coverage.

INTERNAL FACTORS

The following internal factors affect or may affect the quantity and quality of service the Sheriff's Office is able to deliver.

A cut in the sheriff's levy amount is the most important internal factor to have a negative impact on the activities of the Sheriff's Office agencies.

1. As shown in the Financial Section of this report, the amount of discretionary operating budget is quite small compared to the overall budget. Any budgetary cuts will likely further reduce this portion of the budget.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE AND HOW?

SHERIFF'S OFFICE VISION

"The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office is dedicated to protecting and serving the citizens of the County and Region with professionalism and pride."

KEY INITIATIVES

There are several key initiatives within the Sheriff's Office.

1. **Additional Jail Space** is needed to reduce or eliminate off-site inmate housing. This project will need to be funded with a capital bond. *It must be noted that this project is in addition to other initiatives and business practice changes that are being contemplated within the criminal justice community.* Refer to the External Environment Issues for further information.
2. **Additional resources** are needed to adequately staff prisoner transport activities because of the large number of prisoners having to be housed off-site. Safety is the primary factor when transporting inmates long distances for housing, such as Aitkin, MN. Oftentimes there are 13 to 16 inmates in one vehicle and often include dangerous inmates.
3. The present system of loading and unloading inmates in back of the Courthouse is extremely dangerous. **A sallyport** needs to be constructed on the west side of the Courthouse that will provide a secure environment as well as having access to a non-public elevator system. Presently inmates ride the same elevators as the general public. This project will need to be funded by bonding.

4. The **Sheriff's office space in the Duluth Courthouse** needs to be renovated and expanded to meet the space needs of the several work groups housed there. There have been several meetings with an architect to develop the space plan.

5. **Cold Storage:** There is continued and on-going need for cold storage of Sheriff's Office equipment. We have had to lease storage space in recent years to keep seasonal equipment, such as boats and snowmobiles, out of the elements.

6. **The Emergency Communications Agency has completed a staffing study which identifies the following needs:** *It is vital to note that the Sheriff's request for these positions would entail re-allocation of current positions. The net effect is an **increase of only one FTE** to accomplish the following:*

a. The Duluth 911 Center does not have enough mid-management positions. This unit has approximately 31 Communications Specialists and provides 24/7 services. At present there is only one Center Supervisor in Duluth, and this creates problems for span of control for a 24 hour public safety organization. The recommendation would be to upgrade two (2) dispatchers to lead worker status.

b. The Virginia 911 Center is also in need of an additional 911 supervisor since it also is currently served by only one Center Supervisor. The recommendation is for the addition of one FTE lead worker.

RESOURCES WE ARE GOING TO USE

FINANCING:

Of the key initiatives listed above, the sallyport and the jail space will definitely need to be financed by a capital improvement bond. The office space renovation may be able to be levy budget in the Building Maintenance budget. The increase in deputies will need to be funded with levy.

In the 2008 budget, the Sheriff's Office normal operations, which are all public safety activities, are 91% funded by County levy. However, the Sheriff's Office is also very aggressive in procuring grants that have been used to enhance the quality of the law enforcement infrastructure through communication systems, data sharing systems, a state-of-the-art fingerprint system, etc. These systems are all multi-governmental, and this sharing of data throughout the geographic area is a powerful tool. Sheriff's Office has also secured grants that have gone toward the acquisition of much needed and often cutting-edge equipment for both search and rescue and law enforcement.

WORKFORCE NEEDS:

New employees must be people with good computer skills. Accuracy and understanding is essential as intergovernmental entering and sharing of data through complicated electronic systems for criminal records, etc. progresses.

Over the years there has been a definite decline in the number of applicants testing for Deputy Sheriff positions. Continued effort needs to be made in how St. Louis County recruits and attracts viable candidates for these positions. We are in competition with law enforcement agencies throughout the State and should be mindful of comparative wage and benefit packages that will attract and retain excellent personnel.

TECHNOLOGY

We will endeavor to keep up with technological improvements in communications, law enforcement, and information capture and distribution.

The Sheriff will continue to build upon the success of regional projects such as NEMESIS, AFIS and other information sharing projects by continuing to research and develop new ways of doing business. We must continue to provide staff with functional technologies that are reliable and help conduct business better.

SPACE PLAN

1. Proceed with the planned sally-port at the Duluth Courthouse for inmates entering or disembarking from transport vehicles for deputy safety and security of inmates. This project, in conjunction with Property Management, would result in the renovation of the Sheriff's Offices in Duluth to best provide security, provide service to the public, and meet the needs of staff.
2. Proceed with a feasibility study of a new jail on the Range.
3. North Rescue Squad Building and Storage: The need exists for new meeting area and storage for the Rescue Squad. This facility is needed to replace an aging building in Cook that is in poor repair and does not best fit the response profile of the Rescue Squad.
4. Joint Firearms Range (North): Hibbing Community College has expressed interest in partnering with the Sheriff's Office in the construction of a firearms range for use in law enforcement training. There are no designated law enforcement firearms ranges on the Iron Range and Deputies and students in HCC must use private gun clubs.
5. Sheriff/Rescue Squad Storage (South): There is on-going need for cold storage of seasonal equipment such as boats, snowmobiles, command vehicles, trailers, etc. The Sheriff's Office supports the initiative of Public Works to construct a new storage building at Pike Lake, which would then free up square footage for storage of Sheriff's equipment in existing public works buildings.



The St. Louis County Jail in Duluth

“With most agencies we see, we tell them not to build but to look for other solutions. With St. Louis County, you are in the 100th percentile of what you could do, and suggested changes will only save a few jail beds. It is obvious that your “box” is too small”

NIC Consultant Kevin Warwick on the need for a Range Jail feasibility study.