

Greater Pensacola Chamber 2020 Candidate Questionnaire

Sheriff

1. What would you say is the biggest public safety concern in Escambia County?

I believe that crime and a lack of integrity are the biggest concerns in Escambia County. I am aware that the sheriff's position is not about the person behind the desk, but it is about service to people who live, work, and visit Escambia County. It is about providing sound, impartial law enforcement to the community. The sheriff and the sheriff's office should be responsive to the needs of those citizens it serves and should be a benefit to the whole community without regard to their party affiliation. As I have in my past 32 years of law enforcement service, I will, as your next sheriff, continue to live up to these expectations that have existed for decades. Together we can address problems in our community in a proactive way, rather than just being reactive. As a law and order man, I will keep an open mind. With forward thinking, I will encourage others to think outside of the box. My record of accomplishments speaks for itself. We will work collectively, at the federal, state, and local levels, to bring quality professional services to all the citizens of Escambia County.

2. Do you feel the crime rate has increased or decreased in Escambia County? Why or Why not?

The summary of the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) indicates that from 2018 to 2019 arrests, property crimes and the index rates are down; but the violent crime rate for the same period has increased. Therefore, I believe crime has increased because it has increased the public's concern for personal safety. The goal is through proactive policing to reduce the public's perception of feeling unsafe. It is not enough to react to crime. Building relationships with the citizens, community leaders and professional policing will assist in reaching that goal.

3. What new safety measures could be implemented to make Escambia County a safer place to live? Be specific.

I would conduct an exhaustive review and analysis of the Escambia County Sheriff's Office to produce an extensive set of prioritized and practical recommendations to immediately enhance public safety in Escambia County. In addition, immediately implementing strategies that will deliver professional services, improve the integrity of the department, hold people accountable for providing effective law enforcement services and offer fair treatment to all people. My top priorities are safety, security and service to our communities, businesses, and visitors. As sheriff of Escambia County, safety will be my number one priority; there is no place for crime, drug activity or gang violence in Escambia County. It is simply not enough to react to crime, but we must be forward thinking and come up with ways to prevent crime. As law enforcement officers we can prevent crimes by getting down to the root cause. We must build relationships with the citizens, community organizations and community leaders. As your sheriff, I will not only be committed to enforcing the law but will also be equally committed to preventing crime through relationship building, community involvement, professionalism, and fairness.