



Orange County Sheriff's Department Professional Service Responders Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Community Services Division?

The Community Services Division oversees approximately 900 law enforcement volunteers, including 230 reserve deputy sheriffs, with specialized skills, training and equipment who are assigned to specialized units: Aero Squadron, Chaplains, Community Programs, Coroner, Cadets and Explorers, Harbor Patrol, Hi-Tech Services, Investigations (includes Dignitary Protection Detail, and Elder Abuse Detail), Mounted Patrol, Professional Services Responders (PSR), Reserve Professional Standards Unit, Search and Rescue (includes Bicycle Detail and Bloodhound Team), Special Projects, Training (includes Academy Training and Range Staff), and Uniform Patrol. These volunteers donated 166,049 uncompensated hours to the Department in 2006 alone.

What's the difference between Professional Service Responders (PSR's) and Reserves?

Professional Service Responders provide administrative and leadership support in the areas of emerging technologies, communications, industrial relations, graphic arts, healthcare, firearm safety instruction, legal and accounting services, international protocol, governmental relations, and emergency response resources. **Professional Service Responders ARE NOT Reserves.**

Sworn Reserve Deputies are professionally trained and duly sworn law enforcement personnel. In most cases, Reserves are assigned to augment the same duties as regular deputies. Routine tasks such as patrol, booking, surveillance, investigative, and undercover work are just some examples of reserve duties.

Why does the Orange County Sheriff's Department need volunteers?

Volunteers act as "force multipliers," enabling us to provide a higher level of service for each tax dollar spent.

How many hours do PSR's contribute in a year?

PSR's donated over 10,000 hours in 2005 compared to over 16,000 in 2007, and over 20,000 in fiscal year 07/08. That's a 100% increase in volunteer hours in three years.

Where would we see PSR's working and what do they do?

PSR's work all over the department providing many different services. A complete answer will require its own separate page. Please see page 4.*

They were issued badges many years ago. Why exchange the badges for another form of identification now?

On July 30 2007, the California Attorney General issued an opinion on the issuance of badges. His conclusions are clear:

The opinion said in part: "A sheriff's gift of an honorary badge to a private citizen violates California law if (1) the badge falsely purports to be authorized, or would deceive an ordinary reasonable person into believing that it is authorized, for use by a peace officer." The current badge is very similar to badges used by Texas Rangers and U.S. Marshals.

Additionally, the opinion states: If a sheriff's gift of an honorary badge to a private citizen violates California law, the sheriff would be subject to civil liability for an injury resulting from the recipient's subsequent misuse of the badge if the injury was proximately caused by the sheriff's own negligent or wrongful act in providing the badge; the county would be subject to civil liability if the sheriff's negligent or wrongful act occurred within the scope of his or her employment.

Finally, the Analysis concludes: We have previously concluded that a person who is not a peace officer, such as a county public defender's investigator, "may not display a peace officer's badge, a badge which falsely purports to be a peace officer's badge, or a badge which so resembles a peace officer's badge as would deceive an ordinary reasonable person into believing that it is being used by one who by law is given the authority of a peace officer." (68 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 11, 15 (1985).) We have also recognized that a law enforcement official is not barred from creating "purely honorary positions, so long as no official status is sought to be conferred and no official or official-looking identification is authorized." (59 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 97, 102 (1976).)

As with many legal analyses, there seems to be more than one interpretation. Why not choose a more liberal interpretation of the Attorney General's opinion?

Subdivision (c) of section 538d in the California Penal Code provides: Any person who willfully wears, exhibits, or uses, or who willfully makes, sells, loans, gives, or transfers to another, any badge, insignia, emblem, device, or any label, certificate, card, or writing, which falsely purports to be authorized for the use of one who by law is given the authority of a peace officer, or which so resembles the authorized badge, insignia, emblem, device, label, certificate, card, or writing of a peace officer as would deceive an ordinary reasonable person into believing that it is authorized for the use of one who by law is given the authority of a peace officer, is guilty of a misdemeanor, except that any person who makes or sells any badge under the circumstances described in this subdivision is subject to a fine not to exceed fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000).

We don't believe there is any other way to interpret the Attorney General's opinion on the issuance of badges. Besides, law enforcement organizations should strive to uphold the law, not search out loopholes to get around it.

Professional Service Responders do need appropriate identification to perform their duties, don't they?

Absolutely. In fact, we asked interested PSR's to form a working group to determine what identification they needed to perform their volunteer service.

What does the current badge look like?

The PSR badge is in the center. We have included other badges to showcase similarities with other law enforcement badges.



***Where would we see PSR's working and what do they do?**

Operations Support Division

- PSR's assisted with the 2006 Citizen Corp Disaster Drill
- PSR Randy Garrell works over 1,000 hours annually as a Control 1 Dispatcher

Research and Development Division

- PSR's assist with organizing department archives, cataloging of historic photos, and with the OCSD Annual Report
- PSR's provide air transportation for asset procurement

Professional Standards Division

- PSR's provided free electronic sign "air-time" for recruiting purposes

South Operations

- PSR's have assisted with Annual Reports
- A PSR provided architectural consultation for modifications to the Aliso Viejo Station

Training Division

- PSR's provide professional photography services for various academy graduations
- The Orange County Training Manager's Association website was renovated, and is currently hosted by a PSR
- PSR's provided assistance with the "Shoot with the Sheriff" fundraising events

Airport

- PSR's provide the airport with "neighborhood watch" style patrol and traveler assistance.

Community Services Division

- PSR's maintain the website that houses the event calendar and provide webmaster services for the divisional blog
- PSR's provide assistance with event planning/setup and food for PSR Operational Meetings.
- PSR's engaged in fundraising activities on behalf of the explorers, resulting in the purchase of a new explorer van (donated via the Sheriff's Advisory Council).
- PSR's assisted with the Peace Officer Memorial renovation, and have provided consultation on its relocation.
- PSR's assisted with the Wilderness Event and the Christmas party for underprivileged youths
- PSR's regularly staff both the lost children's booth and the department booth at the Orange County Fair

Investigations Division

- PSR's provide air transportation for extraditions and provided air transportation for the return of a kidnapping victim from Texas

North Operations Division

- PSR's provide mobile "neighborhood watch" services for a contract city
- PSR's performed data entry to relieve a backlog
- PSR's assist the Hazardous Devices Unit with robotic construction and programming
- PSR's have assisted with annual reports
- A PSR provided engineering consulting services to solve a flooding problem in the Stanton Police Services parking structure.