

**BYLAWS FOR THE
PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
EXPLORER POST #900**

ARTICLE I : NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post #900 (hereinafter known as the "Post"). This is a sponsored organization by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (P.C.S.O.) and chartered by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America (B.S.A.) and Learning for Life (L.F.L.) through the Pinellas West Coast Council. Explorer Post #900 is affiliated with the Florida Association of Police Explorers (F.A.P.E.).

ARTICLE II : MISSION

The mission of this organization shall be to offer young men and women an opportunity to examine the law enforcement profession as a possible career; to create a better understanding of law enforcement of the local, state, and national levels; to help create a better understanding between the youth of the community; and to help young adults become mature, responsible citizens.

ARTICLE III : ORGANIZATION

Section I

The organization of the Post shall be administered by the Youth Education Section of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.

Section II

1. Lead Advisor – The Lead Advisor shall be a certified Deputy Sheriff and shall attend all post meetings and will be responsible for assisting in all post functions. All recommendations and requests from the post shall be submitted to the Lead Advisor via chain of command for approval.
2. Associate Advisor(s) – The Associate Advisor(s) shall be a certified deputy sheriff appointed by the Lead Advisor and assist the Lead Advisor in performing his/her duties.
3. **The Post Advisors shall have the authority to overrule or veto without exception, any plan, function, act, or any other matter that may arise except in the case of a "Right to Appeal" (Article VIII; Section I;(E) by the post member. This includes the waiving of any defined "disciplinary**

procedure” when deemed in the best interest of the post or the individual explorer.

Section III

1. Post Officers - Post officers of this organization shall be constructed to suit the Post based on the size and needs of the post. The positions shall be filled by competitive examinations and/or by the special appointment by the Lead Advisor. A member must have successfully completed his/her probationary period before he/she is eligible for promotion. Post officer positions may be restructured at any time as deemed by the Lead Advisor. Restructuring of Post Officer positions will require all current Post Officers to complete the promotion requirements as set by the Lead Advisor.

When there is a vacancy for a Post Officer position, the vacancy will be filled at the discretion of the Lead Advisor. The position of captain, lieutenant, sergeant and corporal shall be chosen as follows:

The promotional process will be held at the discretion of the Lead Advisor. The process may include written testing, an interview process, review of attendance, discipline and overall post participation.

2. The chain of command (COC) will be adhered to in all instances except when a matter is of such a personal nature that direct access to the Post Advisor(s) is necessary.

A. Rank of Explorer Captain

The Captain shall be the Chief Executive Officer and shall preside at all meetings and post functions. He/She shall appoint all committees not otherwise provided for in these Bylaws. He/She shall sign all orders and other reports, certificates, documents, or correspondence that may require his/her signature. He/She shall call meetings as necessary or required. It is the Captain's responsibility to maintain communication with the Lead Advisor at all times and fulfill duties as deemed necessary by the Lead Advisor.

B. Rank of Explorer Lieutenant

The Lieutenant shall act as first assistant to the Captain. His/Her duties shall include, but not limited to oral review board chairman, recruitment of new members and application process, he/she shall act as the direct supervisor of all Sergeants. He/She shall assume the Captain's place at meetings or post functions in his/her absence. It is the Lieutenants responsibility to maintain communication with the Captain at all times to provide information to the Sergeants.

C. Administrative Explorer Sergeant

The Administrative Sergeant shall be responsible for issuing, maintaining and storing all explorer equipment, uniforms, and other post property. The Administrative Sergeant shall handle paperwork and introduction of new visitors to the post as stated in Section V, weeks one (1) and two (2). He/She may also be required to maintain a squad.

D. Administrative Explorer Corporal

The Administrative Corporal duties shall include, but not limited to, keeping accurate and complete minutes of all meetings of the officers and post. He/She shall keep an up to date record of the names addresses, and phone numbers of all post members. He/She shall also assist in any other duties deemed necessary by the Administrative Sergeant.

E. Explorer Squad Sergeant

The Sergeants shall be assigned a squad of explorers and shall be responsible for leading, monitoring, and aiding those explorers assigned to his/her squad. He/She shall keep in touch with all the squad members either by personal contact, telephone, or written memo. He/She shall be responsible for informing squad members of postponed meetings, special details, and general announcements. He/She shall be responsible for all controllable actions of squad members during any and all explorer functions and shall enforce the Bylaws, S.O.P.'s, and general orders.

Each Squad Sergeant may also be assigned to a specific duty by the Captain or Lieutenant in maintaining special programs.

F. Rank of Explorer Squad Corporal

The Squad Corporal shall act as an assistant to the Squad Sergeant. In case of the Squad Sergeants absence, the Corporal shall serve in the Sergeant's place. Corporals shall report directly to the Sergeant that they are assigned to.

G. Explorer Chaplain (optional position)

The Chaplain shall be an appointed position for any explorer or officer wanting to do the job with the approval of the Post Advisor and Captain. The Chaplain's duties shall include an opening invocation and closing benediction prayer at every meeting, sending birthday cards and making sure birthdays are announced. He/She is also responsible for sending cards to those explorers or family members who may be sick, hospitalized, or absent due to a death in the family.

H. Rank of Explorer

An Explorer is a member which has been accepted into the Post and meets all the requirements to attend meetings, special details, and has attended the Explorer Academy and/or has been a member more than 3 months.

I. Rank of Explorer Candidate

Has been accepted into the post, but has not attended the Explorer Academy and/or has been a member less than 3 months.

J. Visitor

A non-member of the post who has shown an interest in joining.

K. It is the responsibility of each Explorer and Post Officer to update any changes in their address or phone number(s).

L. ALL POST OFFICERS

Any post officer, regardless of rank, age, or seniority who does not fulfill the duties of his/her office, or who become involved in any activity or behavior that may be considered of an embarrassing nature, or is unbecoming of an officer of the post, or violates any B.S.A./L.F.L. guidelines shall be removed from his/her office and may be subject to disciplinary action, to include expulsion, at discretion of Lead Advisor.

ARTICLE IV : ACCEPTANCE & MEMBERSHIP

Section I

The membership of this organization shall not be limited.

Section II

Membership shall be composed of young men and women between the ages of 14 and 21 years of age, who are presently attending a local school, are enrolled in grades 9 through 12 or currently enrolled in a local college or an educational program (ie P.T.E.C.). Members are required to maintain a 2.0 (C) grade point average. Homeschooled members must show proof they are enrolled in an educational program and must show they are receiving passing scores. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Each explorer is responsible for turning in his/her report card no longer than two weeks after the report card was issued or at the most recent explorer meeting after the report card was issued.

Members wishing to pursue a law enforcement career can be extended to the age of 21. Per BSA, members who turn twenty-one (21) during the fiscal year may remain with the post until time of re-charter.

Section III

Any perspective member who has a criminal history or has been treated for mental illness dating back less than 2 years may be denied membership to the Post. Anyone who has been convicted of a felony shall not be accepted into the Post. If handicapped, certain restrictions may be placed on some activities. Each individual case shall be reviewed by the acceptance board and post advisor.

Section IV

- A. The explorer post shall not accept anyone into the post as an explorer if he/she is married.
- B. Any explorer who gets married while in the post must resign.
- C. No female shall be accepted into the post if she is pregnant.
- D. Any female explorer who becomes pregnant while in the post must resign.

Section V

Perspective members shall be invited to attend a meeting by a member or may come of their own volition. An applicant must attend four (4) consecutive meetings; missed meetings shall be reviewed on individual bases by the Lead Advisor.

Week 1 & 2 Visitors will attend post meetings and observe post functions and participate as allowed by the Lead Advisor.

Week 3 Visitor will be provided a post application packet, B.S.A. form, & medical waivers.

Week 4 - 5 Visitor shall turn in all paperwork that was received on week 3 to the Lead Advisor.

Week 5 - 7 Criminal history background check shall be done by a post advisor. A printout, even if stating no record found shall be placed in the applicant's file. The post Lieutenant or designee shall set up a time and date for acceptance board. No acceptance board shall be conducted until all paper work has been turned in and background check done.

Acceptance boards should be conducted no longer than three (3) weeks after all paper work has been turned in and the background has been completed.

Week 6 - 8 Acceptance board should be done provided all requirements stated above have been met. During this board, the acceptance board shall evaluate the following; applicant's attitude, standing in school (grades, discipline problems, and other activities), desire to pursue a law enforcement career and why; applicant's maturity and willingness to participate at meetings and work details; information about parents desire for candidate to be in the program, explanation of the post functions and policies should be given to explorer candidate.

Section VI

A new candidate explorer will be placed on a three (3) month probationary period. If the probationer successfully completes the probationary period (i.e., attends all post meetings and functions, performs satisfactorily in school, and generally conforms to post standards, he/she shall go in front of an oral review board to evaluate his/her performance over the last three (3) months. If the review board feels the probationer has met all the requirements, the explorer shall be issued a badge in front of the post at the next meeting.

Section VII

Acceptance and review boards will be made up of the current officers of the post and advisors.

Section VIII

No person will be refused acceptance or appointment to any office with the Post because of race, ethnicity, gender, disability or religion, as long as they meet all other requirements.

Section IX

New Members will be required to pay twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) upon approval by the acceptance board committee to help cover start up fees. A new member will not receive their class B uniform until the fee is paid.

New members will also be required to pay twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) to attend the explorer academy to cover costs. The fee for the explorer academy will be collected the week prior to or at the beginning of the explorer academy. These fees may be waived for financial hardships and will be handled on a case by case basis.

ARTICLE V : SPECIAL EVENTS

SECTION I

This section shall give guidelines for special events which shall include but not be limited to field trips, state competition, national competition, delegates meetings, and pistol matches.

1. Travel arrangements and documentation shall be completed by the Lead Advisor or his/her designee.
2. Participation in such events is a privilege to be earned by participation in classroom activities, attendance, details, attitude, and disciplinary history.
3. Upon arrival at destination, room assignments, curfews, and other information will be by the Lead Advisor or his/her designee.
4. No explorer shall leave the event site without direct permission from an advisor.
5. All explorers shall conduct themselves in a professional manner and will be responsible for all post Bylaws, F.A.P.E. Bylaws, B.S.A., and hosting agency's policies.

ARTICLE VI : GENERAL RULES

SECTION I

While in uniform or representing the Sheriff's Office, explorers shall not:

- A. Engage in horseplay of any type.
- B. Show disrespect to any superior officer of the post or agency member or to any person who is subject to respect or courtesy.
- C. Show abuse for the uniform or equipment carried
- D. All explorers may only wear their explorer uniform to post meetings and functions, unless otherwise instructed by Lead Advisor.
- E. Any violation may result in disciplinary action, to include expulsion, from the post as deemed necessary by the Lead Advisor.

SECTION II

Procedures during meetings:

- A. Explorers shall be expected to raise their hands when they have a question or comment.
- B. No food will be allowed during meeting.
- C. Explorers are not expected to arrive more than thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of a meeting, unless previously arranged with an employee, advisor, or Post officer.
- D. Explorers will not congregate after the meeting unless he/she is requested to stay.

- E. Notebooks are required during all classes. They will be considered part of the uniform. Note taking is required during all training classes, films, and any other time in which the instructor feels is necessary.

Section III

Attendance:

- A. A member shall attend all meetings each month.
- B. Each member is required to notify his immediate supervisor if not attending a meeting/special event and provide an explanation. If the reason is medical or otherwise of a confidential nature, the member will notify the Lead Advisor.
- C. When an Explorer is absent from a meeting, he/she will not be allowed to participate in the range, ride-along program, or other privileges until their next attendance, unless authorized by the Lead advisor.
- D. For a member missing four (4) or more meetings in a three (3) month period, the captain or his designee will conduct an attendance hearing. The Explorer in question does not need to be present for attendance hearing. The Explorer is subject to discipline, to include expulsion, from the Post for this infraction.
- E. When a Post Officer misses more than four (4) meetings in a three (3) month period, the Lead Advisor will hold a attendance hearing to determine if he/she should remain in that position.
- F. A member is required to be on time to all meetings. Four (4) tardies in a two-month period may result in disciplinary action.
- G. A member can request a "leave of absence" by submitting a memorandum through the chain of command. For example, if an Explorer needs time for sport functions, the Explorer can submit a request and start attending the meetings once their schedule is free. The Explorer should keep in mind that they could miss certain training and classes that may be important. If an Explorer is going to miss more than two (2) meetings, they must submit a "leave of absence" memorandum.
- H. The Lead Advisory will determine whether or not an absence from a post meeting or function was valid. An example of a valid excused absence for not attending a post meeting or function would be the need to work on school related academic assignments or preparatory classes for college.

Section IV

Uniform & Appearance

- A. All Explorers are to adhere to the uniform standards deemed acceptable per P.C.S.O. agency policy general order 05-01.
- B. An Explorer will not wear any part of their uniform in public other than when present at an approved event by Lead Advisor or with a deputy sheriff. This includes any stops at a convenience store on the way to or from an approved explorer event/meeting, riding a bus or while at school. Violation of this section may result in discipline, to include expulsion.
- C. All explorers will be issued a class B uniform (explorer t-shirt & BDU pants) upon acceptance to post #900 and payment of \$25.00 startup fee.
- D. All explorers are responsible to self-purchase appropriate shoes or boots that conform to the agency standards.
- E. Explorers may receive their Class A uniform (green uniform shirt, badge, name tag and pants) once they have completed guidelines set forth by the Lead Advisor.
- F. Upon leaving Post #900 for any reason, the explorer shall immediately surrender his/her assigned uniform and any other issued equipment. The explorer will be responsible for the cost incurred to replace any lost items or items not returned upon separation as per the uniform agreement. The lead advisor or his designee will attempt to contact the former explorer and make arrangements to pick up any uniforms and/or equipment.
- G. All uniforms and issued equipment are deemed to be the property of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post #900. Any explorer who fails or refuses to return all uniforms and equipment may be charged criminally and forward to the state attorney's office for prosecution.
- H. Explorers will not carry any handcuffs or restraint devices unless previously authorized by the Lead Advisor. Explorers have no arrest powers and shall never place anyone in handcuffs, except when participating in approved explorer training event.
- I. Explorers shall not use or display the explorer badge in order to obtain a benefit or discount.

- J. Male Explorer hairstyles shall be worn in a manner that is professional in both appearance and style. Maximum extension from the head shall be no more than one and one-half inches. Hair shall not extend over the top of the ear or over the top of the collar when groomed. Hairstyles, such as spiking, mohawks, tiered layering, excessive use of mousse and any other hairstyle that might detract from the professional image which explorers are expected to project are not permitted.

Sideburns shall not extend below the earlobe and shall be no more than one inch wide. Sideburns shall not extend more than one-quarter inch from the skin, shall not flare and shall be trimmed horizontally across the bottom. Mustaches shall not cover any part of the upper lip. Mustaches shall not extend more than one-half inch horizontally beyond the corners of the mouth. Beards or any other facial hair or growth of hair below the lower lip shall not be permitted.

- K. Female Explorer hairstyles shall be worn in a manner that is professional in both appearance and style. Maximum extension from the scalp shall be no more than two and one-half inches; loose, unsecured hair may not be worn longer than three inches below the bottom of the collar. Longer hair may be worn in an upward sweep or bun, which conforms to the aforementioned requirements. Hairstyles must be neat in appearance and allow for proper wear of the uniform hat.

Section V

Expected Behavior

- A. Explorers, regardless of age, are not permitted to use any tobacco or alcoholic products while participating at any explorer functions. Violation of this rule may result in disciplinary action, to include expulsion from the post.
- B. Explorers shall not accept free or discounted food, drink, or merchandise.
- C. Explorers are responsible to keep an accurate log of community service hours.
- D. The use of cellular phones, headsets, or any other electronic devices will be prohibited during explorer meetings, ride-alongs and special events, except when authorized by a Post Advisor or for an emergency purpose. Contact information for post advisors will be supplied to parents/guardians.
- E. All Explorers will report any and all incidents that involve contact with a law enforcement agency or fire department agency they become involved in outside of Post activities are required to contact the Lead Advisor within 24 hours. Explorers involved in an incident should not place themselves

in harm's way and should take the role of a good witness. Examples of a law enforcement contact include, but are not limited to traffic stops, parking tickets, traffic crash, an F.I.R. was conducted. If an explorer sustained an injury or discipline during a ride-along will contact the Lead Advisor immediately. If in doubt contact the Lead Advisor or Associate Advisor.

- F. When having contact with law enforcement personnel the Explorer should refrain from identifying themselves as an "Explorer". The Explorer should only identify themselves as an "Explorer" if specifically asked or deemed absolutely necessary.
- G. While traveling during Post activities explorers are only allowed to enter the room of another explorer of the opposite sex as long as the room door is open fully to allow observation from the entrance. Explorers will not enter the room of a different explorer post's room(s) without permission from a post advisor.
- H. Relationships with other post members are discouraged. However, if an explorer becomes involved in a relationship with another explorer the following shall be adhered to: No public displays of affection; may not be in the same squad or hold rank over the explorer (ie. If the post captain is involved in a relationship with another explorer under their command they will resign from their position as captain); no physical intimate actions will be permitted.
- I. Explorers are prohibited to contact the media, to include videotaping, pictures, or interviews, at any time without the prior approval of the Lead Advisor. This will include any videotaping or pictures taken during an explorer activity and later posted to the internet or social websites, such as Facebook, etc.
- J. Explorers are prohibited from using any tobacco products while participating in explorer functions, details, etc., regardless of the explorers age.
- K. The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, and the Boy Scouts of America do not condone and will not permit fraternization between Explorers, Law Enforcement Officers, and Adult Leaders or affiliated adults. This applies to all youth members regardless of local or state laws related to age of consent.

Section VI

Personal Web Pages

- A. The purpose of this policy is to govern the use of personal and public websites with reference to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Officer Post 900 Explorer program. While Explorers are not prohibited from having personal web pages or websites, negative, or distasteful references made to and/or about the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office or Explorer program are prohibited. Periodic queries of web content will be made to ensure that references do not lack in public confidence or respect to the agency or program.

Explorers who have personal websites or other types of internet postings which can be viewed by the public shall not post images, including, but not limited to, photographs of the Explorer Post uniform, badges, patches, or any other material that identifies them, or has the potential to identify them, as a member of the program, without prior approval of the lead advisor. They shall not post photographs or texts that may adversely affect the public's opinion of the Agency or Explorer Program.

The use and application of good judgment, decency, and common sense is expected. This expectation applies while engaged in various computer activities and public posting forums, i.e. Facebook, Twitter etc. Violations of this policy shall be met with corrective and constructive disciplinary action which is used to educate and motivate Explorers to exhibit behavior which contributes to the individual growth and development and to the successful operation of the Explorer Program.

All personal web pages are subject to review by advisors to determine adherence to this policy.

Section VII

Bullying

- A. Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post 900 is committed to protecting Explorers from Bullying, Harassment, or Discrimination for any reason and of any type.

Explorers will not harass or intimidate other post member(s), create and/or promote a hostile environment.

"Bullying" means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more explorers. Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

- Unwanted teasing
- Threatening
- Cyber bullying
- Intimidating
- Social exclusion
- Rumor(s) or spreading false statements/rumors

Any Explorer, who believes he/she is a victim of bullying, or is a witness to bullying, should immediately report the incident(s) to a Post Advisor and/or parent/guardian

ARTICLE VII : POST PRIVILEGES AND ACTIVITIES

Section I

- A. Explorer Requirements to participate at the pistol range:
1. Explorer in good standing
 2. Completed Firearms Familiarization course
 3. Completed Basic CPR/First Aid course
 4. Approval of Lead Advisor
- B. Explorer Requirements to participate in the Ride-Along Program:
1. Explorer in good standing
 2. Completed Firearms Familiarization course
 3. Completed Basic CPR/First Aid course
 4. Completed other requirements set forth in P.C.S.O. policy #POB - 58d

5. If riding with forensics or patrol, must possess a valid learner's driver's license.
 6. Approval of Lead Advisor
 7. Divisions approved for Ride-Along:
 - a. Patrol
 - b. Forensics
 - c. Court Security
 - d. Communications
 - e. Marine
 - f. Radio Shop
 - g. Jail
 - h. Vehicle Maintenance
- C. Explorer Requirements to participate in F.A.P.E. State competition:
1. Explorer in good standing
 2. Must participate in one or more competition events
 3. Approval of Lead Advisor
- D. Explorer Requirements to participate in an F.A.P.E. Delegates:
1. Explorer in good standing
 2. Approval of Lead Advisor

ARTICLE VIII : DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Section I

- A. Disciplinary actions, to include expulsion, may be taken when an explorer has violated any of the provisions contained in the post by-laws, P.C.S.O. agency policy, Florida State Statute, B.S.A./L.F.L. guidelines or other action deemed a violation by the Lead Advisor.
- B. Explorers will obey any order given to them by a Post Advisor, agency member or post officer.
- C. An explorer found in violation will be subject to a disciplinary hearing. The disciplinary hearing will be comprised of post advisors and post officers. If the Lead Advisor deems the violation to be of a sensitive manner the Post Officers will be excluded in the disciplinary hearing.
- D. Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with progressive disciplinary ideals. Explorers deemed chronic offenders will be expelled.
- E. Explorers receiving suspensions (except academic suspensions) or expulsions shall have the **Right to Appeal** the decision of the disciplinary action to the Lead Advisor. The Lead Advisor will forward the appeal information via his/her COC if deemed necessary. The Lead Advisor's COC decision will be final.

- F. Explorers with a grade point average below 2.0 will immediately be placed on academic suspension for the first violation. Explorers on academic suspension may only participate at explorer meetings or details authorized by the Lead Advisor. Explorers who fail to maintain a 2.0 average for a 2nd consecutive occurrence may be expelled from the post. The explorer may return to the post if their grade point average is above 2.0 and with approval of the Lead Advisor. Any explorer expelled for failure to maintain a 2.0 grade point average and does not return with an acceptable report card longer than 6 months will be required to reapply.

Section II

Types of Discipline

- A. Verbal Counseling
- B. Written Counseling
- C. Written Reprimand
- D. Academic Suspension
- E. Post Suspension
- F. Demotion
- G. Expulsion

ARTICLE IX : POWERS OF THE LEAD ADVISOR

Section I

- A. The Lead Advisor shall have final decision in all matters regarding the Post and any others that directly involve the Post.
- B. The Lead Advisory shall have the sole authority to disregard a section, subsection, or article of these by-laws with the just and fair motivation. Therefore, orders from the Lead Advisor supersede the by-laws, even if contradictory to them, and such orders shall be followed at all times.

ARTICLE X : AMENDMENTS

Section I

- A. These Bylaws may be amended at anytime to suit the needs of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and/or the Post's needs as deemed necessary by the Post Advisors.

These Bylaws are hereby adopted for use of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post #900.

ARTICLE XI : RESOURCES

Section I

- A. Boy Scouts of America Law Enforcement Exploring Program Guidelines
- B. P.C.S.O. Policy #POB – 58a Sheriff's Office Explorer Program
- C. P.C.S.O. Policy #POB – 58d Explorer Ride-Along Program
- D. P.C.S.O. Policy #G.O. – 05-01 Uniforms and Appearance
- E. F.A.P.E. By-Laws
- F. Agency Codes & Signals

Revision Dates:

August 8th, 2011