



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 25, 2018

TO: Undersheriff Jack Bisland

FROM: Chief Steve Brandt

RE: Internal Investigation 2018-014

This memorandum is in response to Internal Investigation 2018-014. There was no intent to offend or cause distress to any member of the Flagler County Sheriff's Office during my conversation with Commander Taylor and Detective Thomas. None of the parties involved in the conversation were offended and the conversation was relayed to Det. Conrad through third parties, that I believe took my statements out of context.

I understand that as an executive member of staff I am held to a higher standard. I also understand that as a member of executive staff that a higher level of discretion is to be utilized when engaged in conversations with employees.

I am waiving my right to a Loudermill Hearing and will accept the discipline recommended.



Cc: Professional Standards Unit Investigative File
Human Resources



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 18, 2018
TO: Chief Steve Brandt 
FROM: Undersheriff Jack Bisland 
RE: Internal Investigation 2018-014

Chief Brandt,

I have reviewed the completed file and all the documentation in the above referenced Internal Investigation. This memorandum is to document your receipt of a copy of the entire file on May 18, 2018. Additionally, you were provided a Notice of Intent to Discipline and have ten working days from today's date which is Monday June 4, 2018 at 4:00 pm in which to schedule an appointment with me for a Loudermill Hearing.

CC: Professional Standards Unit Investigative File 2018-014
Human Resources
Chief Steve Brandt



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Notice of Intent to Discipline

DATE: May 18, 2018
TO: Chief Steve Brandt
FROM: Undersheriff Jack Bisland *JB #599*
RE: Intent to Provide Formal Discipline

Based on the sustained findings of FCSO Internal Investigation/Internal Inquiry #2018-014, it is the intention of the FCSO to suspend you without pay as listed below for a sustained violation of FCSO General Order(s) 020.A. Standards of Conduct: Behavior and Language (Category 2): In the performance of their duties, all personnel will maintain command of temper, patience and discretion. Employees shall refrain from using improper, obscene, profane or insolent language.

Recommended Disciplinary Action: Three days suspension without pay.

If you would like to discuss this matter, or wish to express reasons why you feel this action should not be taken, acknowledge by signing below and you are requested to schedule an appointment via a Memorandum with Undersheriff Jack Bisland no later than 4:00 p.m. on the tenth (10) working day from the receipt of this document.

To be completed by the subject employee:

Date:	May 18, 2018
Time	3:15 pm.
Employee Signature	<i>JB #599</i>

To be completed by the employee actually serving the document to the subject employee:

Employee Serving this Form	<i>UBS Jack Bisland</i>	Date and Time	<i>05-18-18 2:45pm</i>
Signature	<i>UBS [Signature] #599</i>		

Distribution: Original to Disciplining Supervisor for investigative file, copy to HR and employee
Linked to: General Order # 019 and 021



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Internal Investigation Report

Internal Inquiry Incident #2018-014

Sworn Employee

Steven Brandt

Internal Inquiry Incident #:2018-014

Subject Employee: Steven Brandt #37

Division: Investigative Services Division

Date of Hire: June 8, 1994

Probation Status (if any): N/A

Date of Most Recent Promotion: December 20, 2017

Previous Corrective Measures: N/A

List of Witnesses:

Detective Elizabeth "Annie" Conrad	#289
Commander Jennifer Taylor	#208
Detective Nicole Thomas	#709

List of Exhibits:

1. Three (3) page letter written by Detective Annie Conrad
2. One (1) CD containing audio interviews of:
 - a. Detective Annie Conrad
 - b. Commander Jennifer Taylor
 - c. Detective Nicole Thomas
 - d. Chief Steven Brandt

Incident and Complaint:

Detective Elizabeth "Annie" Conrad wrote a letter addressed to the Sheriff, Undersheriff, and Chief Strobridge. After reading the letter, there were two (2) sentences containing what could be interpreted as discriminatory remarks. The sentences read "*There are so many rumors floating around; we brought stuff from our houses, Jenn gave me Shingles, Brandt even asking Nicole if she slept with a guy that Jenn and I slept with. Joke or not, all I can say is wow. I know in Law Enforcement we all joke around, but it would be different if you joked and then looked out for your people*".

Distribution: Original to investigative file

Linked To: General Order #019

FCSO # IA-004 (12/16)

Page 2 of 8

Investigation:

Statement of Detective Nicole Thomas taken by Director Renina Fuller

On Thursday April 26th at 2:33 p.m. Director Fuller conducted an interview with Detective Nicole Thomas at the Flagler County Sheriff's Office Operations Center. Detective Nicole Thomas was sworn in by Commander Chris Sepe.

The full interview is available in the Internal Affairs case file. Below are the highlights pertaining to this investigation:

- Detective Thomas was read the "Template for Interview of Department Employee as a Witness" form (FCSO IA-007) and "Internal Investigations Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form" (FCSO IA-002).
- Detective Thomas was read the statement from Detective Conrad's letter (2018 p.2) *"There are so many rumors floating around; we brought stuff from our houses, Jenn gave me Shingles, Brandt even asking Nicole if she slept with a guy that Jenn and I slept with. Joke or not, all I can say is wow. I know in Law Enforcement we all joke around, but it would be different if you joked and then looked out for your people"*.
- Detective Thomas stated there was a conversation in Cmdr. Taylor's office in ISD when Chief Brandt made *"some kinda joking statement"* that their skin rash came from potentially the three of them (Detective Thomas, Detective Conrad, and Cmdr. Taylor) sleeping with the same person.
- Detective Thomas stated Chief Brandt did not make the comment directly to her.
- Detective Thomas advised she did not think Chief Brandt had any ill intentions.
- Detective Thomas stated she knew *"I know there have been conversations previously about Cmdr. Taylor and Detective Conrad having the same sexual partner..."* and as far as she knew, everything was just a *"joke"*.
- Detective Thomas stated she was not offended by the statement.
- Detective Thomas advised Chief Steven Brandt had never made any comments to her that were either sexual or sexist in nature.
- Detective Thomas advised Chief Steven Brandt had never made any comments to anyone else in her presence that were either sexual or sexist in nature.
- Regarding the previous question, Detective Thomas wanted to clarify that in their office they work sex crimes and talk about sexual things in nature all the time. Chief Brandt has made comments but never toward an employee and nor was it offensive.
- Detective Thomas signed and dated the Internal Investigations Confidentially Acknowledgement Form.
- The interview concluded at 2:39 p.m.

Statement of Detective Elizabeth "Annie" Conrad taken by Director Renina Fuller

On Thursday April 26th at 3:11 p.m. Director Fuller conducted an interview with Detective Elizabeth "Annie" Conrad at the Flagler County Sheriff's Office Inmate Facility Administration Building. Detective Elizabeth Ann Conrad was sworn in by Commander Chris Sepe.

Distribution: Original to investigative file

Linked To: General Order #019

FCSO # IA-004 (12/16)

Page 3 of 8

The full interview is available in the Internal Affairs case file. Below are the highlights pertaining to this investigation:

- Detective Conrad was read the “Template for Interview of Department Employee as a Witness” form (FCSO IA-007) and “Internal Investigations Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form” (FCSO IA-002).
- Detective Conrad was asked about the following statement from her letter *“There are so many rumors floating around; we brought stuff from our houses, Jenn gave me Shingles, Brandt even asking Nicole if she slept with a guy that Jenn and I slept with. Joke or not, all I can say is wow. I know in Law Enforcement we all joke around, but it would be different if you joked and then looked out for your people”*.
- Detective Conrad said she believed the statement was made in November 2017.
- Director Fuller asked Detective Conrad if she was present when the statement was made and Detective Conrad stated *“it was actually talked about um in the group and unfortunately I don’t remember exactly who was in the group...”*
- Detective Conrad further stated that somebody had mentioned it because it bothered Nicole Thomas and she was new to the unit. However, this is not what Detective Thomas stated in her interview. Detective Conrad additionally stated *“it bothered her and this was the exact words I was given and, I wish I could remember to be honest with you, who told me originally, um but she talked about it after Brandt said it. So it bothered her enough for her to repeat it to other detectives in the actual bay area”*.
- Detective Conrad advised she did not know when it chronologically began.
- Detective Conrad stated she asked someone if Cmdr. Taylor was present and she was told yes, she was.
- Detective Conrad said *“it’s inappropriate she is so young, and it’s just silly”*.
- Commander Chris Sepe had a question for Detective Conrad and ask her if she was okay with him asking a question or two without her feeling intimidated by two people asking questions? Detective Conrad said she was comfortable with it.
- Commander Sepe asked if Detective Conrad had heard with her own ears Chief Brandt make the statement. Detective Conrad indicated she did not hear Chief Brandt.
- Detective Conrad advised Detective Nicole Thomas had heard it with her own ears *“we talked about it multiple times after the initial exposure”*.
- Detective Conrad advised the “we” was herself, Detective Thomas and Cmdr. Taylor.
- Detective Conrad continued that she felt like it was joke being made in a serious situation.
- Detective Conrad indicated neither Detective Thomas nor Cmdr. Taylor told her about the statement. She heard it from someone else.
- Detective Conrad said she had confirmed with Cmdr. Taylor that Chief Brandt made the statement.
- Detective Conrad advised she was under the impression that just Cmdr. Taylor and Detective Thomas were present when the alleged comment was made.
- Detective Conrad confirmed that she heard the alleged statement after the fact when somebody had heard Detective Thomas speaking about it to someone else out in the bay.

Distribution: Original to investigative file

Linked To: General Order #019

FCSO # IA-004 (12/16)

Page 4 of 8

- Detective Conrad advised Chief Steven Brandt had never made any comments to her that were either sexual or sexist in nature.
- Detective Conrad advised Chief Steven Brandt had never made any comments to anyone else in her presence that were either sexual or sexist in nature.
- Detective Conrad indicated she was offended in the aspect of respect more than being a female.
- Detective Conrad said she deals with bad guys and brushes off their comments but stated in a leadership role she get frustrated which leads to a kind of depression.
- Detective Conrad indicated her intent for including those particular statements in her letter to the Sheriff was to make known “*My intent is the overview of our leaders thinking our serious situation is a joke*”.
- Detective Conrad signed and dated the Internal Investigations Confidentially Acknowledgement Form.
- The interview concluded at 3:21 p.m.

Statement of Commander Jennifer Taylor taken by Director Renina Fuller

On Thursday April 27th at 9:28 a.m. Director Fuller conducted an interview with Commander Jennifer Taylor at the Flagler County Sheriff’s Office Operations Center. Commander Jennifer Taylor was sworn in by Commander Chris Sepe.

The full interview is available in the Internal Affairs case file. Below are the highlights pertaining to this investigation:

- Cmdr. Taylor was read the “Template for Interview of Department Employee as a Witness” form (FCSO IA-007) and “Internal Investigations Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form” (FCSO IA-002).
- Cmdr. Taylor was read the statement from Detective Conrad’s letter (2018 p.2) “*There are so many rumors floating around; we brought stuff from our houses, Jenn gave me Shingles, Brandt even asking Nicole if she slept with a guy that Jenn and I slept with. Joke or not, all I can say is wow. I know in Law Enforcement we all joke around, but it would be different if you joked and then looked out for your people*”.
- Cmdr. Taylor stated she and Detective Nicole Thomas were in an office with Chief Brandt and they were searching for something in common that could cause the illness Cmdr. Taylor, Detective Thomas, and Detective Conrad were experiencing.
- Cmdr. Taylor stated that topic did come up and she did not think the statement was meant to be derogatory toward herself and Detective Thomas.
- Cmdr. Taylor stated she was not offended by Chief Brandt’s comment at all and nor were her feelings hurt.
- Cmdr. Taylor stated she did not feel it was a major insult.
- Cmdr. Taylor indicated that to her knowledge, that comment or similar comments had not been made previously.
- Cmdr. Taylor advised Chief Steven Brandt had never made any comments to her that were either sexual or sexist in nature.

Distribution: Original to investigative file

Linked To: General Order #019

FCSO # IA-004 (12/16)

Page 5 of 8

- Cmdr. Taylor advised Chief Steven Brandt had never made any comments to anyone else in her presence that were either sexual or sexist in nature.
- Cmdr. Taylor signed and dated the Internal Investigations Confidentially Acknowledgement Form.
- The interview concluded at 9:37 a.m.

Statement of Chief Steven Brandt taken by Director Renina Fuller

On Thursday April 27th at 10:50 a.m. Director Fuller conducted an interview with Chief Steven Brandt at the Flagler County Sheriff's Office Operations Center. Chief Brandt was sworn in by Commander Chris Sepe.

The full interview is available in the Internal Affairs case file. Below are the highlights pertaining to this investigation:

- Chief Brandt read the FCSO IA-008 Garrity Notice and signed it. Chief Brandt was then read FCSO IA-014 "Template for Interview of Subject Employee".
- Chief Brandt was read the statement he allegedly made "*There are so many rumors floating around; we brought stuff from our houses, Jenn gave me Shingles, Brandt even asking Nicole if she slept with a guy that Jenn and I slept with. Joke or not, all I can say is wow. I know in Law Enforcement we all joke around, but it would be different if you joked and then looked out for your people*".
- Chief Brandt indicated he was aware of the conversation not necessarily the comment.
- Chief Brandt stated he remembered a conversation that occurred last year with Commander Taylor where they were brainstorming looking for commonalities between the three employees experiencing rashes. Chief Brandt stated that was the conversation when the topic came up about Commander Taylor and Detective Conrad having a relationship with the same gentleman over several years.
- Chief Brandt stated he could not recall how he said it but he remembers thinking that could be ruled out because of Detective Thomas not having a relationship with the same gentleman as Cmdr. Taylor and Detective Conrad.
- Chief Brandt reiterated it was a brainstorming conversation and nothing other than that.
- Chief Brandt also stated he remembers speaking with Commander Taylor but he was uncertain if it was that particular conversation or a different one, when Commander Taylor indicated her and Detective Conrad had joked about asking Detective Thomas if she ever slept with the gentleman that she (Detective Conrad) and Cmdr. Taylor had a relationship with in a joking manner.
- Chief Brandt stated "*I wasn't thinking of it as an actual joke, I was thinking of it as us brainstorming trying to figure out what's wrong trying to find a commonality, it wasn't meant to be anything other than that*".
- Chief Brandt signed and dated the Internal Investigations Confidentially Acknowledgement Form.
- The interview concluded at 10:56 a.m.

Distribution: Original to investigative file

Linked To: General Order #019

FCSO # IA-004 (12/16)

Page 6 of 8

Discussion:

Although Chief Brandt admitted to making the statement, the intent was searching for a commonality of the shared illness. The intent seemed innocent, but Detective Conrad and Detective Thomas took as if it was stated in a **joking** manner. Based on these findings, Chief Steven Brandt will be exonerated of criticism and a sustained finding of improper and insolent language.

Findings:

This investigation has **exonerated** Chief Brandt of the following FCSO General Order violation:

Flagler County Sheriff's Office General Order 020 – Standards of Conduct III. (A) 7
Category 7 Violations:

(d) Criticism:

Personnel shall not publicly criticize or ridicule the FCSO, its policies, or other personnel by speech, writing, or other expression, where such speech, writing or other expression is defamatory, obscene, unlawful, undermines the effectiveness of the FCSO, interferes with the maintenance of discipline, or is made with reckless disregard for truth or falsity.

If sustained, this violation could warrant a Three day to five days of suspension per GO 19 Discipline (Category 4 violations)

Exonerated - There is sufficient evidence which indicates that the act or incident did occur, but the actions were justified, lawful and proper.

This investigation has **sustained** Chief Steven Brandt of the following General Orders violations:

Flagler County Sheriff's Office General Order 020 – Standards of Conduct III. (A) 9
Category 2 Violations:

(a) Behavior and Language:

In the performance of their duties, all personnel will maintain command of temper, patience, and discretion. Employees shall refrain from using **improper**, obscene, profane, or **insolent** language.

Disciplinary Action: According to Flagler County Sheriff's Office General Order 019 – Discipline. Category 2 Violations carry a penalty of “Written reprimand to one day (8 hours) of suspension”.

To be Completed by the Investigating Supervisor or Official:

"I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under penalty of perjury, that, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, I have not knowingly or willfully deprived, or allowed another to deprive, the subject of the investigation of any rights contained in ss. 112.532 and 112.533, Florida Statutes.

Kevin J. [Signature]
Signature

5/3/2018
Date

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the undersigned, this **3** day, **may** month, year **2018**

Sheri A. Goipe
Notary



Mark D. Grobidge
Reviewing Supervisor Printed Name

05/04/18
Date

Mark D. Grobidge
Signature of Reviewing Supervisor



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 14, 2018

TO: Jack Bisland
Undersheriff

FROM: Kayla Hathaway *KH #777*
General Counsel

RE: Legal Review of Internal Investigation #2018-014

I have reviewed the complete file and all documentation in the internal investigation referenced above. After my review of the file, it is my legal conclusion the conduct specified in the investigation does not amount to a successful legal claim under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC §2000 et seq.) for employment discrimination.

cc: Internal Investigation file

Dearest Sheriff Staly, Strobridge, and Bisland,

I am choosing to send these personal letters to all of you in this fashion because I promise you no one else knows the contents of it. Please feel free to throw them away after reading them. I have just been shut down every time I wish to speak with any of you because of chain of command or making things worse. If I get in trouble for this I will totally understand, but my mental health is more important to me at this moment and expressing my true feelings and dispelling several rumors is worth the punishment if it's necessary. I have tried really hard to put myself in your positions and realize you can't accept there is anything truly wrong with the building. From an outsider and especially someone that is affected, I just keep repeating to myself that it's baffling that no one sees the totality of the situation and the fact that a lot of their good people have come up sick/affected and the only commonality is the workplace. I also know when you're not affected it's difficult for you to understand, but imagine if it was your wife or daughter and now their lives may be forever changed because of a situation no one is willing to recognize. That's why I'm not looking for a response from any of you, but begging you to simply hear me out as a person who has dedicated their entire life to serving and taking care of others in this county and even more, a team player for this team. Maybe the small town mindset is what makes all this so hard for me.

I truly hope you will take the time to read this though;

Let me start by dispelling a few rumors;

- 1) **I do NOT have ill intentions:** The day I met with Bisland and spoke from my heart in reference to my concerns, it was never meant to start a war. Please understand my mindset, I am extremely sick, absolutely terrified, and all I was asking for is support from the people I work for to find out why we were all getting sick and to take it serious. I thought I made that crystal clear. I'm scared not only for me, but for everyone else who won't speak up. I know you allowed me to go off site, but the place you have us working now is torturing. The room is like being in an airplane. I've bought air quality plants, made a homemade air purifier, and still had to work out of my car the other day because the air was so stagnant. But I don't mind working out of my car and problem solving, but again that is not as easy for others. I know the county is doing what they feel they NEED to do to cover their butts, but if we truly want to find out the problem it takes team work (like anything else). The county should not be interpreting the reports, the company writing the report should speak directly to you guys because it's your people at risk if there is a problem. Heidi Petito sat right in the large meeting that day and completely gave out wrong information which was clearly written in the report provided by Richard. The fact that the HVAC system wasn't working properly is HUGE piece of the puzzle and she argued it was. Richard's company should be at the meetings explaining it in a way we can understand and be available for questions. Just because we get tests back that are acceptable to most we just ignore the fact that people are sick. It was real easy for Brandt to simply tell me to go back to patrol the very first time I expressed my concerns, because that's what we do here. Get rid of the loud one and then let the others ones suffer and learn to keep their mouth shut. I've never not fought for my team and I'm not trying to fight with anyone, but simply remaining open with everything with what is happening with me with my sickness and the medical findings.
- 2) **I do NOT think I am a mold expert:** If you experience the symptoms that I have, you are forced to become very interested and make it a priority to research and figure it out, just as if I was a diabetic, or any other illness that requires special care. I spoke with Richard from H2H in the beginning because he IS an expert. I would take every chance I had to share our symptoms, and pick his brain, because I do think the medical aspect is a HUGE piece of the puzzle. He is a very passionate person when it comes to his job and I consider him extremely professional. I also asked him, being in the field if he knew of a doctor that specializes in mold exposure. It took me

a month to get an appointment with the doctor he suggested, which cost me \$843.00 for the 5 hour visit. She required all my medical paperwork in prior to my visit so she would be prepared. She reviewed all the mold reports that I've received from the building and wrote a long letter explaining the health risks of not getting out of the potential exposure area. This was not to be a pain in the butt or to stir things up. I even previously put Richard from H2H as someone who could have copies of all my medical paperwork, lab results, and findings to compare with his findings **in hopes of narrowing in on the problem**. This has obviously been interpreted by you all as something completely different, and for the most part labelling me "the villain. The County will no longer talk to me, Richard will no longer talk to me. My lifelong friend Mike Dickson will no longer talk to me. In the beginning he was even going to ask his wife to help figure it out because she has medical training and is very smart. All because people think I have ill intentions all of a sudden and all I want to do is solve the problem so we can all be safe. I will be more than happy not to talk to Richard again, but I beg you to let him see the medical findings. The problem is, the less people talk, we see the more that is hidden. Next door is a prime example. We know there is asbestos next door. We know they saw it, everyone is talking about it, and no one is looking out for people's welfare. That is just not the type of person I am and I have a very difficult time understanding it.

- 3) There are so many rumors floating around; we brought stuff from our houses, Jenn gave me Shingles, Brandt even asking Nicole if she slept with a guy that Jenn and I slept with. Joke or not, all I can say is wow. I know in Law Enforcement we all joke around, but it would be different if you joked and then looked out for your people. But he's obviously the driving force to making them come back into the building. You guys are closer to Nicole and you well know her situation as a single mom. She can't afford to seek the expensive treatment and diagnostic stuff that I have and I've brought it all back to share with her and others affected in hopes they can be treated properly. I'm not only sinking in debt at this point, but I have the mental strain that if I share all this info I will be put on a black list and lose my job. The exposure that I have is throughout my body and very severe. I was able to lead Nicole to a cheap test online that is an eye test to test for different illnesses including Bio toxin illness and she was positive for that and two other illnesses. She will go back in the building when ordered because she doesn't feel she is at a point in her life and her career that she can lose her job. That is so sad! She will sacrifice her health and get even more infected because a piece of paper says there is nothing wrong and no one stands up for her. **How do we know we are even testing for the right stuff if we don't know what are people are infected with?**

I go back April 27th for a follow up and get my culture and blood work results. This will tell me exactly what I am infected with. I am currently showing presence for 3 out of 4 mycotoxins, the levels still need to be interpreted at my follow up, however 2 out of the 3 cause cancer. This stuff is no joke! I am absolutely terrified.

One of the biggest struggles in all of this is the mental torture for a few reasons. The fear of never getting better, and never being normal again. The fear of losing the job that I love. I definitely cannot afford to lose my health insurance at this moment either. The struggle with depression is real! I fight it every day and pray hard for God to give me strength.

I'm not sure where I will be able to go without being able to go back in the building but whether it's the schools, the courthouse, or patrol I have no doubt I will continue to do the best job I can do because I love working for the people and doing the right thing. It's in my heart and soul no matter how people treat me.

I live by my life verse Luke 6:38 "Give, and it shall be given unto you". When I begin to get discouraged by the people around me, I remind myself you too are children of God and then I see people in a different light.

Commanders from every unit have welcomed me into their Division if needed because they know I give 110% no matter what and they are prepared to help me work around the fact that I may have to do things a little different to avoid the building. I just hate that I will ultimately being punished for getting sick, and trying to look out for others by looking like the absolute trouble maker. And honestly one of the hardest parts is to leave the others stranded not being able to voice their opinions and concerns because they are scared to get "black listed" so to say.

My asthma has went away since I left the building, but my body has an overgrowth of fungus/yeast. I'm currently on approximately 12 different medications right now, some being very costly. Jenn and I can swing it for now, but Nicole cant. We look back on how supportive everyone was for Watkins, and realizing there is a fund to help deputies in times like this and nothing is ever offered. And I'll finish with this, and it's not to feel sorry for myself because I feel God walks me through things for a reason, but since the day I literally spilled my guts on the table for Bisland NONE of you have EVER asked how I am doing. I was even in the hospital last weekend due to complications of this whole mess and no one has ever reached out. And I know Brandt was notified. It's just hurtful, especially because we are all on the same team and it feels we serve and protect everyone else but not our own sometimes.

I apologize if you think anything I said is out of line and I truly thank you for allowing me to vent and express myself. I have provided these to just you with no one else having knowledge in hopes of not causing further damage with anything and getting anyone else in trouble besides myself.

Thank you for your time and God Bless,

Annie



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 26, 2018

TO: Undersheriff Bisland

J. Staly

FROM: Director Renina Fuller

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Internal Investigation/Chief Steven Brandt

On Wednesday April 4, 2018 at approximately 5:00pm Chief Mark Strobridge brought a letter to me that was written by Detective Elizabeth "Annie" Conrad and addressed to the Sheriff, Undersheriff, and Chief Strobridge. The letter indicates an inappropriate statement was made by Chief Steven Brandt. The letter states Chief Steven Brandt asked Detective Nicole Thomas if she slept with the same guy that Commander Jennifer Taylor and Detective Conrad slept with. Attached is the letter containing the alleged statement by Chief Brandt.

Due to inappropriate statement, at this time Director Fuller is recommending that this matter be referred to the Professional Standards Unit for further internal investigation.



Michael Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Authorization to Conduct Internal Investigation

Date: April 26, 2018

To: Director Renina Fuller

From: Undersheriff Jack Bisland

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jack Bisland".

Internal Investigation Incident #: 2018-014

In accordance with FCSO GO# 021.VII. D.1.e, I hereby authorize Director Renina Fuller to conduct an Internal Investigation into the allegation(s) that have been made against FCSO Employee(s) Chief Steven Brandt.

/jb



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Employee Notice of Internal Investigation

Date: April 26, 2018

To: Chief Steven Brandt

From: Undersheriff J. Bisland


Internal Investigation Incident #: 2018-014

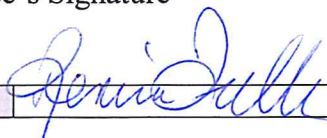
The FCSO has initiated an internal investigation into the allegation/complaint that you may have violated FCSO General Orders # 020-Standards of Conduct. The investigation involves an allegation of an inappropriate statement on December 2017.

You will be notified when to appear to answer questions fully and truthfully and to present all information and/or evidence relevant to this investigation when directed to do so by Director Renina Fuller, the FCSO employee responsible for this investigation.

Since this is an internal investigation, you are ordered to fully cooperate with the investigation. You are entitled to review the complaint and any and all evidence immediately prior to your interview. If you wish, you may have counsel or a representative of your choosing with you during questioning. All information concerning this investigation is to remain confidential until the investigation becomes a public record. If you divulge information prior to it becoming public record, you are in violation of FCSO General Order 020.III.A.1.h. Upon completion of the investigation, you will be notified of the findings and any action, if any, to be taken.

If you wish to voluntarily admit you committed the violation(s) of the General Order(s) listed above, and wish to expedite the disposition of the matter, you must acknowledge and return the completed Expedited Disciplinary Process form within three (3) working days of the receipt of this document to the investigating supervisor listed above.

 37	4/27/18	8:58 A.M.
Employee's Signature	Date	Time

Served By		Date	4/27/18	Time	8:59 A.M.
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Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Template for Interview of Subject Employee

THIS IS Penina Fuller, Director of H.R. FLAGLER
(your name) (your title)

COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE. THE DATE IS 4/27/18, AND THE TIME IS 1050 HOURS.

WITH ME (IN/AT) FCSO Op. Center IS Chief Steven Brandt
(location of interview) (employee interviewed)

WOULD YOU STATE YOUR NAME AND ID NUMBER FOR THE RECORD.....

ALSO PRESENT IS _____, ATTORNEY FOR _____. WOULD YOU ALSO STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD.....

Chief Brandt FOR THE RECORD, DO YOU UNDERSTAND YOU ARE HERE IN AN OBSERVATIONAL CAPACITY AND YOU MAY NOT SPEAK OR OBJECT DURING THIS INTERVIEW.

THIS WILL BE IN REFERENCE TO ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY NUMBER 2018-014

REGARDING A COMPLAINT INVOLVING: (select one) STANDARDS OF CONDUCT or FCSO PROCEDURES

AT THIS TIME I AM GOING TO READ YOU THE GARRITY WARNING (read completely AND have them sign)

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE BEGIN THE INTERVIEW? YES NO

-RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND FOR THE OATH-

- AS A SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, I AM AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER OATHS IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. PLEASE RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND. DO YOU SOLEMNLY SWEAR OR AFFIRM THAT ANYTHING YOU SAY DURING THIS INTERVIEW IS THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP YOU GOD?

Chief Brandt, FOR THE RECORD, DID YOU RECEIVE:
(employee interviewed)

NOTIFICATION BY FCSO MEMORANDUM THAT AN ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY HAS BEEN INITIATED REGARDING THIS COMPLAINT? YES NO

DID YOU RECEIVE A COPY OF THE COMPLAINT? YES NO

DID YOU RECEIVE A COPY OF THE POLICE OFFICER'S AND CORRECTIONAL OFFICER'S BILL OF RIGHTS? YES NO

HAVE YOU HAD AN OPPURTUNITY TO REVIEW THE STATEMENTS OF WITNESSES AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH THIS COMPLAINT? YES NO

DO YOU NEED MORE TIME TO REVIEW ANYTHING OR MORE TIME TO PREPARE FOR THIS INTERVIEW? YES NO

~~REVIEW EVIDENCE~~ ~~REVIEW FORM AND HAVE PRINCIPLE~~ INITIAL BY EACH ITEM AND SIGN AT THE BOTTOM.

BEGIN THE INTERVIEW

- HOW LONG HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED BY FCSO?
- WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT?
- ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH AN INCIDENT OCCURING ON.....
- IN YOUR OWN WORDS PLEASE EXPLAIN FROM BEGINNING TO END WHAT OCCURRED DURING INCI
- AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW, REMIND THE EMPLOYEE ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION IS CLOSED. END WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

"THE TIME IS 1056 AND THIS WILL CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW WITH Chief Brandt

Distribution: Original to investigative file.
Linked To: General Order# 021
FCSO IA-014 (06/17)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Internal Investigation Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form

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FCSO General Order 020.III.A.1.h -Failure to Cooperate with Internal Investigation states "Personnel shall answer all questions, provide all requested documents, and otherwise cooperate with inquiries and/or investigations that are related to their employment with the agency, off-duty employment; volunteer activities with the agency or that are otherwise related to FCSO operations. This specifically includes requests from superior officers, the IAU, or other designees of the Sheriff."

A sustained violation of General Order 020.III.A.1.h -Failure to Cooperate with Internal Investigation can result in your termination from the FCSO.

I have read and understand the above.

SIGNATURE: *[Signature]* 37 DATE/TIME: 4/27/18 10:56 AM.

WITNESS: *[Signature]* DATE/TIME: 4/27/18 10:56 AM

WITNESS: *[Signature]* 44 DATE/TIME: 4/27/18 10:57am



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Notice of Obtaining a Statement for Internal Investigation

Date: *April 27, 2018*
 To: *Chief Steven Brandt*
 From: *Director Renina Fuller*
 Re: Internal Inquiry Incident #: *2018-014*

You are ordered to report to the FCSO's *Ops* Building on *4/27, 2018* at *10:45 am* hours to answer questions in reference to the aforementioned internal inquiry/investigation.

This investigation may or may not lead to disciplinary action against you, and you are entitled to bring a representative (a union representative, or union or other attorney, or another representative of your choice). If you chose to be represented at the interview by an attorney, please advise me so that arrangements can be made with the Sheriff's attorney to also be present. Please be aware that your representative:

- May attend.
- May assist in counsel.
- May not disrupt or bargain over the purpose of the interview during the interview process.
- It must be emphasized that as long as the Weingarten Rules are followed, a representative has no right to tell you not to answer questions, or to advise you to provide false answers. **You can be disciplined if you refuse to answer questions or are untruthful with your answers.**

Digital recordings of all sworn witness statements, as well as digital copies of document/exhibits that may or may not be used as part of this investigation, will be available for your review immediately prior to your statement being taken. Please make the appropriate arrangements with your supervisor to attend this mandatory meeting.

[Signature] *4/27/18* *10:44 AM*
 Employee's Signature Date Time

Served By	<i>Renina Fuller</i>	Date	<i>4/27/18</i>	Time	<i>10:44 AM</i>
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Distribution: Original signed to investigating supervisor. Copies to employee and division commander.

Linked To: General Order # 021



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Garrity Notice

Internal Inquiry Incident #: 2018-014

I wish to advise you that you are being questioned as part of an official internal affairs investigation by the Flagler County Sheriff's Office. You will be asked questions specifically directed and related to the performance of your official duties or fitness for office. You are entitled to all the rights and privileges guaranteed by the laws and the Constitution of this state and the Constitution of the United States and the union contract between the Flagler County Sheriff's Office and Coastal Florida PBA, including the right not to be compelled to incriminate yourself. I further wish to advise you that if you refuse to testify or to answer questions relating to the performance of your official duties or fitness for duty, you will be subject to departmental charges that could result in your dismissal from this agency. If you do answer, neither your statements nor any information or evidence that is gained by reason of such statements can be used against you in any subsequent criminal proceeding, **(except for perjury or obstruction of justice charges)**ⁱ. However, these statements may be used against you in relation to subsequent departmental charges.

The above warning was read to me by:

Director Regina Fuller on 4/27/18 at 10:51 A.M.
Name Date Time

Signature: [Handwritten Signature] 37

Witness: [Handwritten Signature]

Witness: Cmdr. C-Sage 44

ⁱ See United States v. Veal, 153 F3d 1233 (11th C.A. – 1998); the inclusion of this bolded language is at the discretion of the investigating agency although the evolving trend is to include this provision.

Distribution: Original to investigative file
Linked To: General Order # 021

FCSO IA-008 (12/16)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Template for Interview of Department Employee as a Witness

THIS IS Renira Fuller, Dir. of Human Resources FLAGLER
(your name) (your title)

COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE. THE DATE IS 4/26/2018, AND THE TIME IS
3:11 pm HOURS. WITH ME (IN/AT) FCSO Jail Adm. IS Detective "Annie" Elizabeth Conrad
(location) ^{B19} (employee)

WOULD YOU STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD.....

THIS INTERVIEW IS IN REFERENCE TO ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY NUMBER 2018-014, REGARDING
FCSO STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.

THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW IS NOT FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

FOR THE RECORD, Det. Conrad IS BEING INTERVIEWED AS A WITNESS AND IS NOT
(employee)
THE PRINCIPAL OR FOCUS OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION.

*** (READ GARRITY) ***

Detective Conrad, FOR THE RECORD:
(employee)

- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THIS IS AN ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION AND YOU ARE BEING INTERVIEWED IN THE CAPACITY OF A WITNESS? YES NO
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE NOT THE FOCUS OR PRINCIPAL OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION? YES NO
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT ALTHOUGH YOU ARE BEING QUESTIONED AS A WITNESS, BUT YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO ANSWER ALL OF MY QUESTIONS FULLY AND TRUTHFULLY AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED DURING THE INTERVIEW CAN BE USED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES? YES NO
- DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING I'VE EXPLAINED TO YOU BEFORE WE BEGIN THE INTERVIEW? YES NO
- AS A SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, I AM AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER OATHS IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. PLEASE RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND. DO YOU SOLEMNLY SWEAR OR AFFIRM THAT ANYTHING YOU SAY DURING THIS INTERVIEW IS THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP YOU GOD?

(begin the interview)

- HOW LONG HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED BY FCSO?
- WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT?
- ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH AN INCIDENT OCCURRING ON letter you wrote to Sheriff, ...
- FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE INCIDENT AND IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, IN YOUR OWN WORDS, PLEASE DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED.....

notes

AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW, REMIND THE EMPLOYEE ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION IS CLOSED. END WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "THE TIME IS 1521 AND THIS WILL CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW WITH Det. E. Conrad."

Distribution: Original to investigative file
Linked To: General Order # 021
FCSO IA-007 (06/17)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Internal Investigation Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form

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FCSO General Order 020.III.A.1.h -Failure to Cooperate with Internal Investigation states "Personnel shall answer all questions, provide all requested documents, and otherwise cooperate with inquiries and/or investigations that are related to their employment with the agency, off-duty employment; volunteer activities with the agency or that are otherwise related to FCSO operations. This specifically includes requests from superior officers, the IAU, or other designees of the Sheriff."

A sustained violation of General Order 020.III.A.1.h -Failure to Cooperate with Internal Investigation can result in your termination from the FCSO.

I have read and understand the above.

SIGNATURE: *Elipe Galt Rownd* DATE/TIME: *4/26/18 / 3:21pm*
WITNESS: *Benjamin Jullu* DATE/TIME: *4/26/18 3:22pm*
WITNESS: *Cmdr C Seje 44* DATE/TIME: *4/26/18 3:22pm*

Distribution: Original to Investigating Supervisor to be included in file.
Linked to: General Order #021
FCSO IA-002 (12/16)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Template for Interview of Department Employee as a Witness

THIS IS Rebecca Fuller, Dir. of Human Resources FLAGLER
(your name) (your title)

COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE. THE DATE IS 4/27/2018, AND THE TIME IS
9:28 HOURS. WITH ME (IN/AT) Operations Center IS Cmdr. J. Taylor
(location) (employee)

WOULD YOU STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD.....

THIS INTERVIEW IS IN REFERENCE TO ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY NUMBER 2018-014, REGARDING
FCSO STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.

THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW IS NOT FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

FOR THE RECORD Cmdr. Taylor IS BEING INTERVIEWED AS A WITNESS AND IS NOT
(employee)

THE PRINCIPAL OR FOCUS OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION.

*** (READ GARRITY) ***

Cmdr. Jennifer Taylor, FOR THE RECORD:
(employee)

- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THIS IS AN ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION AND YOU ARE BEING INTERVIEWED IN THE CAPACITY OF A WITNESS? YES NO
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE NOT THE FOCUS OR PRINCIPAL OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION? YES NO
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT ALTHOUGH YOU ARE BEING QUESTIONED AS A WITNESS, BUT YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO ANSWER ALL OF MY QUESTIONS FULLY AND TRUTHFULLY AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED DURING THE INTERVIEW CAN BE USED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES? YES NO
- DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING I'VE EXPLAINED TO YOU BEFORE WE BEGIN THE INTERVIEW? YES NO
- AS A SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, I AM AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER OATHS IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. PLEASE RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND. DO YOU SOLEMNLY SWEAR OR AFFIRM THAT ANYTHING YOU SAY DURING THIS INTERVIEW IS THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP YOU GOD?

(begin the interview)

- HOW LONG HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED BY FCSO?
- WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT?
- ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH AN INCIDENT OCCURRING ON.....
- FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE INCIDENT AND IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, IN YOUR OWN WORDS, PLEASE DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED.....

AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW, REMIND THE EMPLOYEE ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION IS CLOSED. END WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "THE TIME IS 9:37 AND THIS WILL CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW WITH Cmdr. J. Taylor."

Distribution: Original to investigative file
Linked To: General Order # 021
FCSO IA-007 (06/17)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."


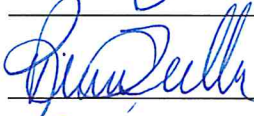

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A sustained violation of General Order 020.III.A.1.h -Failure to Cooperate with Internal Investigation can result in your termination from the FCSO.

I have read and understand the above.

SIGNATURE:		DATE/TIME:	4/27/18 • 9:37am
WITNESS:		DATE/TIME:	4/27/18 9:38 AM
WITNESS:		DATE/TIME:	4/27/18 9:37am

Distribution: Original to Investigating Supervisor to be included in file.
Linked to: General Order #021
FCSO IA-002 (12/16)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

Template for Interview of Department Employee as a Witness

THIS IS Renina Feeler, Dir of Human Resources FLAGLER
(your name) (your title)

COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE. THE DATE IS April 26, 2018, AND THE TIME IS
1433 HOURS. WITH ME (IN/AT) FCSO operations center Detective Nicole Thomas
(location) (employee)

WOULD YOU STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD.....

THIS INTERVIEW IS IN REFERENCE TO ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY NUMBER 2018-014, REGARDING
FCSO STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.

THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW IS NOT FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

FOR THE RECORD, Det. Nicole Thomas IS BEING INTERVIEWED AS A WITNESS AND IS NOT
(employee)

THE PRINCIPAL OR FOCUS OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION.

*** (READ GARRITY) ***

Det. Nicole Thomas, FOR THE RECORD:
(employee)

- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THIS IS AN ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION AND YOU ARE BEING INTERVIEWED IN THE CAPACITY OF A WITNESS? YES NO
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE NOT THE FOCUS OR PRINCIPAL OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION? YES NO
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT ALTHOUGH YOU ARE BEING QUESTIONED AS A WITNESS, BUT YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO ANSWER ALL OF MY QUESTIONS FULLY AND TRUTHFULLY AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED DURING THE INTERVIEW CAN BE USED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES? YES NO
- DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING I'VE EXPLAINED TO YOU BEFORE WE BEGIN THE INTERVIEW? YES NO
- AS A SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, I AM AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER OATHS IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. PLEASE RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND. DO YOU SOLEMNLY SWEAR OR AFFIRM THAT ANYTHING YOU SAY DURING THIS INTERVIEW IS THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP YOU GOD?

(begin the interview)

- HOW LONG HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED BY FCSO?
- WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT?
- ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH AN INCIDENT OCCURRING ON un known date
- FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE INCIDENT AND IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, IN YOUR OWN WORDS, PLEASE DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED.....

f AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW, REMIND THE EMPLOYEE ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION IS CLOSED. END WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "THE TIME IS 1439 AND THIS WILL CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW WITH Det. N. Thomas."

Distribution: Original to investigative file
Linked To: General Order # 021
FCSO IA-007 (06/17)



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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A sustained violation of General Order 020.III.A.1.h -Failure to Cooperate with Internal Investigation can result in your termination from the FCSO.

I have read and understand the above.

SIGNATURE: Det. [Signature] 709 DATE/TIME: 4/26/18 2:38
WITNESS: Det. [Signature] DATE/TIME: 4/26/18 2:43
WITNESS: Cmdr. [Signature] 44 DATE/TIME: 4/26/18 14:42

Distribution: Original to Investigating Supervisor to be included in file.
Linked to: General Order #021
FCSO IA-002 (12/16)