

Biography

Sheriff Rick Staly is serving his third 4-year term as Flagler County Sheriff. He was first elected to the office of Sheriff in 2016 and was sworn in as the 18th Sheriff of Flagler County on January 3, 2017. Following his first term, he was overwhelmingly re-elected in 2020. Following his second term, he was re-elected unopposed in 2024, joining Sheriff Zip Edmonson in 1968 as the only incumbent Sheriff in agency history to be re-elected unopposed. As Sheriff, he leads a workforce of more than 400 employees and volunteers with a budget of over \$48 million dollars.

Sheriff Staly holds a master's degree in justice administration from the University of Louisville and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Rollins College. Sheriff Staly is a graduate of the 177th Session of the FBI National Academy, the 79th Session of the FBI LEEDS Program, and the Southern Police Institute's 79th Administrative Officer's Course. He is also a graduate of the 112th Session of the National Sheriff's Institute, and Session 2 of NSI's Jail Administration, making him the first Sheriff in Flagler County to graduate from the NSI.

Sheriff Staly is past president of the Florida Deputy Sheriffs Association. During his tenure as president, he led FDSA during its fastest membership growth period, making FDSA the largest Deputy Sheriffs Association in the United States. He has served as board chair of the Florida Sheriffs Association and is currently an officer. Sheriff Staly is past board chair of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. He previously served as board chair of the Florida Commission on Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation where he served a 6-year appointment. In 2023, Sheriff Staly was appointed by the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture to the Florida Private Investigation, Recovery and Security Advisory Council as the law enforcement representative member. Sheriff Staly serves as chairman of the Flagler County Public Safety Coordinating Council.

Sheriff Staly has been awarded lifetime memberships in the National Sheriffs' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Southern Police Institute Alumni Association, Florida Sheriffs Association, FBI National Academy Associates, and the Florida Police Chiefs Association. He is also a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association (NRA).

Sheriff Staly is an active member in the local community. He is on the Board of Directors for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Volusia/Flagler Counties. He is Past President of the Rotary Club of Flagler County and of Crimestoppers of Northeast Florida. He is also a member of the Volusia-Flagler Police Chiefs Association, the B.P.O.E. Elks of Palm Coast, Bunnell Lodge No. 200 F&AM, and the Flagler County Gun and Archery Club.

Sheriff Staly and his wife, Debbie, are members of Flagler Beach United Methodist Church and live in Bunnell. Sheriff Staly has two grown daughters, Lauren and Diana, and three grandchildren, Aiden, Lexi, and Adalynn.

Law Enforcement Career

During Sheriff Staly's more than 45-year career of public safety service, he has received numerous awards, commendations, and medals. While serving the Orange County Sheriff's Office, he received the Medal of Valor, Purple Heart Medal, and Florida Governor's Medal of Heroism after being shot three times while saving the life of a deputy sheriff. In 2015, he was awarded the President's Lifetime Achievement Award from President Obama. In 2019, Sheriff Staly was selected as one of five finalists for the NRA's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award.

Sheriff Staly began his law enforcement career in 1975 as a police officer in the City of Oviedo, Florida and later in the City of Altamonte Springs, Florida. In 1977, Sheriff Staly joined the Orange County Sheriff's Office as a Deputy Sheriff. Through the next 23 years, he was promoted through the ranks — ultimately serving as Undersheriff, or second-in-command, of the 4th largest law enforcement agency in Florida and the 13th largest Sheriff's Office in the nation. As Orange County Undersheriff, he commanded 2,000 employees and managed a \$120m budget. Sheriff Staly retired from the public sector in 2001, but remained a sworn reserve Deputy Sheriff with the Seminole County Sheriff's Office.

After a brief retirement, Sheriff Staly worked in the private security industry as a Senior Vice President for an international developer where he was responsible for security operations in five states and the Bahamas. He moved to Flagler County in 2005 and started his own security business based in Palm Coast, Florida in 2008. After growing the company to 128 employees with an annual revenue of \$3.5 million dollars, he and his wife sold the company to a national security firm and he looked to return to public service.

In 2013, he joined the Flagler County Sheriff's Office where he served as Undersheriff for two years. Sheriff Staly was asked by the community to run for Sheriff in 2015. In 2016, he was elected as the 18th Sheriff of Flagler County, overwhelmingly re-elected in 2020, and re-elected unopposed in 2024.

Accomplishments

Under Sheriff Staly's leadership, Flagler County has experienced a 50% crime reduction since 2017. An innovative program of deputies monitoring juveniles on probation ensures a 96% compliance rate preventing and reducing juvenile crime. 92% of residents of Palm Coast report feeling safe in their neighborhood in biennial surveys commissioned by the city. 86% of inmates who graduate from the FCSO's SMART program have not returned to jail.

The Flagler County Sheriff's Office has become a 5-Diamond Accredited Agency holding five different national and statewide accreditations from the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFLEA), Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC), National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), National Institute of Ethics, and the Florida Telecommunications Accreditation Commission representing consistent adherence to best practices.

The Flagler County Sheriff's Office has been recognized with a series of prestigious national, statewide, and regional awards for technology, victim's services, traffic safety, its inmate detention facility, K-9 Unit, and best places to work. For example, the National Sheriff's Association selected FCSO as the winner for their 2024 Crime Victim Services Award and in 2025, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office's Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility was chosen by the National Institute for Jail Operations to receive the 2025 Detention Facility Innovation Award. An independent panel of experts with the Daytona News-Journal has twice named the Flagler County Sheriff's Office one The Ten Best Places To Work in Flagler and Volusia Counties.

Several members of the FCSO team have been singled out as the best statewide and nationally in their specific roles at the Sheriff's Office with awards from the Florida Sheriffs Association and the National Sheriffs' Association. For example, Communications Specialist Megan Burton was selected as the Florida Sheriffs Association 2024 Dispatcher of the Year. In addition, their professional peers across America and Florida have asked multiple members of the FCSO to lead their profession. For example, Real Time Crime Center Supervisor Nikki North was elected President of National Real Time Crime Center Association.

Community support is extraordinarily strong. In a county of 130,000 residents, 132,000 follow the FCSO's Facebook page demonstrating a high level of citizen engagement. Thousands of citizens call, email, and post to express their gratitude and dozens of small businesses and families regularly bring by meals to share their appreciation with the FCSO team.

Employees of the Flagler County Sheriff's Office have donated tens of thousands of dollars to the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranches. Sheriff Rick Staly donated \$100,000 in leftover campaign funds to the Flagler Sheriff's Employees Assistance Trust which is a non-profit organization to help seriously injured deputies and their families and the families of deputies who are killed in the line of duty.

The FCSO's Domestic Violence Initiative started by Sheriff Staly has produced a 15% decrease over six years in total domestic violence offenses from 570 in 2017 to 486 in 2022 despite adding over 30,000 new residents. Reports of domestic violence initially rose after this initiative began due to greater victim awareness, community outreach and engagement, and victim trust, confidence, and support. Over time, the new system has proven successful. In terms of real lives saved, and

injuries, trauma, and harm avoided, there were 84 fewer victims from 2017 to 2021 and 95 fewer victims from 2021 to 2022. Along with its other services and support for victims of crime, this model program achieved nationwide recognition in 2024 by the National Sheriffs' Association with its Crime Victims Services Award.

\$1,502,513.92 in federal, state, and local grant funds were obtained by the Flagler County Sheriff's Office in FY 2024. The Flagler County Sheriff's Office saved taxpayers over \$1.1 Million in inmate health care costs. Trained volunteers in the national award-winning Citizen Observer Patrol worked 29,258 volunteer hours saving taxpayers over \$1.4 million in 2024.