Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police
MICHIGAN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Onsite Final Report
Rockford Department of Public Safety
June 16, 2017

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B. Dates of the On-Site Assessment:

Monday, June 5, 2017 – Tuesday, June 6, 2017

C. Assessment Team:

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D. Community and Agency Profile:

1. Community Profile

Rockford, Michigan is a city in Kent County that began as a logging town in 1842. The logging town was originally named Laphamville, but changed its name to Rockford in 1865 when it became a village. In 1935, Rockford became a home rule city with its own charter, city council, and manager. Today, the City of Rockford is about four square miles and sits on either side of the Rogue River, just 15 miles north of Grand Rapids. Rockford is a vibrant community, thanks to an involved citizen base, an engaged business community and a focused city organization. The Rogue River is Rockford’s most prominent natural feature, and is marked by the picturesque dam, located in the center of town. Residents and visitors never lack entertainment, as festivals, events, and parades
occur almost every season. The area is served by the Rockford Public School system, which offers a first-class education to area students. The 2010 census included the following statistics: the population of Rockford is 5,719; however, the school system services over 8,000 students. As of 2010, the city population density is 1,765.1 inhabitants per square mile, with 2,302 housing units. The racial makeup of the city is reportedly 95.0% White, 3.7 % Hispanic, and 1.2% Asian in 2010.

The reported median income for a household in the city is $53,113, and the median income for a family is $71,700. The per capita income for the city is $28,632. About 10.5% of families and 11.7% of the population are below the poverty line, including 18.5% of those under the age of 18 and 7.2% of those age 65 or over.

The City of Rockford operates under the council/manager form of government, a system that combines the policy leadership of elected officials in the form of a city council, with the managerial expertise of an appointed city manager. The council is the legislative body that represents the community and is empowered by the city charter to formulate citywide policy. The city council is comprised of five members, elected by the community at-large. The council in turn elects the mayor from among its members. The city manager, appointed by the council, is responsible for administration of city affairs, day-to-day operations, and implementation of council policies. The Rockford City Council is currently working through the process of hiring a new city manager.

Rockford has been described as a big city in a small package because the governmental entity offers all the city services one would expect in larger municipalities. A recent millage increase was approved by the council for the preservation of the operational budget and to fund several future infrastructure projects.

2. **Agency Profile**

A law enforcement presence in Rockford was first seen in 1848 when four constables were appointed to keep the peace. The spring of 1935 brought about change in the Village of Rockford when voters approved a proposal to make the village a Home Rule City. On May 17, 1937, Harley D. Peck made the transition from marshal to the first chief of police for the City of Rockford. He served as the police chief for one month. Following Peck’s resignation, Lyle Ford was hired as chief of police and served from 1937 to 1967. At the time of his retirement, he was the longest serving police chief in the United States.

Five different police chiefs served the City of Rockford between the years of 1967 and 1990. John Porter, who began his career with the City of Rockford as a police officer in 1979, was promoted to chief of police in 1990. John Porter served as chief of police until 2003. In 2003, Dave Jones was hired as chief of police and is currently the chief of public safety and the interim city manager.

In 2012, the police and fire departments were combined. Personnel from each department were cross-trained to perform police and fire duties. The Rockford Department of Public Safety is dedicated to a community policing philosophy based on crime prevention through education and community partnerships. The department
maintains several neighborhood watch groups, organizes block parties and community outreach events, provides a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) curriculum to 5th, 7th, and 8th graders in the Rockford Public School District, and offers fire prevention programs in conjunction with National Fire Prevention Week.

3. CEO Biography

The Chief of Public Safety is Dave Jones and he is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). He previously served in the Kent County Sheriff Department before being appointed the Rockford Chief of Police in 2003. During Chief Jones’ career with Kent County, he worked as a patrol officer and detective. He was also the commander of the Kent Area Narcotics Team (KANET) and also held positions as a crisis negotiator, property room supervisor and defensive tactics Instructor.

Chief Jones was instrumental in the reorganization of the City of Rockford police and fire services into a single public safety department. The Rockford public safety model is highlighted in the Michigan State University Program on Police Consolidation used by cities across the country as a reference on public safety consolidation. Chief Jones firmly believes in community policing programs and has brought several outreach programs to the City of Rockford since his arrival. Chief Jones studied Criminal Justice at Grand Rapids Community College and Kalamazoo Valley Community College. He is also a graduate of the Michigan State University Leadership Development Program.

In February of 2016, Chief Jones was asked to be the interim city manager. He currently manages oversight of the city in addition to the public safety department. Appointed by the city council to serve as the city’s chief administrative officer, the city manager is responsible for handling day-to-day oversight of city operations. The city manager provides administrative direction for all city departments in accordance with the goals and policies established by the city council. Chief Jones also serves on the Board of Directors for the Grand Rapids Community College Police Academy, the Kent Career Technical Center Criminal Justice Department, Kent County 911 Dispatch Authority, the Kent EMS Consortium and the North Kent Sewer Authority.

4. Future Issues

The agency cites population growth as the chief issue or challenge facing the department. The surrounding area looks to the City of Rockford as the social and recreational hub for the area. The school district serves, not only the City of Rockford, but the surrounding townships; all have seen an increase in population. The city has seen an increase in visitors, which has strained the need for more police services. Staffing of public safety may need to grow with the increasing demands of services to residents and visitors.

The retention of quality part-time public safety personnel has also been a challenge. Turnover continues for part-time staff, and the chief is determined to maintain high standards by hiring only the best candidates. Elimination of part-time staff and replacing
part-time staff with full-time public safety officers may need consideration as calls for service increase.

The CEO has a comprehensive succession plan. Newly promoted supervisory staff have attended leadership development seminars and training sessions in anticipation of the CEO’s eventual retirement. The CEO is dedicated to maintaining best practices and to keeping up with the rapidly changing issues facing policing in America.

E. **Public Information Activities:**

Public notice and input are cornerstones of democracy and MLEAC accreditation. This section reports on the community’s opportunity to comment on their law enforcement agency and to bring matters to the attention of the commission that otherwise may be overlooked.

1. **Telephone Contacts**

The public telephone line was active on Tuesday, June 6, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The telephone line was tested, found to be functional, and four calls were received.

Rich Geldhof (616) 437-7774

Rich Geldhof is the owner of Rogue River Tavern in Rockford. He stated he is very pleased with the chief and the police department. He said the department improved greatly when Chief Jones was hired 13 years ago. He said the department responds to his establishment on occasion, usually for a patron that has been cut off for service of alcohol and is refusing to leave. The responding officers are professional and use great restraint dealing with problem people.

He said officer response time is immediate when needed, and they do occasional “walk-throughs” at night. He recalls a few years back when someone stole a couple of his patrons’ leather coats. Officers responded to the complaint, watched video, and conducted follow-up until they located the suspect and recovered the property. He was very pleased such a small complaint was handled with such interest and detail.

Mr. Geldhof stated he fully supports the agency’s accreditation effort.

Judge Jeff O’Hara (616) 632-7831

Judge O’Hara stated that the Rockford Department of Public Safety is a top-notch agency. He has the pleasure of having contact with officers both in the court and in the community, as he is a Rockford resident.

Judge O’Hara has known Chief Jones since he was a deputy with the Kent County Sheriff Department. He is very happy with the way the chief handles his police department, and called him “second to none.”
Judge O’Hara said that he frequently sees the officers giving back to the community with events, such as “shop with a cop” near Christmas, and is proud that Rockford is one of a very few communities that still supports the DARE program for the elementary school kids.

Judge O’Hara fully supports the agency’s effort to become state accredited.

Tom Rich (616) 485-4200

Tom Rich identified himself as a local business owner. He praised the agency’s DARE program and its partnership with the public school system and the local business community. He described officers visiting each business in the community and was complimentary about the community orientated approach the police take with the residents and businesses. He highlighted the agency-sponsored National Night Out event, where the department partners with businesses to hold a large downtown event in the summer.

He also stated that the officers go out of their way to help people rather than spend all their time conducting enforcement activities. He said the agency is doing a fantastic job.

Tracy Rich (616) 443-9041

Tracy Rich stated the department is always fair. She further stated that the agency is on top of responding to residents’ needs. She stated the officers work very hard and are an essential part of the community. She stated the agency has great response times; she even used an officer’s personal cellular contact information and described a time where she had a text conversation with an off-duty officer who helped her with an issue.

2. Correspondence

The assessors received no copies of correspondence regarding the reaccreditation process.

3. Media Interest

There were no inquiries from the media to assessors regarding the on-site.

4. Community Outreach Contacts

The assessment team contacted several members of the community during the on-site.

Bryant Fravel - KMG Prestige Property Management (616) 866-2335

Bryant Fravel is the manager of two apartment complexes in Rockford. The complexes are multi-family and include elderly tenants as well as federally-subsidized occupants. In total, there are approximately 500 tenants. The location of the complexes are 9101 Courtland and 560 Hillview Place.
Calls for police service include medical emergencies, drugs, domestic violence, as well as other minor complaints. Bryan stated his relationship with the Rockford Department of Public Safety is very strong, and the police respond quickly and professionally. He said the officers are great with kids and are often seen giving out police badge stickers. They participate in the multi-family housing program, which educates his staff on dealing with problem tenants. The agency also maintains a neighborhood watch in the complexes.

The Rockford Department of Public Safety conducts a monthly fire safety program, and also opens the fire hydrants in the summer for the kids to play. The officers are seen frequently driving through the complexes, and also do bike and foot patrols. He is very pleased with the department.

Mr. Fravel fully supports the agency’s effort to become state accredited.

City Council Member Terry Konkle

Terry Konkle spoke to the assessors at city hall while files were being reviewed and the on-site was being conducted. He stated that the department’s personnel were competent, organized, and quick to respond to the community’s needs and issues. The officers are always visible and available to the community. The agency is highly involved with the community by conducting community events, parades, and the DARE program with the schools.

Dr. Michael Shibler – Superintendent of Rockford Public Schools (616) 292-1940

Dr. Shibler stated he has been the superintendent of the public schools for 28 years. He stated that the school district and police have an outstanding relationship, with individual police officers and Chief Jones. The agency has been supportive in the past with students who have demonstrated poor decision-making. He cited an incident of a bomb threat that was investigated in conjunction with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which resulted in formal criminal charges. The DARE program is extremely valuable, as it is only one of a few remaining programs in the state. Dr. Shibler is supportive of the agency’s commitment to continue the program. He feels the agency is committed to the protection of young people, and he has the highest respect for the department and the officers.

Linda Southwick – Executive Director Rockford Chamber of Commerce (616) 866-2000

Linda Southwick described the relationship between the chamber and the police as awesome. The police help with all of the chamber’s events, including the Start of Summer Celebration, which is a large festival and carnival marking the beginning of the summer season in Rockford. The officers have been very successful in keeping the peace during events, and officers utilize foot and bike patrols during festivals. The chamber also sponsors a harvest festival, Santa parade, and carriage rides, and the police are always available to assist. She described the relationship as a true partnership. The police are very responsive to the needs of the area merchants.
The agency has provided active shooter training to the businesses and have trained personnel on shoplifting and crime prevention techniques. The police attend the chamber’s quarterly meetings and provide additional training when necessary. She also described a mandatory safety meeting that the police provide for parade participants and volunteers.

Retired Mayor Jerry Coon (616) 204-3858

Mayor Jerry Coon stated he was a re-elected official for several terms. He stated the police serve the community well, and the officers are well trained. The police chief is an experienced administrator, and he described the chief as mentoring the staff for future leadership. The former mayor stated that the public safety concept is working and that it saved the city $250,000 in operational costs. Overall, his comments were very complimentary and stated the department has good leadership and that the staff is great.

5. Agency Ride-along

On Monday evening, Assessor Jeff Baker rode along with Officer Ian Graham. Officer Graham went to several key locations in the city, including the downtown, city borders, prominent neighborhoods, businesses, residential developments and several housing complexes.

Officer Graham discussed being intimately involved with the neighborhood watch program and his multi-family housing program. He discussed patrol response, shift schedules, complaint inception and follow-up, recent millage changes, and other issues surrounding the agency. Officer Graham further discussed his equipment on board and his training, as well as, the training of his peers. It is apparent that Officer Graham is well trained as a public safety officer and is very attached to his community. He was knowledgeable in the working of the police department, and spoke highly of the agency, his coworkers and command.

While traversing the neighborhoods, many people where outside walking, biking or doing yard work. Everyone seemed very pleased to see the patrol car, which appeared to be a normal occurrence. The community appears to strongly support their police agency.

6. Community Involvement

The Rockford Department of Public Safety sponsors at least one community event each month. Rockford Youth Night, Rockford Area Kids Triathlon, National Night Out, and Shop with a Cop are just a few of the events highlighted by community members and police staff.

The agency also participates in the Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce Community Expo at Rockford High School. A booth displaying the department’s main functions and equipment is manned by public safety officers. The officers provide stickers for children and interact with the youth and the display, which also includes a marked police vehicle.
Civilian Response to Active Shooter Training is provided to the Chamber of Commerce Merchants Meeting and local bank employees. The department has scheduled additional training in 2017 for the local athletic club, the Rockford Public Library, and Community West Credit Union.

The Rockford Department of Public Safety also has active business watch and neighborhood watch programs. Training is provided to merchants regarding police procedure and criminal prosecution, as well as crime prevention techniques. The City of Rockford has eleven active neighborhood watch programs. Block captains have direct access to police officers, so concerns can be addressed and residents’ questions answered.

F. Essential Services:

Chapter 1 – The Administrative Function:

Direction of Personnel

All written directives require the approval and signature of the Chief of Public Safety, and, in the absence of the chief, the lieutenant may temporarily issue policy and procedures in response to emergencies or legal mandates.

Fiscal Control

The agency has one cash account used for confidential informants and controlled buys for special investigations. The account is properly maintained with limited access. Quarterly reviews of the account were conducted. The fund was not used during the assessment period.

Internal Affairs

The Chief of Public Safety is responsible for the internal investigation function of the agency. Cases are assigned to superiors, who conduct special investigations and report directly to the CEO. The agency accepts and investigates all complaints received, including anonymous complaints. The CEO makes final determinations of all internal complaint investigations. A specific process is followed for receipt, closure and notification of complaint investigations to the employees and to the complainants. All internal investigation files are properly secured with limited access to only the lieutenant.

During the assessment period, four internal investigations were conducted; three were sustained. Two cases were closed with reprimands, and one case was closed with a 40-hour suspension. With only a limited number of complaints, the annual analysis of internal investigations lacked a structured process for dissecting and identifying patterns or trends. The agency did not identify a need to change policy and did not identify any training needs. Equipment upgrades were not addressed.
Disciplinary Procedures

The agency has an excellent written system, which details the rules, regulations and expectations for employee conduct. The agency is well-disciplined and has procedures to apply training and counseling in lieu of punitive employee discipline. The agency has an appropriate appeal and grievance process in place with established timelines. There were no grievances filed during the assessment period.

Organization

All sworn personnel sign and give assurance of fidelity by taking an oath of office administered by the CEO. The oath includes a statement of support for the United States Constitution and Constitution of the State of Michigan. All agency personnel acknowledge a code of ethics and receive ethics training. During the on-site, it was determined that the senior volunteers had not received ethics training. Therefore, ethics training of volunteers was immediately scheduled for July 2017.

The police personnel have structured unity of command. The Chief of Public Safety, as the Chief Executive Officer, is assisted by one lieutenant and one sergeant. Along with the Chief of Public Safety, the lieutenant and sergeant are salaried at will employees, who supervise seven full-time public safety officers and three part-time police officers. The agency has one full-time dispatcher, who works days and only handles non-emergency calls for service. All 911 calls are received and processed at the Kent County Sheriff’s Department. The agency has access to supervisory personnel on a 24-hour basis. In the absence of the Chief of Public Safety, the lieutenant assumes command.

Bias-based policing is strictly prohibited by the agency. There is a clear definition for bias-based policing, including but not limited to, inappropriate decision-making based on race, ethnic background, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and economic status. Training is also conducted on diversity, discrimination, bias-based profiling, and related legal aspects of bias-based policing.

The agency also prohibits unlawful workplace harassment, including sexual harassment. The written directive outlines a proper reporting mechanism in the chain of command, including an alternate reporting process for any conflict of interest. The written directive was amended during the on-site to include a reporting process for incidents involving the CEO. There were no reported incidents of workplace harassment during the assessment period.

Agency Equipment and Property

Officers are required to maintain all law enforcement-related equipment in a state of operational readiness. The wearing of body armor is mandatory for all sworn personnel, and there are additional requirements to wear body armor while engaged in pre-planned and high-risk operations. All sworn personnel are responsible for the maintenance of agency-issued equipment.
Public Information

The Chief of Public Safety is the designated point of contact for media relations, and news releases are normally issued by the Chief of Public Safety; however, responses to routine media news stories or other urgent requests may be handled by the on-duty supervisor. The agency has a detailed process for the issuance of press releases, and the agency effectively demonstrated control of the media at an incident by placing a picture of an incident scene as proof of compliance.

Agency Records and Computers

The agency has a detailed written directive describing the field reporting system, follow-up investigations, and the approval of reports by supervision. The department controls access to agency records electronically with records management passwords. Any hard copies of reports are stored in a file cabinet where only the dispatcher and officers have access. Juvenile records are kept separate, and there are extra security measures for non-public records. The agency receives very few freedom of information requests, which are typically handled by the dispatcher, sergeant or lieutenant. The agency abides by the state retention and disposal requirements in accordance with Michigan Statute and Records Management.

The agency has procedures to protect its central records. The data is stored and backed up electronically and is password-protected. Annual security audits and password audits were performed during the assessment period. There were no breaches in security during the assessment period.

Agency Training

The agency training records are current and are being maintained in accordance with applicable retention schedules. Training course content is outlined, and lesson plans are utilized. In-house instructors are properly trained and experienced. New sworn personnel are required to complete a four-week field training program. Field training officers are properly selected and trained through a documented process. The field training program is properly supervised by the sergeant. Newly promoted personnel receive supervisory and leadership training consistent with new responsibilities and tasks. The agency has a documented remedial training policy. No training needs were identified during the assessment period, and no remedial training was conducted with personnel.

The written directive for selection of field training officers did not outline a process for selection of potential field training officers, a position within the agency to oversee the field training program, nor did the directive include a list of required reports, evaluations, and responsibilities. This was corrected on site with a revision of policy.

Required annual training was identified, and proof of compliance was documented. Annual training included, firearms, hazmat, and use of force, blood borne pathogens, Taser, ethics, and active shooter.
Authorization and Use of Agency Weapons and Ammunition

The CEO is the authorizing authority for weapons and ammunition requirements, including specialized weapons and knives. The agency uses certified/qualified staff for armorer inspections, repair and replacement. Records of weapons are properly maintained with written guidelines for storage.

Chapter 2 – The Personnel Function:

Personnel Benefits and Responsibilities

The agency has a written directive outlining an employee assistance program, line-of-duty injury and death circumstance policy, and an employee collision and review process. The agency also has a comprehensive exposure control and reporting policy. Extra employment is prohibited by policy.

Performance Evaluations

All agency personnel receive documented annual performance evaluations. The performance evaluation system has a well-defined purpose statement with established and defined criteria, scored on a rating scale. The system also includes directives to raters regarding evaluation responsibilities and procedures on how to use the required forms. Training for evaluators is documented, and the evaluations are maintained according to the department’s retention schedule. The agency has an established early warning system. The written directive for performance did not contain a process for contested evaluations, which was corrected on site with a change in policy. No employees were identified as needing assistance during the assessment period.

Promotion of Sworn Personnel

Promotions are made at the sole discretion of the Chief of Public Safety. During the application process, the CEO reviews performance evaluations, training, and other requisite qualifications for promotions when deciding on advancement of personnel.

For a special assignment, interested parties write a letter of interest, which is submitted to the CEO. The CEO considers performance evaluations and training when making any special assignment. Special assignments include, but are not limited to, the DARE Officer and Field Training Officers. By policy, all assignments are made as deemed necessary by the Chief of Public Safety.

Recruitment of Sworn Personnel

The recruitment plan contains a clear statement that the agency is committed to equal opportunity. The city does not have a formal human resources department; however, human resource services are conducted by city hall personnel and the Chief of Public Safety. The only stated goal and objective for the recruitment plan is to have a work force that is representative of the diversity of the community. The department is primarily
Caucasian, with twelve white males and one white female. Recruitment activities include internship ride-alongs and outreach to community service organizations, schools, and other media outlets. The plan was recently reviewed by the CEO with no recommendations for change.

**Selection of Personnel**

The agency has a complete written process for the selection of new full-time personnel, which includes a thorough background investigation, as well as a medical and psychological exam.

**Reserve Officers and Civilian Volunteers**

The agency does not have a reserve program; however, they have an active senior volunteer program, which handles in-home visits of shut-in residents, vacation home checks, foot patrol and motor patrol, issuance of handicap parking violations, reporting of code violations, and found bicycle reports. The program is very active and successful.

**Chapter 3 – The Operations Function:**

**Arrest, Search and Seizure**

The Rockford Department of Public Safety is a full service agency with arrest powers. The agency and its policies follow the U.S. Constitution in relation to arrest, search and seizure. In particular, the agency recognizes the foundation set forth in the Fourth Amendment.

Agency policy outlines the warrantless search exceptions and the need for a court-authorized search warrant, when applicable. However, the policy regarding arrest was lacking in detail regarding the handling of foreign nationals and those with limited English proficiency. The deficiency was corrected during the onsite.

The agency only conducts strip searches when an arrestee is lodged and there is reasonable cause to believe the suspect is concealing a weapon, controlled substance or evidence of a crime. The person conducting the strip search does so under authorization of the Chief of Public Safety or designee. The strip search must be conducted by person of same sex. Body cavity searches are conducted by a licensed physician (or nurse, under the direction of and in the absence of the doctor), with a search warrant.

The agency takes in-custody arrests directly to the jail, where they are processed by Kent County Jail Intake officers. Breathalyzer for OWI arrests are also conducted at the county jail for added safety of these investigations.
Interview and Interrogation

The Rockford Department of Public Safety has established procedures for compliance with contemporary criminal procedural requirements related to interviews, investigative detention interviews, and interrogations. The agency has an interview room located on the premises; however, the room does not have recording capability. The agency’s written directive indicates that an officer should videotape substantive interviews, unless: the video would compromise the investigation, the prosecutor advises against the recording, or videotape equipment is unavailable or inoperable. The directive also indicates that, when investigating a homicide, police-involved shooting, or cases where it is alleged police used excessive force, interviews will be videotaped. Since recording equipment is not available on site, substantive interviews are not recorded. During the on-site, the policy was changed to reflect the availability of the recording equipment at the Kent County Sheriff’s Department for use when substantive interviews are required.

Use of Force

Three use-of-force reports were completed during the assessment period. The department conducts a thorough internal affairs investigation for each use-of-force incident. All three incidents involved empty hand tactics, and the officers were exonerated in the final findings. If an officer were to be involved in an incident which resulted in serious injury or death, or a violation of the law or internal policy of the department occurred, the chief would temporarily suspend the officer from active duty with pay pending the investigation or review of the event.

The file regarding deadly force training lacked proof and only included a Taser training report; however, this was remedied while onsite with additional documentation of firearms training.

Communications

The Rockford Department of Public Safety utilizes the Kent County Sheriff Department Communications Center for all emergency calls for service and all after-hour calls for service. The onsite team toured the facility and spoke with public safety telecommunicators regarding dispatch policy. All recordings are kept in storage for one year unless requested by the department for longer retention.

The Kent County Sheriff Communications Center has several backup generators onsite and a battery backup system that runs for 3 ½ hours, if necessary. If catastrophic issues were present, the dispatch backup would be Grand Rapids Police Department Communications Center.

Each dispatch station is set up identical, allowing for dispatchers to move station to station seamlessly. All emergency medical dispatch is being conducted by certified radio operators from contract ambulance companies.
Field Activities

There were no traffic pursuits or foot pursuits during the assessment period. The Rockford Department of Public Safety policy allows for both types of pursuits at the discretion of the officer.

The department employs stop sticks as a method to terminate vehicle pursuits. Intentional ramming and roadblocks are allowed with prior approval of the on-duty supervisor. Pitting is not allowed.

The agency trains its officers on dealing with mentally ill persons and most recently had updated training during the assessment period.

The agency has video recording equipment in all of their police vehicles. The files are manually downloaded weekly by the lieutenant to a separate hard drive located in his locked, protected office. There is no back-up of this computer, and all files would be lost if this piece of equipment were to be damaged.

Rockford Department of Public Safety has in-car computers available in each patrol vehicle, accessible to each patrol officer.

The agency has a foot pursuit policy that was created during the assessment period. The written directive has a section that states that the reinstatement of a previously terminated foot pursuit is prohibited. This may have been written to intend for those terminated by a supervisor, but appears to limit officers from terminating a foot pursuit due to losing sight of a suspect, and then re-engaging if re-located.

Traffic Safety and Enforcement

Rockford Department of Public Safety has applicable policies in place regarding traffic violation enforcement, enforcement options, offenders, and traffic direction and control. The directive establishes procedures to conduct motor vehicle stops, including high-risk stops. The enforcement options include warnings, citations, and arrest when appropriate.

Homeland Security/Critical Incidents

The agency has a critical incident system in place, which includes command, operations, planning, logistics and fiscal responsibility. No critical incidents took place during the assessment period that required activation of the Incident Command System.

Chapter 4 – The Investigative Function:

Criminal Investigation

Rockford Department of Public Safety officers follow up on their own investigations. There are no detectives; therefore, officers must take the complaint from inception to prosecution. There are no solvability factors or case screening, as each case is followed
up on if there is any ability to do so. No case is closed with open leads. Open cases do not sit idle, as officers are required to follow up on the case as soon as possible, and often will come in the following day on overtime to complete the investigation.

A policy is in place for eyewitness identification. A copy of a photo lineup was placed in the file, which was created by Kent County due to access to the booking photos.

**Crime Scene Processing**

There are no accident investigators or evidence technicians at the department. Officers use basic training to process police scenes. The Rockford Department of Public Safety has an agreement with Kent County Sheriff’s Department if the need arises for an evidence technician or accident reconstructionist. If the case requires extensive investigation or other resources, the agency is assisted by Kent County Sheriff's Department, but command remains with the agency.

**Storage of Evidence and Property**

Appropriate policy is in place for property processing and evidence collection. The agency has a small, well-organized property room. Only the lieutenant, sergeant and property custodian have access to the room. The door is key-locked with video in the hallway outside the door, recording access. There are six two-way lockers for officers to use. Each officer has his or her own locker with a padlock that only that officer has access to. Larger items are placed in larger lockers in the lieutenant’s office, which have locks left open and are locked once property is placed inside. Only the property custodian has access to these keys. Note, there are seven officers at the Rockford Department of Public Safety that need access to the lockers, and only six lockers are available for assignment. When asked, the sergeant indicated the seventh officer is the DARE officer, and he needs very little property access. When needed, the DARE officer will put property into the larger lockers in the lieutenant’s office.

Evidence that needs lab submission is sent to the Michigan State Police lab in Grand Rapids. Appropriate policy for transmission and chain of custody is in place.

All time-sensitive inspections, audits and inventories were conducted; no irregularities were identified. There was no change in the property custodian during the assessment period.

**Juvenile Matters**

The agency has established policies regarding juvenile status offenses, including dealing with runaway cases, unidentified adults and children, and the safe delivery of newborns. There were no incidents where the agency needed to use Amber Alerts or the Law Enforcement Information Network. There were two cases of missing adults; both adults were located in a relatively short period of time. The agency takes very few runaway reports.
Special Investigations and Operations

The agency has a general investigations policy and a separate special investigations policy. The written directives are in compliance with standards; however, the agency added a deconfliction procedure during the on-site assessment. The Rockford Department of Public Safety utilizes area concept teams for conducting decoy, raid and undercover operations.

Chapter 5 – The Arrestee/Detainee/Prisoner Handling Function:

Transporting of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The Rockford Department of Public Safety has established procedures for the transportation of arrested subjects, to include searching vehicles prior to the beginning of each shift, prior to and following any transport, and the securing of arrested subjects in restraints during transport.

The agency does not engage in the processing and holding of arrestees, detainees, and prisoners. The agency utilizes the Kent County Sheriff’s Department for the processing of arrests and detainees.

G. Applied Discretion Compliance Discussion:

This section provides specific information on those standards found to be in compliance after on-site adjustments were made.

During this on-site, the agency had six standards in applied discretion.

Standard 1.5. Unlawful Workplace Harassment

ISSUE: Written directive did not indicate a reporting mechanism if the actor is the chief executive.

AGENCY ACTION: The written directive was amended to include reporting of misconduct to the city manager when the actor is the chief executive.

Standard 1.9.3 Field Training

ISSUE: Written directive did not indicate process for selection of potential field training officers, a position within the agency to oversee the program, or a listing of required reports, evaluations, and responsibilities.

AGENCY ACTION: The written directive was changed to include a letter of interest to be submitted to the CEO for potential field training officers and the appointment of the sergeant to oversee the field training program; and, a list of required documents, reports and responsibilities was also added.
Standard 2.2.1 Evaluation System

ISSUE: Written directive did not indicate process for contested evaluations.

AGENCY ACTION: The policy was changed during the onsite to include a process for the employees to follow when contesting evaluations, which included an appeal process to the next command officer in chain of command, including the city manager, who would make any final appeal decision.

Standard 3.1.3 Adult Arrests

ISSUE: Written directive did not indicate a process or procedure for the handling of foreign nationals, mandatory consulate contact, or those with limited English proficiency.

AGENCY ACTION: The policy was changed during the onsite to reflect the mandatory requirement to notify consulates of those countries on the mandatory notification list, and the language was added that an interpreter could be requested from the Kent County Sheriff Office.

Standard 3.2.1 Interview and interrogation

ISSUE: Written directive indicated that video recording of interviews should occur on homicides, police-involved shootings, or cases where excessive force is used. The agency does not have a video-recording device on premises, and policy was silent on what an officer should do.

AGENCY ACTION: The policy was changed during the onsite to reflect the ability to utilize Kent County Sheriff’s Department recording equipment when needed.

Standard 4.5.1 Special Investigations

ISSUE: Written directive did not include deconfliction procedures.

AGENCY ACTION: The policy was changed to include new deconfliction procedures to comply with the standard.

H. Waivers of Standards:

This section provides specific information on those standards which qualified for waivers. Waivers are available to agencies when it is impossible to comply with a specific standard. A request to waive standard compliance must be made to the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Accreditation Program Director in writing, on official agency letterhead, signed by the CEO. The following standards were granted non-applicable waivers:

Standard 1.9.8 Tactical Team Training
Standard 2.6.1 Reserve/Auxiliary Officers Program
Standard 4.3.4(d) Security
Chapter 5.2 Processing of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners
Chapter 5.3 Holding of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

I. Standards Noncompliance Discussion:
The agency had no standards in noncompliance.

J. Future Performance / Review Issues:
Future reviews and analyses should be more comprehensive during the next assessment period. An analysis should have a structured process for dissecting events into basic parts to identify any patterns or trends. An analysis should also reveal patterns or trends that could be predictive or could indicate program effectiveness, identify training needs, equipment upgrades or policy modifications. Meaningful reviews should also include whether policy, training, equipment, or disciplinary issues need to be addressed.

Future recruitment plans should include more than one goal and objective, should list activities for achievement of the listed goals and objectives, and outline attempts to recruit, hire and promote the underrepresented.

Consider revision of policy definition of field interviews. The agency included a statement in policy that, if a person reasonably believes they are not free to leave the presence of the officer, a stop has occurred. This may have Miranda implications.

Consider revision of the written directive regarding guidelines for organized crime, narcotics and vice crime investigations to include specific guidelines for these specific special investigations.

Consider a system to back up mobile video recordings and electronic files.

K. Summary and Recommendation:
A thorough review of the files for compliance was conducted, as well as observations of compliance; and, after interviews were conducted, it was determined that the agency was in compliance with all of the established accreditation standards, with exceptions and waivers noted. Accreditation is recommended.

Daniel J. Mills, Team Leader
Date: June 16, 2017

Reviewed and approved to be scheduled for a hearing before the MLEAC.
Program Director N. Rossow
Date: June 17, 2017.