

# **Professional Standards and Criteria to Hold the Office of Sheriff in the State of Florida**

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The purpose of this study is to examine Florida's need to adopt professional standards and criteria for the office of sheriff, either through legislation or a constitutional amendment. In the last several years, the Florida Legislature has attempted to set forth qualifications for the office of sheriff on several occasions; the most recent attempt was coordinated by a committee of the Florida Sheriffs Association, known as the Sheriff's Qualifications Committee. This committee met, studied the problem, and recommended an amendment to the Constitution in 1989, 1990, and again in 1991.

As the Sheriff's Star points out, the state of Florida is currently very fortunate. The vast majority of Florida sheriffs are well qualified to hold the office, but this research project shows there is no guarantee it will remain so. Therefore, it is incumbent for our lawmakers to enact qualifications to protect our citizens from any future unqualified person holding the office of sheriff in Florida.