

# Gastonia Police Department

Protect, Serve & Enhance the Quality of Life for All



Contact: Donna Lahser, 704-854-6665

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## **Gastonia Police Department Earns CALEA Reccreditation**

Gastonia Police Chief Robert Helton proudly announced today that the Gastonia Police Department has successfully attained reaccreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). The Gastonia Police Department was officially awarded reaccreditation on July 29 at the CALEA's Summer Conference held in Providence, RI.

"I'm proud of the Gastonia Police Department and our community for earning this national reaccreditation," Chief Helton said. "CALEA accreditation is a voluntary process that recognizes the pursuit of professional excellence and, because the local community is involved in actual assessments, GPD's reaccreditation is a positive statement about our community as well as our police department."

CALEA was established as a private, non-profit accrediting authority in 1979 by the four major law enforcement executive associations: International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP); National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE); National Sheriffs' Association (NSA); and Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). CALEA's purpose and mission is two-fold: first, to establish a body of standards designed to increase agency effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of public safety services. Second, it is to establish and administer a series of credentialing programs through which public safety agencies can demonstrate *voluntarily* that they meet an established set of internationally recognized professional standards leading to excellence in management and public safety delivery.

The CALEA accreditation process, itself, is a proven modern management model. Once implemented, CALEA provides an agency's Chief Executive Officer, on a continuing basis, with a blueprint that promotes the efficient use of resources and improves service delivery - regardless of the size, geographic location, or functional responsibilities of the agency. The standards upon which CALEA's programs are based reflect the current mindset and experience of public safety practitioners and researchers and are considered benchmarks for today's public safety agencies.

Agencies are awarded accreditation after participating in a process that involves a commitment of

personnel and respective resources. The process can take up to 36 months for law enforcement agencies seeking CALEA accreditation. During that period, all aspects of the agency's policies, procedures, management, operations, and support services are examined in detail. In addition, each agency conducts a detailed self-assessment and participates in an on-site review by a team of outside CALEA assessors, composed of experienced public safety officers and/or executives. The local community is also notified of the process and given an opportunity to submit their comments and observations.

GPD's initial CALEA accreditation was received in July 2014, and there was a three-year accreditation award cycle. As of April 1, 2017, CALEA has modified its process and changed to a four-year cycle, with annual audits by CALEA staff. Reaccreditation will occur at the end of the four years, following another successful on-site assessment and hearing before the Commission.

Some of the benefits that law enforcement agencies receive as a result of their participation in the CALEA accreditation process include:

- Independent confirmation that policies comply with professionally developed standards;
- Promotion of fair recruitment, selection and promotion processes;
- Reduced exposure to civil law suits and costly settlements;
- Enhanced understanding of agency policies and procedures;
- Greater administrative and operational effectiveness; and
- Greater public confidence in the agency and its personnel.

"Professional excellence, and accreditation, is something many people consider when they choose where to pursue an education or which hospital to visit," Chief Helton said. "Policing is no different. We continually strive to be the best law enforcement agency for the community that we proudly serve."

For more information, you may go online to [CALEA.org](http://CALEA.org), or the local contact is Amanda Neese, 704-869-1990.

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Photo 1 – Capt. Ed Turas, Chief Robert Helton, Problem Analysis & Research Center Director Amanda Neese, and Assistant Chief Travis Brittain represented the GPD at a hearing before the Commission in Rhode Island as part of GPD's process of obtaining the CALEA reaccreditation award.

Photos 2 & 3 – Chief Robert Helton, Problem Analysis & Research Center Director Amanda Neese, Assistant Chief Travis Brittain, and Capt. Ed Turas answer questions in a hearing before the Commission and then shake hands with Commission members as part of GPD's process in obtaining the CALEA reaccreditation.

*(Photos are courtesy of Chief Jeff Ledford, Shelby Police Dept.)*