

VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' INSTITUTE (VSI)

FACT SHEET

HOW TO HANDLE QUESTIONS, PROBLEMS OR COMPLAINTS SPRING 2018 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

1. HOW IS THE ASSOCIATE AND BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN CONDUCTED IN EACH LOCALITY?

Each sheriff authorizes a letter for mailing to citizens and businesses in his/her locality inviting them to become Members of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute.

NO ONE IS EVER CONTACTED BY TELEPHONE! Nor is a solicitation ever conducted without the sheriff's authorization.

Mailings are prepared for all persons on a list developed by our support team and modified to our standards.

Enclosed within the letter mailing is an easy perf-off acceptance slip and a postage-paid reply envelope which may be returned with annual dues of \$20 for individual membership.

When dues are paid, new members will receive a thank you letter, bumper stickers, decals, and a subscription to our quarterly Newsletter.

2. WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP?

There is no age limit; however, the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute does not accept convicted felons as members.

Both men and women are accepted as members, but letters of invitation are only sent to one name per household.

There are no restrictions on residence. Out-of-state citizens are welcome to join, but we are targeting only Virginia addresses. Some individuals maintain dual residences. We hope many people who tour, visit or spend any amount of time in Virginia will join.

3. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PERSON WHO DOES NOT ACCEPT THE MEMBERSHIP INVITATION AND DOES NOT SEND IN ANY DUES?

He/she will not receive any follow-up letters or notices after this membership campaign, and is not contacted or harassed in any way. This keeps membership on an entirely **voluntary** basis.

4. DOES THE CAMPAIGN CREATE A LOT OF WORK IN THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE?

No. All of the work is done by the Institute headquarters and their support services including securing an appropriate list of prospective members. If citizens call the sheriff's office, they usually just want to know that the mailing is legitimate. If they ask for specific information, please feel free to have them call the VSI's office at 804-225-7152

A few people may bring their membership dues to the sheriff's office instead of mailing them to the Institute. The sheriff will have to forward these to the Institute.

5. CAN THE SHERIFF ACCEPT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS FROM PERSONS NOT ON THE MAILING LIST?

Certainly. If a person walks up to you and says he/she wants to become a member, just direct them to our website or have him/her complete an application and send the annual dues of \$20 or more for individual membership, \$40 for businesses, to the Institute. The new member will be promptly enrolled and will begin to receive all benefits shortly thereafter.

6. IF AN INDIVIDUAL OR BUSINESS JOINS THE INSTITUTE THIS YEAR, HOW WILL THE MEMBERSHIP BE RENEWED NEXT YEAR?

Next year the member will receive a request in the mail to renew his/her membership for the coming year. All mechanics of the renewal are handled by the Institute and their support services. The sheriff and his/her staff will not be bothered with the renewal process.

7. ARE ASSOCIATE AND BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP DUES DEDUCTIBLE FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES?

Yes. The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute is considered a non-profit tax-exempt and tax-deductible organization as established by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The IRS determination letter from the IRS is available on the VSI website – www.vasheriffsinstitute.org, as well as the past three VSI 990's, the IRS tax return for non-profit organizations.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS MEMBERSHIP MAILING CONTACT JOHN JONES AT THE VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' INSTITUTE AT (804) 225-7152.