

# VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' INSTITUTE

## FACT SHEET

### HOW TO HANDLE QUESTIONS, PROBLEMS OR COMPLAINTS SPRING 2023 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 (VSI).

**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 \$25 for individual membership.

When dues are paid, new members will receive a thank you letter, bumper stickers, decals and a subscription to the VSI 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 work is done by the VSI office and their support services including securing an appropriate list of prospective members.

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

**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 the VSI website or have him/her complete an application and send the annual dues of \$25 or more for individual membership, \$40 for businesses, to VSI. The new member will be promptly enrolled and will begin to receive all benefits shortly thereafter.

**6. IF AN INDIVIDUAL OR BUSINESS JOINS THE VSI 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 VSI 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. We have a determination letter on file from the IRS.

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