VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' INSTITUTE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Guidebook for Virginia's Sheriffs and Deputies

Updated April 2025

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program recognizes the professional development of Virginia's sheriffs and deputies.

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Program Purpose

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute (VSI), in cooperation with the Virginia Sheriffs' Association (VSA), the Performance Management Group at the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and the National Center for Policing Innovation (NCPI), has developed the VSI Certification Program to promote, recognize and elevate the continued individual professional development of Virginia's sheriffs and deputies.

The VSI Certification Program seeks to instill the ideals of professionalism that come with the wisdom of experience and tested judgment attained and demonstrated through standards of achievement, including education, work experience, training and professional development. Certification through this voluntary program provides recognition of the professional knowledge and commitment to excellence, life-long learning and advancement of public safety as a profession.

Program Partners

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 organization that encourages charitable and educational activities among the sheriffs and deputies within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Virginia Sheriffs' Association gives a voice to Virginia sheriffs and deputies. Working on many levels and in cooperation with the various segments of the criminal justice system and state government, VSA guarantees unfailing representation for sheriffs and deputies throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs The Wilder School at VCU engages, teaches, and inspires students and leaders to understand and resolve challenges in our world and provides expertise in research, consulting and training, partnering with government agencies, nonprofits and private organizations.

The National Center for Policing Innovation is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization committed to its mission to advance public safety by providing unparalleled training and services nationwide for law enforcement professionals and the communities they serve.

Program Benefits

Sheriffs and deputies serving in the Commonwealth of Virginia carry immense responsibilities as the guardians of their communities, providing effective public safety services balanced with the fair and equitable treatment of every individual they encounter. Those seeking VSI Certification must demonstrate a deep personal commitment to exemplifying a level of professionalism and leadership that solidifies community confidence and trust in, and reinforces the legitimacy of, the public safety function. The success of any public safety agency truly depends on the quality and capability of its officials.

❖ For Our Sheriffs

Those individuals elected as sheriff assume a tremendous personal and professional responsibility for the safety and security of their communities and are granted extraordinary powers and opportunities to positively affect the community they serve. With these powers come the responsibility to foster a commitment to excellence for themselves, their personnel and throughout the community.

Developing trust and legitimacy within the community is an ongoing process. Participation in the VSI Certification Program demonstrates the sheriff's commitment to provide, through continual self-improvement, the exemplary service and implementation of the public safety best practices needed to support the effective public safety leadership expected by the community.

The certification program is also an excellent career development tool that the sheriff may use for their sworn personnel as the sheriff works toward enhancing and elevating the services and programs offered by their office.

❖ For Our Deputies

For deputies, participation in the VSI Certification Program provides the opportunity to develop new skills and enhance existing ones, while demonstrating the individual deputy's commitment to self-improvement, resulting in an enhanced level of safety and security for the community.

By continually striving to train and learn, deputies also prepare themselves to take on greater roles and responsibilities within their agencies and in the community.

❖ For Our Communities

Those seeking certification demonstrate a deep personal commitment and sense of accountability, which exemplifies public safety as a profession. By encouraging and recognizing dedicated service to the public and accomplishments such as furthering education, and completing leadership training and professional development courses, the VSI Certification Program promotes a commitment to professional standards that attracts highly qualified people to a career in public safety and provides the community with an assurance that those certified have met some of the highest standards in public safety.

Program Structure

The VSI Certification Program has been developed to promote, recognize and elevate the continued individual professional development of Virginia's sheriffs and deputies. Applicants must meet eligibility requirements and demonstrate a commitment to continual career development.

The VSI Board of Directors appoints a Certification Committee (Committee) comprised of a diverse group of Virginia sheriffs. The Committee is responsible for ensuring the certification program represents the best public safety practices through:

- Continual review of the program requirements to ensure the requirements are relevant and represent the solid professional foundations of public safety service;
- Conducting the formal review of all applications and appeals submitted for consideration to ensure those individuals being awarded certification have met all program requirements.

Questions regarding the certification program and any of the eligibility or certification standards may be submitted to **vsicert@virginiasheriffs.org.**

Initial Certification

Applicants must apply during the annual application window, October 1 through December 31. Once received, applications will be digitized, and any paper copies will be destroyed after review by the Committee. Decisions will be made by March 15. Applicants will be notified via email, and certificates will be awarded during the annual VSI conference in April. Those who cannot attend the conference will receive their certificate by mail. See pages 8-11 for details and instructions on the application submission and approval process.

An applicant receiving certification will be designated as VSI Certified and may use the designation "VSIC" professionally. VSI Certification remains in effect for a period of 4 years, beginning on the date an applicant is awarded certification. The date listed on the certificate from VCU will serve as the official certification date. Certification expires on April 30th of the year four years after certification is awarded. Those applicants attaining certification will be recognized during the annual VSI conference held in April each year.

In the event that any of the following circumstances occur during the initial certification period, VSI Certification remains valid:

- A VSI Certified deputy is elected to sheriff;
- A VSI Certified deputy is appointed as deputy with another Virginia sheriff's office; and/or
- A VSI Certified deputy's sheriff's office experiences a change in leadership.

Initial Certification Requirements

The VSI Certification Program recognizes activities in the two focus areas of Life Experience and Career Development, as summarized in the following charts.

Summary of Initial Certification Requirements

Applicants must have a minimum total of 150 points, per individual section requirements.

Life Experience

This section must total a minimum of 40 points.

Public Safety Experience		Education	
Years of Experience[1]		Degree/Diploma[2]	
3 - 10 = 10 pts	20 - 29 = 30 pts	H.S./GED = 10 pts	Bachelor's = 30 pts
11 - 19 = 15 pts	30+ = 40 pts	Associate = 15 pts	Master's/+ = 40 pts

Career Development

Each sub-section of Career Development must total a minimum of 40 points.

All career development activities being claimed towards certification must be related to public safety and must have been completed within the 4 years preceding the application submission date.

Training		Professional Development	
Required Minimum Training[3]:		Multi-Month Courses	30 pts/course
Leadership	8 pts	Multi-Week Courses	15 pts/course
Ethics	8 pts	College Coursework[4]	5 pts/credit hour
Cultural Diversity	8 pts	Public Safety Conferences	5 pts/conference
Community Policing	8 pts	VSA/VSI Annual Conferences	10 pts/conference
Legal/HR Law	8 pts	Service as VSA and/or VSI President	10 pts
Additional Training	1 pt/hr	Instruction of Public Safety Courses[5]	1 pt/hr

[1] All sworn public safety service listed and used for the purpose of certification must be with a sheriff's office within the Commonwealth of Virginia.
[2] Degree or diploma may be in any field of study for initial certification. 40 points are awarded for a Master's, Ph. D., or other terminal degree.
[3] Basic skills training, such as firearms or defensive tactics training or qualification, RADAR or TASER training, or other training conducted to maintain job/skill proficiencies and certifications cannot be claimed toward certification.
[4] College coursework must be related to public safety, and coursework claimed may not be part of the degree claimed toward the education requirement in Section 2B.
[5] A maximum of 15 points may be claimed for instruction of public safety courses.

If the minimum required points are claimed in each sub-section, an applicant will have a total of 120 of the required 150 points for initial certification. In order to meet the 150-point requirement, an applicant must document an additional 30 points in any of the four sub-sections of the application.

A key element of the VSI Certification program is the documentation applicants submit verifying their education, training and professional development accomplishments claimed toward certification. Applicants must submit documentation demonstrating the completion of each degree, training course, conference attended, or other professional development activity included in the application. Documentation should verify attendance, as well as subject matter, if appropriate. Acceptable forms of documentation required for each section are detailed accordingly throughout this guidebook.

Applicants must complete a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for the degree being claimed, and for each training or professional development activity included in the application. A copy of this form is included in Appendix C. This form assists applicants as they compile the necessary documentation for each section of the application.

Recertification

To maintain VSI Certification beyond the initial certification period, a sheriff or deputy must submit an application for recertification between October 1 and December 31 of the 4th year of certification. Applications for recertification demonstrate continued eligibility in the program as well as required career development activities. Certified sheriffs and deputies who do not meet the recertification requirements, or who do not submit an application for recertification, will lose their certified status. If certification has lapsed, applicants must meet all the requirements for initial certification in order to become recertified. See pages 17-20 for details on recertification.

In the event that any of the following circumstances occur during the recertification period, VSI Certification remains valid:

- a VSI Certified deputy is elected to sheriff;
- a VSI Certified deputy is appointed as deputy with another Virginia sheriff's office; and/or
- a VSI Certified deputy's sheriff's office experiences a change in leadership.

<u>Recertification Requirements</u>

Beyond the initial certification period, the VSI Certification Program recognizes continued activities in the Career Development focus area, as summarized in the following charts.

Summary of Recertification Requirements

Applicants must have a minimum total of 100 points, per individual section requirements.

Career Development

Each sub-section of Career Development must total a minimum of 40 points.

All career development activities being claimed towards certification must be related to public safety and must have been completed within the 4 years preceding the application submission date.

Training		Professional Development	
Required Minimum Training[6]:		Multi-Month Courses	30 pts/course
Leadership	8 pts	Multi-Week Courses	15 pts/course
Ethics	8 pts	College Coursework[7]	5 pts/credit hour
Cultural Diversity	8 pts	Public Safety Conferences	5 pts/conference
Community Policing	8 pts	VSA/VSI Annual Conferences	10 pts/conference
Legal/HR Law	8 pts	Service as VSA and/or VSI President	10 pts/term
Additional Training	1 pt/hr	Instruction of Public Safety Courses[8]	1 pt/hour

If the minimum required points are claimed in each sub-section, an applicant will have a total of 80 of the required 100 points for recertification. In order to meet the 100-point requirement, an applicant must document an additional 20 points in any of the two sub-sections of the application.

A key element of the VSI Certification program is the documentation applicants submit verifying their training and professional development accomplishments claimed toward recertification. Applicants must submit documentation demonstrating the completion of each training course, conference attended, or other professional development activity included in the application. Documentation should verify attendance, as well as subject matter, if appropriate. Acceptable forms of documentation required for each section are detailed accordingly throughout this guidebook.

Applicants must complete a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for each training or professional development activity included in the application. A copy of this form is included in Appendix C. This form assists applicants as they compile the necessary documentation for each section of the application.

[6] Basic skills training, such as firearms or defensive tactics training or qualification, RADAR or TASER training, or other training conducted to maintain minimum job/skill proficiencies and certifications cannot be claimed toward recertification.
[7] College coursework claimed must be related to public safety, and may not be part of the degree claimed toward the education requirement in Section 2B.
[8] A maximum of 15 points may be claimed for instruction activities.

Application Submission and Approval Proces

Any sheriff or deputy wishing to apply for initial certification or recertification must submit an application and supporting documentation for review by the VSI Certification Committee. Deputies must have the approval of their sheriff to participate in the certification program and their sheriff must sign the application package.

Questions regarding the certification program and any of the eligibility or certification standards may be directed to vsicert@virginiasheriffs.org.

Completing the Application

The level of trust required by VSI and the public leaves no room for misrepresentation of an applicant's experience, education, training or professional development accomplishments. By signing and submitting an application, those seeking certification certify that all the information and supporting documentation provided is truthful, accurate and complete. Applicants must understand that misrepresentation may result in denial, revocation or cancellation of the certification.

The guidebook and program applications may be accessed on the VSI Certification website at (http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/). Applications must be complete and include supporting documentation as described below.

Compiling Supporting Documentation

A key element of the VSI Certification program is the documentation applicants submit verifying their education, training and professional development accomplishments claimed toward certification. Applicants must submit documentation demonstrating the completion of each degree, training course, conference attended, or other professional development activity included in the application. Documentation should verify attendance, as well as subject matter, if appropriate. Acceptable forms of documentation required for each section are detailed accordingly throughout this guidebook.

Applicants must complete a Supporting Documentation Certification Form[9] for the degree being claimed, and for each training or professional development activity included in the application. A copy of this form is included in Appendix C. This form assists applicants as they compile the necessary documentation for each section of the application.

Applicants should submit copies of all required documentation as all paper applications and documents will not be returned.

Submitting the Application & Supporting Documentation

Applications for certification or recertification are accepted October 1 through December 31 every year. Completed applications and supporting documentation may be submitted via the online portal, email, or mail to VSI's program partner NCPI.

[9] This form is required for applications being submitted beginning October 2021

Email: vsicert@virginiasheriffs.org

Mail:
NCPI
Attn: VSI Certification
413 Stuart Circle, Suite 200
Richmond, VA 23220 Fees and

Payment

A non-refundable administration fee is required at the time of application for initial certification or recertification. Fees vary by application type, based on membership status in VSA and VSI, as shown below.

Fees	
Type of Application	*Fee*
Initial Certification (VSA and VSI member)	**$250**
Initial Certification (non-VSA and/or non-VSI member)	**$500**
Recertification (VSA and VSI member)	**$150**
Recertification (non-VSA and/or non-VSI member)	**$300**

Applicants are considered VSA and VSI members if membership is obtained by March 31st of the calendar year in which the application is submitted. For example, to apply at the member rate during the application window of October 1 – December 31, 2018, the applicant must be a member of both VSI and VSA by March 31, 2018.

Payments are accepted only during the application submission period (October 1 – December 31). Payments may be made by credit card at the VSI Certification website (http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/) or by check, made payable to the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute and mailed with the application to:

NCPI
Attn: VSI Certification
413 Stuart Circle, Suite 200
Richmond, VA 23220

Separate payments are required for each application submitted. No cash or phone payments will be accepted

Application Review & Approval

The review and approval process for submitted applications begins once NCPI receives both the application and administrative fee. All applications must be received by the established deadline of December 31.

If, during the initial review of any application, it is determined that the application is incomplete and/or does not meet minimum certification requirements, the applicant is notified as soon as possible of the discrepancies and afforded the opportunity to submit a properly completed application, or additional supporting documentation. Due to the time-sensitive nature of the application process, the applicant is given a specific deadline to amend or add to the application.

The applications recommended for certification are submitted to the Committee. The Committee reviews the applications and submits a roster of applicants who have met the certification requirements to VCU no later than March 15 each year. VCU issues certificates to VSI to be presented to the applicant.

Applicants are notified of the Committee's decision no later than March 15. Those approved for certification are invited to attend the VSI Annual Conference in April to receive their award and be recognized as VSI Certified sheriffs and deputies. If an applicant is unable to attend the conference, the certificate is mailed. Those not approved for certification are notified

Appeals Process

Applicants whose applications are rejected may submit a written appeal to the Committee. Written appeals may be emailed or mailed to:

Email: vsicert@virginiasheriffs.org

Mail:
Virginia Sheriffs' Institute - Certification Committee 901
East Byrd Street, Suite 1031
Richmond, VA 23219

The Committee notifies the applicant of the appeal determination. All decisions made by the Committee are final.

Records Retention

Following the Library of Virginia schedules for record retention (General Schedule GS-103, Series Number 100501), applications, or any supplemental documentation collected as part of the VSI Certification Program, will be retained for a period of no more than 3 years beyond the last certification or recertification expiration date. (Library of Virginia, 2015)

All applicants should retain copies of completed applications and all supporting documentation for at least 3 years beyond the last certification or recertification expiration date.

The Committee has a right to review applications and request submission of supporting documentation (e.g. training certificates, educational transcripts, conference agendas, employment records, etc.) at any time during the certification process and after certification has been obtained.
All applications are stored electronically. Original paper applications are digitized and all paper copies are destroyed

Initial Certification Requirements

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply for VSI Certification, applicants must be duly elected or appointed sheriffs or full-time deputies currently employed by a sheriff's office in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Deputies wishing to apply for certification must have the approval of their sheriff to participate in the certification program. Their sheriff must sign the application package.

Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements must also fulfill the requirements detailed in the following sections in order to be considered for initial certification.

Life Experience

Applicants must have a minimum combined total of 40 points in the Life Experience focus area, which consists of Public Safety Experience and Education.

Public Safety Experience

Applicants seeking certification must be duly elected or appointed sheriffs, or full-time deputies, with at least 3 years of sworn public safety service with any sheriff's office in the Commonwealth of Virginia may apply for certification.

All sworn public safety service claimed for certification must be with a Virginia sheriff's office, based on years of service with corresponding point values, as shown below.

Public Safety Experience	
Years of Service	*Points*
3 - 10	**10**
11 - 19	**15**
20 - 29	**30**
30+	**40**

Applicants who have worked as a deputy at more than one Virginia sheriff's office during their career will document that service on the application.

State or local law enforcement service in Virginia, federal or military law enforcement service, or prior experience as a sheriff or deputy in another state will not be accepted towards certification as the training, duties and responsibilities of each vary from the requirements and duties of the sheriff's offices in Virginia.

Required Supporting Documentation

There is no supporting documentation required to verify public safety experience.

Education

Applicants seeking certification must have a high school diploma or GED. Secondary or post-secondary education documented towards certification will be listed on the application, based on the highest educational degree claimed. Any post-secondary degree being claimed must be awarded by an accredited institution of higher education. Post-secondary programs of study or degrees do not have to be specific to criminal justice/law enforcement.

Points for the education requirement correspond with the type of degree being claimed for certification, as shown below.

Education	
Type of Degree	*Points*
H.S. Diploma/GED	**10**
Associate Degree	**15**
Bachelor's Degree	**30**
Master's Degree/Terminal Degree (Ph.D., J.D., etc.)	**40**

Points are not cumulative; they are awarded for highest degree being claimed for certification.

Required Supporting Documentation

Applicants must submit a copy of the diploma or degree being claimed for certification. Acceptable forms of documentation include but are not limited to the following: copies of high school diploma, GED certificate, or diplomas/degrees conferred by an accredited institution of higher education.

Applicants must also fill out and sign a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for the degree being claimed. On this form, the applicant will list the degree and indicate what kind of documentation is being submitted to verify the earned degree. If complete documentation cannot be provided, the applicant will write a personal statement to explain the incomplete or insufficient documentation.

Applicants should submit copies of all required documentation as all paper applications and documents will not be returned.

Career Development

Applicants must have a minimum of 80 points in the Career Development focus area; 40 points minimum for Training and 40 points minimum for Professional Development.

Training

Applicants seeking certification must have a minimum of 40 points of public safety related training, completed within the 4 years preceding the application submission date, with 8 hours in each of five required topic areas. One hour of training completed equates to

one point towards the minimum requirements. Training may be completed via in-person events or via distance/online learning. Distance/online learning that may be completed to satisfy certification requirements includes, but is not limited to webinars, webcasts, asynchronous online courses, synchronous online courses, and hybrid asynchronous/synchronous online events.

Applicants who have participated in a VSI New Sheriffs' School may claim points towards training requirements, based on the topic and hourly allocations set forth by VSI which are listed on the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program website, http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/.

Applicants who have participated in VSI and/or VSI Annual Conferences may claim points towards training requirements, based on the topic and hourly allocations set forth by VSI each year which are listed on the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program website, http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/.

The intent of the certification program is to document training that demonstrates advancement of the applicant's skills and knowledge, not the basic skills needed to function as a sheriff or deputy. As such, basic skills training, such as firearms or defensive tactics training or qualification, RADAR or TASER training, or other training conducted to maintain minimum job/skill proficiencies and certifications cannot be claimed for certification.

Applicants may find that courses they've participated in cover subject matter which falls under multiple required training topics. For instance, a "Leadership" course might also address topics related to ethics, community policing, law, and/or diversity. In such cases, applicants may choose to claim those hours/points, in increments of no less than one half hour, under more than one required topic. Applicants should use their best judgement in determining which topic (or topics) best applies and provide the appropriate supporting documentation for the training. One exception is training completed at the annual VSA and/or VSI Conferences, the points for which are pre-designated by VSA and VSI.

Required Training
Applicants must claim a minimum of 8 points in each of the following training topics: Leadership, Ethics, Cultural Diversity, Community Policing and Legal/Employment Law. For more information on each of the required training topics, refer to Appendix B. Minimum points for each required training topic are shown below.

Training	
Required Training Topics	*Points*
Leadership (8 Hours)	**8**
Ethics (8 Hours)	**8**
Cultural Diversity (8 Hours)	**8**
Community Policing (8 Hours)	**8**
Legal/Employment Law (8 Hours)	**8**
Minimum Total Points	**40**

Additional Training

Public-safety related training above and beyond the 40-point minimum can be documented and applied toward the 150-point certification requirement.

Required Supporting Documentation

Applicants must submit documentation to verify the training dates, hours and content for the trainings claimed. Acceptable forms of documentation include but are not limited to the following: copies of training outlines, agendas and/or descriptions that correspond with copies of certificates of completion, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (VADCJS) Partial In- Service Credit (PIC) forms, and/or agency training inventory records to verify date(s), hours and content.

Applicants must also fill out and sign a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for each training event being claimed. On this form, the applicant will list the event, indicate in which category the training is being listed, and indicate what kind of documentation is being submitted to verify training dates, hours, and content. If complete documentation for the event cannot be provided, the applicant will write a personal statement to explain the incomplete or insufficient documentation.

Applicants should submit copies of all required documentation as all paper applications and documents will not be returned.

Professional Development

Applicants seeking certification must have a minimum of 40 points of public safety related professional development activities, completed within the 4 years preceding the application submission date.

There are seven areas of professional development for which points may be claimed: multi-month courses, multi-week courses, public safety conferences, the VSA/VSI annual conferences, service as the VSA and/or VSI president, and instruction of public safety training courses.
These areas of professional development correspond with the point values shown below.

Professional Development	
Type of Activity	*Points*
Multi-Month Courses	**30**
Multi-Week Courses	**15**
College Coursework[10]	**5/credit hr**
Public Safety Conferences	**5**
VSA/VSI Annual Conferences	**10**
Current or Former VSA and/or VSI President	**10/term**
Instruction of Public Safety Training Courses[11]	**1/hr**

Professional Development

Applicants seeking certification must have a minimum of 40 points of public safety related professional development activities, completed within the 4 years preceding the application submission date.

There are seven areas of professional development for which points may be claimed: multi-month courses, multi-week courses, public safety conferences, the VSA/VSI annual conferences, service as the VSA and/or VSI president, and instruction of public safety training courses.

These areas of professional development correspond with the point values shown below.

Professional Development	
Type of Activity	*Points*
Multi-Month Courses	**30**
Multi-Week Courses	**15**
College Coursework[10]	**5/credit hr**
Public Safety Conferences	**5**
VSA/VSI Annual Conferences	**10**
Current or Former VSA and/or VSI President	**10/term**
Instruction of Public Safety Training Courses[11]	**1/hr**

Areas of Professional Development

Each area of professional development is explained below:

Multi-Month Courses are career development activities which require at least two months' participation such as: University of Virginia/Virginia State Police Command College, FBI National Academy, Southern Police Institute Command Officers Development Course, and other similar public safety programs.

Multi-Week Courses are career development activities which require at least two weeks' participation, such as: Police Executive Research Forum Senior Management Institute for Police, University of Richmond Professional Executive Leadership School, and other similar public safety programs.

College Coursework relating to public safety, or which advances the applicant's job-related knowledge/expertise may be claimed for points as stated in the chart above. College coursework claimed may not be part of the degree claimed toward the education requirement in Section 2B.

Public Safety Conferences are career development activities which provide educational and networking opportunities with other public safety professionals such as: National Sheriffs' Association Conference, International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference, American Correctional Association Conference, FBI National Academy Association Conference, and other similar public safety programs. Please note: If an applicant claims a public safety conference for Professional Development points, individual training sessions that occur during the conference may not also be claimed for Training points. Public safety conferences that were held online via webcast, webinar or a similar format, may be claimed in the same way that an in-person public safety conference is claimed, provided that the applicant can provide appropriate supporting documentation.

VSA or VSI Annual Conferences are career development activities which provide educational and networking opportunities with professionals from other Virginia sheriff's offices. Please note: in addition to claiming Professional Development points for VSA and/or VSI Conference attendance as stated in the chart above, applicants may claim Training points based on the

[10] College coursework claimed must be related to public safety and may not be part of the degree claimed toward the education requirement in Section 2B.
[11] A maximum of 15 points may be claimed in this category.

topic and hourly allocations set forth by VSI each year which are listed on the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program website, http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/.

Current/Former VSA and/or VSI President service may be claimed for points as stated in the chart above.

Instruction of Public Safety Training Courses may be claimed for points as stated in the chart above, up to a maximum of 15 points.

Required Supporting Documentation

Applicants must submit documentation to verify the details of the Professional Development activities being claimed. Acceptable forms of documentation include, but are not limited to the following: copies of course and/or conference outlines, agendas, and/or descriptions that correspond with certificates of attendance/completion, VADCJS PIC forms, and/or agency training inventory records to verify date(s), hours and content; and/or copies of training records/rosters and corresponding course outlines, agendas, and/or descriptions denoting applicant as the instructor.

Applicants must also fill out and sign a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for each professional development activity being claimed. On this form, the applicant will list the event and indicate what kind of documentation is being submitted to verify the details of the professional development activity being claimed. If complete documentation cannot be provided, the applicant will write a personal statement to explain the incomplete or insufficient documentation.

Applicants should submit copies of all required documentation as all paper applications and documents will not be returned.

Recertification Requirements

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply for VSI Recertification every 4 years, applicants must be duly elected or appointed sheriffs or full-time deputies currently employed by a sheriff's office in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Recertification applicants must also be currently VSI Certified, with no lapse in certification. Deputies wishing to apply for recertification must have the approval of their sheriff to participate in the certification program. Their sheriff must sign the recertification application.

If certification has lapsed, applicants must meet all the requirements for initial certification in order to become recertified.

Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements must also fulfill the requirements detailed in the following sections in order to be considered for recertification.

Career Development
Recertification recognizes continued activities in the Career Development focus area (Training and Professional Development) only. The requirements for recertification are based upon documented activities completed from the date of the applicant's last certification award.

Applicants must meet the 100-point recertification requirement with a minimum of 40 points in each section of the Career Development focus area: Training and Professional Development. If the minimum required points are claimed in each sub-section, an applicant will have a total of 80 of the required 100 points for recertification. In order to meet the 100-point requirement, an applicant must document an additional 20 points in any of the two sub-sections of the application.

Training

Applicants seeking certification must have a minimum of 40 points of public safety related training, completed within the 4 years preceding application submission date, with 8 hours in each of five required topic areas. One hour of training completed equates to one point towards the minimum requirements. Training may be completed via in-person events or via distance/online learning. Distance/online learning that may be completed to satisfy certification requirements includes, but is not limited to webinars, webcasts, asynchronous online courses, synchronous online courses, and hybrid asynchronous/synchronous online events.

Applicants who have participated in a VSI New Sheriffs' School may claim points towards training requirements, based on the topic and hourly allocations set forth by VSI which are listed on the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program website, http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/.

Applicants who have participated in VSI and/or VSI Annual Conferences may claim points towards training requirements, based on the topic and hourly allocations set forth by VSI each year which are listed on the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program website, http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/.

The intent of the certification program is to document training that demonstrates advancement of the applicant's skills and knowledge, not the basic skills needed to function as a sheriff or deputy. As such, basic skills training, such as firearms or defensive tactics training or qualification, RADAR or TASER training, or other training conducted to maintain minimum job/skill proficiencies and certifications cannot be claimed for recertification.

Applicants may find that courses they've participated in cover subject matter which falls under multiple required training topics. For instance, a "Leadership" course might also address topics related to ethics, community policing, law, and/or diversity. In such cases, applicants may choose to claim those hours/points, in increments of no less than one half hour, under more than one required topic. Applicants should use their best judgement in determining which topic (or topics) best applies, and provide the appropriate supporting documentation for the training. One exception is training completed at the annual VSA and/or VSI Conferences, the points for which are pre-designated by VSA and VSI.

Required Training

Applicants must claim a minimum of 8 points in each of the following training topics: Leadership, Ethics, Cultural Diversity, Community Policing and Legal/Employment Law. For more information on each of the required training topics, refer to Appendix B.

Minimum points for each required training topic are shown below.

Training	
Required Training Topics	*Points*
Leadership (8 Hours)	**8**
Ethics (8 Hours)	**8**
Cultural Diversity (8 Hours)	**8**
Community Policing (8 Hours)	**8**
Legal/Employment Law (8 Hours)	**8**
Minimum Total Points	**40**

Additional Training

Public-safety related training above and beyond the 40-point minimum can be documented and applied toward the 100-point recertification requirement.

Required Supporting Documentation

Applicants must submit documentation to verify the training dates, hours and content for the trainings claimed. Acceptable forms of documentation include, but are not limited to the following: copies of training outlines, agendas and/or descriptions that correspond with copies of certificates of completion, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (VADCJS) Partial In- Service Credit (PIC) forms, and/or agency training inventory records to verify date(s), hours and content.

Applicants must also fill out and sign a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for each training event being claimed. On this form, the applicant will list the event, indicate in which category the training is being listed, and indicate what kind of documentation is being submitted to verify training dates, hours, and content. If complete documentation for the event cannot be provided, the applicant will write a personal statement to explain the incomplete or insufficient documentation.

Applicants should submit copies of all required documentation as all paper applications and documents will not be returned.

<u>Professional Development</u>

Applicants seeking recertification must have a minimum of 40 points of public safety related professional development activities, completed within the 4 years preceding the application submission date.

There are seven areas of professional development for which points may be claimed: multi-month courses, multi-week courses, public safety conferences, the VSA/VSI annual conferences, service as the VSA and/or VSI president, and instruction of public safety training courses.

These areas of professional development correspond with the point values shown below.

Professional Development	
Type of Activity	*Points*
Multi-Month Courses	**30**
Multi-Week Courses	**15**
College Coursework[12]	**5/credit hour**
Public Safety Conferences	**5**
VSA/VSI Annual Conferences	**10**
Current or Former VSA and/or VSI President	**10/term**
Instruction of Public Safety Training Courses[13]	**1/hr**

Areas of Professional Development

Each area of professional development is explained below:

Multi-Month Courses are career development activities which require at least two months' participation such as: University of Virginia/Virginia State Police Command College, FBI National Academy, Southern Police Institute Command Officers Development Course, and other similar public safety programs.

Multi-Week Courses are career development activities which require at least two weeks' participation, such as Police Executive Research Forum Senior Management Institute for Police, University of Richmond Professional Executive Leadership School, and other similar public safety programs.

College Coursework relating to public safety, or which advances the applicant's job-related knowledge/expertise may be claimed for points as stated in the chart above. College coursework claimed may not be part of the degree claimed toward the education requirement in Section 2B.

Public Safety Conferences are career development activities which provide educational and networking opportunities with other public safety professionals such as: National Sheriffs'

[12] College coursework claimed must be related to public safety, and may not be part of the degree claimed toward the education requirement in Section 2B.
[13] A maximum of 15 points may be claimed in this category.

Association Conference, International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference, American Correctional Association Conference, FBI National Academy Association Conference, and other similar public safety programs. Please note: If an applicant claims a public safety conference for Professional Development points, individual training sessions that occur during the conference may not also be claimed for Training points. Public safety conferences that were held online via webcast, webinar or a similar format, may be claimed in the same way that an in-person public safety conference is claimed, provided that the applicant can provide appropriate supporting documentation.

VSA or VSI Annual Conferences are career development activities which provide educational and networking opportunities with professionals from other Virginia sheriff's offices. Please note: in addition to claiming Professional Development points for VSA and/or VSI Conference attendance as stated in the chart above, applicants may claim Training points based on the topic and hourly allocations set forth by VSI each year which are listed on the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program website, http://certification.vasheriffsinstitute.org/.

Current/Former VSA and/or VSI President service may be claimed for points as stated in the chart above.

Instruction of Public Safety Training Courses may be claimed for points as stated in the chart above, up to a maximum of 15 points.

Required Supporting Documentation

Applicants must submit documentation to verify the details of the Professional Development activities being claimed. Acceptable forms of documentation include, but are not limited to the following: copies of course and/or conference outlines, agendas, and/or descriptions that correspond with certificates of attendance/completion, VADCJS PIC forms, and/or agency training inventory records to verify date(s), hours and content; and/or copies of training records/rosters and corresponding course outlines, agendas, and/or descriptions denoting applicant as the instructor.

Applicants must also fill out and sign a Supporting Documentation Certification Form for each professional development activity being claimed. On this form, the applicant will list the event and indicate what kind of documentation is being submitted to verify the details of the professional development activity being claimed. If complete documentation cannot be provided, the applicant will write a personal statement to explain the incomplete or insufficient documentation.

Applicants should submit copies of all required documentation as all paper applications and documents will not be returned.

Appendix A – Certification Program Structure

Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program

INITIAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: A+B+C+D MUST TOTAL 150 points

LIFE EXPERIENCE

A + B = Minimum 40 pts
80 pts possible

A PUBLIC SAFETY EXPERIENCE

Years of Experience

3-10 = 10 pts
11-10 = 15 pts
20-29 = 30 pts
30+ = 40 pts

B EDUCATION

Degree/Diploma

H.S./ GED = 10 pts
Associate = 15 pts
B.A./ B.S. = 30 pts
Master's/+ = 40 pts

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

C = 40 pts D = 40 pts
80 pts minimum

C TRAINING

Required Minimum Training*:

Leadership = 8 hrs
Ethics = 8 hrs
Cultural Diversity = 8hrs
Community Policing = 8hrs
Legal/ HR Law = 8 Hrs
*1 hour of training = 1 pt
Additional Training = 1 pt/hr

D PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Multi-Month Courses
30 pts/course
Multi-Week Courses
15 pts/course
College Coursework
5 pts/credit hour
Public Safety Conferences
10 pts/conference
Service as VSA and/or VSI President
10 pts/term
Instruction of Public Safety Courses
1 pt/hr

VCU L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

NCPI NATIONAL CENTER FOR POLICING INNOVATION

Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program

RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: A+B MUST TOTAL 100 points

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Virginia Sheriffs' Association

VCU L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

Virginia Sheriffs' Institute

NCPI National Center for Policing Innovation

CAREER DEVELOPMENT A = 40 pts B = 40 pts 80 pts minimum	
A **TRAINING** (Within last 4 years)	**B** **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** (Within last 4 years)
Required Minimum Training*: **Leadership = 8 hrs** **Ethics = 8 hrs** **Cultural Diversity = 8hrs** **Community Policing = 8hrs** **Legal/ HR Law = 8 Hrs** *1 hour of training = 1 pt **Additional Training = 1 pt/hr**	**Multi-Month Courses** 30 pts/course **Multi-Week Courses** 15 pts/course **College Coursework** 5 pts/credit hour **Public Safety Conferences** 10 pts/conference **Service as VSA and/or VSI President** 10 pts/term **Instruction of Public Safety Courses** 1 pt/hr

Appendix B – Training Topic Definitions

Applicants must claim points in each of the following training topics: Leadership, Ethics, Cultural Diversity, Community Policing and Legal/Employment Law. The primary subject matter or the course title should be the guide to determine in which category (or categories) the training will be claimed, and applicants should use their best judgement for this determination. Definitions of each training topic, for the purposes of certification and recertification, are provided below.

Leadership Training

For the purposes of certification/recertification, Leadership training is defined as any training program that enhances the participant's knowledge, skills and abilities to perform in formal or informal leadership roles within an organization. Leadership courses being claimed towards the eight (8) hour certification/recertification minimum requirement may include a wide range of philosophical and/or practical topics, including but not limited to: supervision/management, organizational change, leadership styles, motivation, mentoring, goal-setting, decision making, conflict resolution, communication skills, disciplinary processes, risk management, media relations, workforce allocation, procedural justice, civil liability, crisis management, stress management/wellness, community engagement, and diversity. Additionally, Leadership topics are often components found within a wide range of training programs, such as homeland security, corrections, crime analysis, problem solving, court security, or others.

Ethics Training

For the purposes of certification/recertification, Ethics training is defined as any training program that enhances the participant's knowledge, skills and abilities to perform in an ethical manner.
Ethics courses being claimed towards the eight (8) hour certification/recertification requirement may include a wide range of philosophical and/or practical topics, including but not limited to: history/theories of ethics, decision making, professional standards, public trust, and diversity.

Cultural Diversity Training

For the purposes of certification/recertification, Cultural Diversity training is defined as any program that enhances the participant's knowledge, skills and abilities to work in a diverse environment and serve a diverse community. Cultural Diversity courses being claimed towards the eight (8) hour certification/recertification requirement may include a wide range of topics that ensure sensitivity to and awareness of diversity.

Community Policing Training

For the purposes of certification/recertification, "Community Policing" training is defined as any program that enhances the participant's knowledge, skills and abilities to build partnerships, solve problems, and implement organizational change necessary to support efforts to build trust and legitimacy with the community. "Community Policing" courses being claimed towards the eight (8) hour certification/recertification requirement may include a wide range of philosophical and/or practical topics, including but not limited to: history/theory of community policing, crime

prevention, organizational change, use of force, decision making, conflict resolution, communication skills, de-escalation, risk management, media relations, workforce allocation, procedural justice, crisis intervention, critical incident management, stress management/wellness, crime analysis and evidence-based policing strategies, enforcement strategies, problem solving, community engagement and outreach, language acquisition, diversity, and policy development. Additionally, Community Policing topics are often components found within a wide range of training programs, such as homeland security, corrections, court security, or others.

Legal/Employment Law Training

For the purposes of certification/recertification, Legal/Employment Law training is defined as any program that enhances the participant's knowledge, skills and abilities to perform his or her role as a sworn law enforcement professional within the confines of applicable federal, state and local laws. Legal/Employment Law courses being claimed towards the eight (8) hour certification/recertification requirement may include a wide range of topics, such as: constitutional law, corrections law, human resource management and law, use of force, critical incident management, civil process, and civil liability.

Appendix C – Supporting Documentation Certification Form

Applicant Name: _____

Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program

Supporting Documentation Certification Form

Please use this form to accompany each supporting documentation item you are submitting to verify your education, training, and professional development. You must verify both attendance and subject matter for all training programs and professional development events in Sections 3C and 3D of the application. Please see the VSI Certification Program Guidebook for details on acceptable forms of supporting documentation.

You will complete this form multiple times. You must complete this form once for the degree you list in Section 2B, and again for <u>each</u> training program or professional development activity that you list in Section 3C and 3D.

This form supports the following degree, training program, or professional development event I am claiming on my VSI Certification application:

☐ **Section 2B Education**	Degree	
☐ **Section 3C Training**	Training	Training Date
	Check all categories that apply: ☐ Leadership ☐ Ethics ☐ Cultural Diversity ☐ Community Policing ☐ Legal/Employment Law ☐ Additional Training	
☐ **Section 3D Professional Development**	Event	Event Date
	Check only one: ☐ Multi-Month Course ☐ Multi-Week Course ☐ Public Safety Conference ☐ College Coursework ☐ VSA/VSI Annual Conference ☐ Instruction of Public Safety Training	

List below the type of documentation you are providing to support either your education or career development. In the event that you cannot provide complete or sufficient documentation to support this degree or career development activity, please explain below.

I have included the following documentation to verify my degree, training program, and/or professional development event:

My documentation for this degree or career development activity is insufficient or incomplete, and I am submitting the following personal statement to supplement the required supporting documents:

The supporting documentation I have provided for this degree, event, or activity is truthful, accurate, and complete. I understand that insufficient or incomplete documentation may result in denial of my application for Virginia Sheriffs' Institute certification. I understand that any misrepresentation may result in denial or revocation of certification and the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification designation.

Applicant Signature	Date

Applicant Name: _____

Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification Program

Supporting Documentation Certification Form

Please use this form to accompany each supporting documentation item you are submitting to verify your education, training, and professional development. You must verify both attendance and subject matter for all training programs and professional development events in Sections 2A and 2B of the application. Please see the VSI Certification Program Guidebook for details on acceptable forms of supporting documentation.

You will complete this form multiple times. You must complete this form for <u>each</u> training program or professional development activity that you list in Section 2A and 2B.

This form supports the following training program or professional development event I am claiming on my VSI Certification application:

☐	**Section 2A Training**	Training	Training Date
		Check all categories that apply: ☐ Leadership ☐ Ethics ☐ Cultural Diversity ☐ Community Policing ☐ Legal/Employment Law ☐ Additional Training	
☐	**Section 2B Professional Development**	Event	Event Date
		Check only one: ☐ Multi-Month Course ☐ Multi-Week Course ☐ Public Safety Conference ☐ College Coursework ☐ VSA/VSI Annual Conference ☐ Instruction of Public Safety Training	

List below the type of documentation you are providing to support this career development activity. In the event that you cannot provide complete or sufficient documentation to support this career development activity, please explain below.

I have included the following documentation to verify this training program and/or professional development event:

My documentation for this career development activity is insufficient or incomplete, and I am submitting the following personal statement to supplement the required supporting documents:

The supporting documentation I have provided for this event or activity is truthful, accurate, and complete. I understand that insufficient or incomplete documentation may result in denial of my application for Virginia Sheriffs' Institute certification. I understand that any misrepresentation may result in denial or revocation of certification and the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Certification designation.

Applicant Signature	Date

Appendix D – References

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