LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER EXPLORATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to turn your interest in a law enforcement career into a clear plan, one step at a time.

- [ ] **Research different law enforcement careers**
  Explore roles beyond patrol deputy, including dispatcher, correctional deputy, investigator, K-9 handler, and crime scene technician.
- [ ] **Identify careers that match my interests and strengths**
  Match personal strengths, such as quick decision-making or attention to detail, to the right role.
- [ ] **Talk to someone working in the field**
  Reach out to a local sheriff's office to connect with someone who can speak honestly about the work.
- [ ] **Research education requirements**
  Requirements vary by role and agency, from a high school diploma to additional coursework for specialized positions.
- [ ] **Research physical fitness requirements**
  Review the physical fitness standards required for the role to prepare ahead of time.
- [ ] **Learn about training and certification**
  Understand the academy training and state certification process, including length, cost, and location.
- [ ] **Research local sheriffs' offices**
  Compare hiring needs, specialty units, and starting pay across agencies in the area.
- [ ] **Explore internships, youth programs, scholarships, or career events**
  Try a ride-along, youth academy, career fair, or internship to see the profession firsthand.
- [ ] **Create a career plan**
  Write down the target role, required education, or training and a realistic timeline.
- [ ] **Identify your next three steps**
  Name three immediate actions, such as scheduling a ride-along or requesting an academy application, to keep momentum going.