

CAT. A – OUTSTANDING CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM OF THE YEAR  
JACKSONVILLE SHERIFF’S OFFICE – APARTMENT WATCH

The Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office had been involved with Crime-free Multi-housing for many years, but found it did not meet all of the needs of the apartment community in Jacksonville. Armed with this knowledge and experience the seven members of the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office Apartment Unit created a program specifically for the apartment community in Jacksonville that meet the needs of their community.

**The Sheriff’s Watch – Apartment program** is a partnership between the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, apartment coordinators, property managers, owners, staff and residents. The goal is to provide a framework for a coordinated effort between all parties to engage residents and management with the police and help create a community committed to safety and the prevention of crime.

The first requirement is for apartment managers to attend a one-day interactive training where they learn about the **Sheriff’s Watch – Apartments program** requirements and benefits, Fair Housing Act, criminal history/background checks, trespass enforcement, communication with residents, property inspection assessments, active property management, personal safety, apartment liability/legal issues, CPTED principles, crime prevention, drugs, gangs and graffiti. Manager training is held twice a month, with a break in the summer for members of the JSO – Sheriff’s Watch Unit to perform property inspections and to coordinate with apartment managers to ensure they are progressing through the program. As of September 2018, 110 apartment managers have attended the **Sheriff’s Watch – Apartments program** training.

The feedback from both apartment managers and residents has been extremely positive.

One apartment manager of a low income/HUD community that had a terrible reputation due to having a high crime rate involving everything from drugs to domestic stated that after participating in the **Sheriff’s Watch – Apartment program** their crime rate and calls for service to the property dropped. They also noticed a significant improvement of the attitude and interaction of current residents with officers that come on site stating, “I feel empowered by the training and interaction.” Another property manager stated that she felt, “this program is very effective and offers information on how communities can take steps to deter crime and hold residents accountable for their actions.”

It is my honor to recognize the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office **Sheriff’s Watch – Apartment program** as the 2018 Florida Crime Prevention Association’s Crime Prevention Program of the Year winner.