

Explorer Career Path



Congratulations on starting your career with the Orange County Sheriff's Department! As the largest law enforcement agency in Orange County, and one of the largest in the nation, we are poised to offer you opportunities for an exciting career that do not exist elsewhere. This is truly a department where you are only limited by the vision you have for yourself and the effort you are willing to put in to get there. If you dream big and work hard everything is attainable.



Plan It. Do it.

OCSA has a 5 and 10 year plan, and so should you! Where do you see yourself in 5 years? In 10 years? Now is the time to plan for your future. Set short term and long term goals and work towards achieving them. Be prepared to make course corrections along the way, but continue to work towards excellence.



Opportunities Open to Explorers:

Explorers are valuable members of our department. As such, promotional opportunities are open to you and you are encouraged to pursue your dreams of becoming a Correctional Services Assistant, Deputy Sheriff and beyond. As soon as you meet the minimum requirements to be a CSA or Deputy Sheriff, you are encouraged to test and promote. Our Explorer Program is wonderful preparation for a career in law enforcement. In the Explorers, you will get to work in various divisions within our department, assist with crowd and traffic control, get firearms training, and participate in Street Patrol, Harbor Patrol and Crime Scene Investigation ride-alongs. You will also get to be part of an elite group of youths who are trained in critical thinking skills, leadership ability, and team work.

Minimum Requirements to be a Correctional Services Assistant or Deputy:

- Be 18 years old for CSA and 20.5 for Deputy.
- Have a high school diploma or GED equivalent.
- Have a clean background.
- Must be a US citizen or a permanent resident who has filed for citizenship.
- No domestic violence convictions, no domestic violence restraining orders, no felony convictions as a juvenile nor as an adult, and cannot be on probation of any kind.

Tips for Success – going above and beyond

- Act like the partner you want to have.
- Do not be afraid to try new things.
- Do not sell yourself short.
- Set an example in excellence.



-Attend every event and training that you can. Whether you are helping with crowd control in a parade, working a DUI checkpoint, or training with the SWAT team, you will be exposed to the best learning environment – real life experience. These experiences will prove invaluable as you study in either the CSA or Deputy Sheriff Academy because it will give you a framework to understand the instruction on a deeper level than you otherwise would have.

-Do ride-alongs. In the Explorer Program you will have the opportunity to do ride-alongs. These are valuable experiences because it not only familiarizes you with procedures, equipment and forms, but it will also show you how our laws are enforced in real life. You will get to talk with patrol trained deputies about why they did what they did, so that when your turn to serve in law enforcement comes, you will understand the thought process behind the laws and actions we take to enforce them.

-Try and be the best that you can be. This may sound kind of obvious, but if you treat each Explorers meeting, event, training, and competition as an opportunity to enrich yourself and invest in your future, you will get a lot out of the program.

-Participate in the Explorer Competitions. Explorer competitions are wonderful events where you and your Post get to use all that you have learned, while performing under the pressure of competition, to compete against other Posts. These competitions are not only good experiences to see if you can do what you have been trained, but also they help give you confidence in your ability so that you trust your skills when they are needed in real life.



-Learn to use the radio. Being able to communicate clearly and efficiently makes all the difference in law enforcement. As an Explorer you will get to use our radios, learn our codes, and have hands on experience communicating at events. This will get you used to radio communications in a low-stress environment so that as you move on in your law enforcement career, good radio communication will be second nature to you.

-Use your advisor as a resource to prepare you for the CSA and Deputy testing process and Academy. Advisors are hand-picked individuals who care deeply about your development and success. They have all been through an Orange County Sheriff's Academy and know on a personal level what is required and expected. As you look to your future, use your advisors to help you along the way so that you are prepared and ready to succeed.

-Familiarize yourself with forms and report writing styles. As you attend events, do ride-alongs, and participate in DUI checkpoints, you will have the opportunity to see deputies writing reports that are intended to change a person's life. These forms and reports are the lifeblood of law enforcement, because if we do not document an event then it will not stand up in court and the criminal will be let free. In order to protect the public, it is imperative that you know how to properly fill out all forms and write good reports.

-Pick goals for yourself. Whether you want to be a CSA, a Deputy Sheriff, or just do well in your Explorer Inspections, setting goals and choosing a path to attain them is wonderful training that will serve you well your whole life long.