



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

February 13, 2019

Commissioner Rick Swearingen
Florida Department of Law Enforcement
2331 Phillips Road
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Dear Commissioner Swearingen:

In recent years, Florida was the site of several mass shootings, targeting the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, Jacksonville Landing and, most recently, a SunTrust Bank in Sebring. These acts of targeted mass violence underscore the need for Florida to focus additional resources toward threat identification and proactive prevention to protect against future senseless tragedies.

Today, I directed the Department of Education to take all necessary steps to implement Section 1001.212(6)-(9), Florida Statutes, which requires the development of a central data repository and data analytics resources for school threat assessment teams. Tools like this will aid in the identification of threats and in the prevention of mass targeted violence in our schools - an important component of any broader threat assessment strategy. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) must assist the Department of Education in fully developing this resource.

The development of a broader and more comprehensive threat assessment strategy is a top priority for Florida. With this focus in mind, I am directing the FDLE to develop a unified statewide strategy for identifying and managing threats of targeted violence. The FDLE should immediately begin the process of developing appropriate training through the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission for frontline officers, and higher level training for more senior officers to fully execute threat assessment strategies throughout Florida.

The FDLE must identify ways in which the agency can assist our local law enforcement partners in fully taking advantage of our new threat assessment strategy. Specifically, the FDLE must assist local law enforcement to better identify threats and


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mitigate those threats through existing cooperative entities such as the Regional Domestic Security Task Forces. As local law enforcement moves in the direction of comprehensive threat assessment strategies, the FDLE will work closely with local partners to ensure collaboration and cooperation on this important objective.

Many of our local law enforcement agencies will need additional resources to assist them with the necessary training and personnel to adopt a threat assessment strategy. I am committed to working with our federal partners to ensure nationwide best practices are established to assist in this endeavor, as well as to secure resources for our law enforcement community to embrace this new strategy.

We have entered a new era of policing. It is of paramount importance that we identify threats before they occur, and do everything within our power to prevent individuals from carrying out acts of targeted violence. We have the opportunity to modernize our threat assessment and response efforts with the information that is available to us today. A new focus on establishing a comprehensive threat assessment strategy will make Florida safer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ron DeSantis
Governor