



Rick Staly, Sheriff

## FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Keeping S.T.R.I.D.E. Inmate Education and Training Programs Open During COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) has enabled the inmate population at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility to maintain communication and direct connections with medical and mental health practitioners as well as religious counselors and programming.



Individual and group virtual meetings are available to the inmates.

Under Sheriff Rick Staly's direction, the **Skills, Transitional Support, Respect, Integrity, Direction and Employment (S.T.R.I.D.E.)** program was implemented in the jail in February 2018. S.T.R.I.D.E. is aimed at enabling inmates to become productive members of the community once released from jail. S.T.R.I.D.E. works with community partners to help inmates apply for social security cards and obtain copies of birth certificates, provides G.E.D. courses, Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous meetings, and Christian-based anger management classes as well as many other services. Weekly non-denominational ministry services are also offered through the program.

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The COVID-19 pandemic caused a shift in the delivery of this program to inmates. In normal times, S.T.R.I.D.E is taught inside the inmate facility's internal classrooms by volunteers. But to keep inmates and staff safe for all, the jail was closed to all visitors and implemented virtual S.T.R.I.D.E meetings allowing these programs to continue. Remote video visitation, telemedicine - used to supplement the 24-hour onsite medical care - and virtual program meetings have all been used to deliver inmate services and visitation during the pandemic.

"We implemented the S.T.R.I.D.E. program in the jail to help turn inmate lives around to become productive members of our community," said Sheriff Staly. "We have strong partnerships with the organizations that contribute to the program and we did not want to put these services on hold during the pandemic as these programs make radical changes in the lives of many of the inmates that pass through our jail so we did whatever we could to re-create these programs in a virtual format."

The programs will continue to be offered virtually until CDC guidelines indicate it is safe to resume in-person meetings in a confined environment. The ability to continue with virtual programs will be maintained indefinitely, should the need arise.

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