

## 13. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Suffolk County Police Department is to "preserve the public peace, prevent crime, detect and arrest offenders, protect the rights of persons and property and enforce all laws and ordinances applicable in Suffolk County."

The Suffolk County Police Department was created in 1958 under the County Charter adopted that year. The Police District was organized in 1960. The Department operates in two divisions: The headquarters division, which functions on countywide property taxes; and the police district division, which serves the unincorporated areas within the five western towns and some incorporated villages in those towns, and is supported by taxes from

only those areas it serves. Each division has a separate budget.

The Commissioner of Police is appointed by the County Executive with the confirmation of the County Legislature. The Commissioner serves at the pleasure of the County Executive, must be a citizen of the United States and reside in Suffolk County at the time of appointment. All other members of the Department up to the rank of Captain are appointed by the Police Commissioner from a Civil Service list. Appointees must be United States citizens, literate in the English language, and be County residents who have never been convicted of a felony. The Chief of Department, Division Chiefs and deputies are appointed by the Commissioner from the list of Captains. They retain the rank of Captain and serve at the pleasure of the Commissioner.

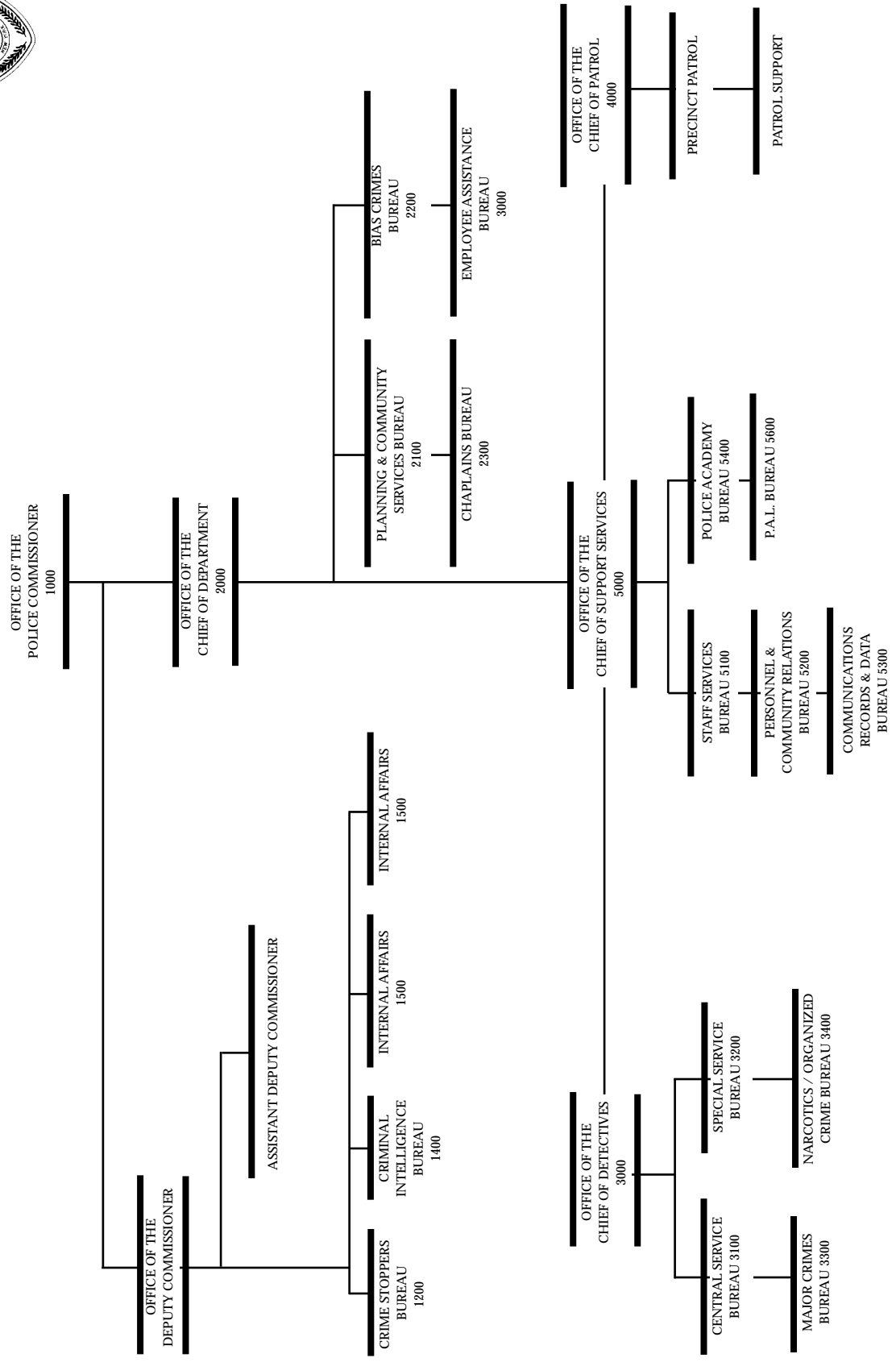


*Photo © Adam Gaus*

### **Octagonal Witherill House**

Above Stony Brook Harbor in Head of the Harbor, NY  
Designed by Stanford White

**FIGURE 13.1 SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT, COUNTY OF SUFFOLK, N.Y.**



## SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

The Suffolk County Sheriff, a law enforcement officer, is elected for a term of four years. The Sheriff's Department has two divisions: Corrections and Law Enforcement.

The Corrections Division is responsible for the care and custody of all persons arrested and remanded to the Sheriff, both sentenced and unsentenced. The department's three facilities, Maximum, Minimum, and D.W.I. Alternative Facility, have a capacity of 1,300 inmates.

The Community Relations Section operates the Youth Enlightenment Seminar (Y.E.S. program) in which each year, about 4500 students from 150 schools visit the maximum security facility to experience prison life.

The Law Enforcement Division's Headquarters Bureau transports inmates outside the correctional facilities. They operate the Detention Center in the Criminal Courts Building where

inmates are held temporarily. In addition, they provide law enforcement services to the public or other county agencies.

The Criminal Investigations Bureau (C.I.B.) investigates crimes committed within the Sheriff's Department facilities. C.I.B. also executes criminal warrants from within the State of New York as well as fugitive warrants.

The Department's Civil Bureau enforces civil court orders within the County. The Domestic Violence Unit serves court Orders of Protection and arrests those who violate a court order.

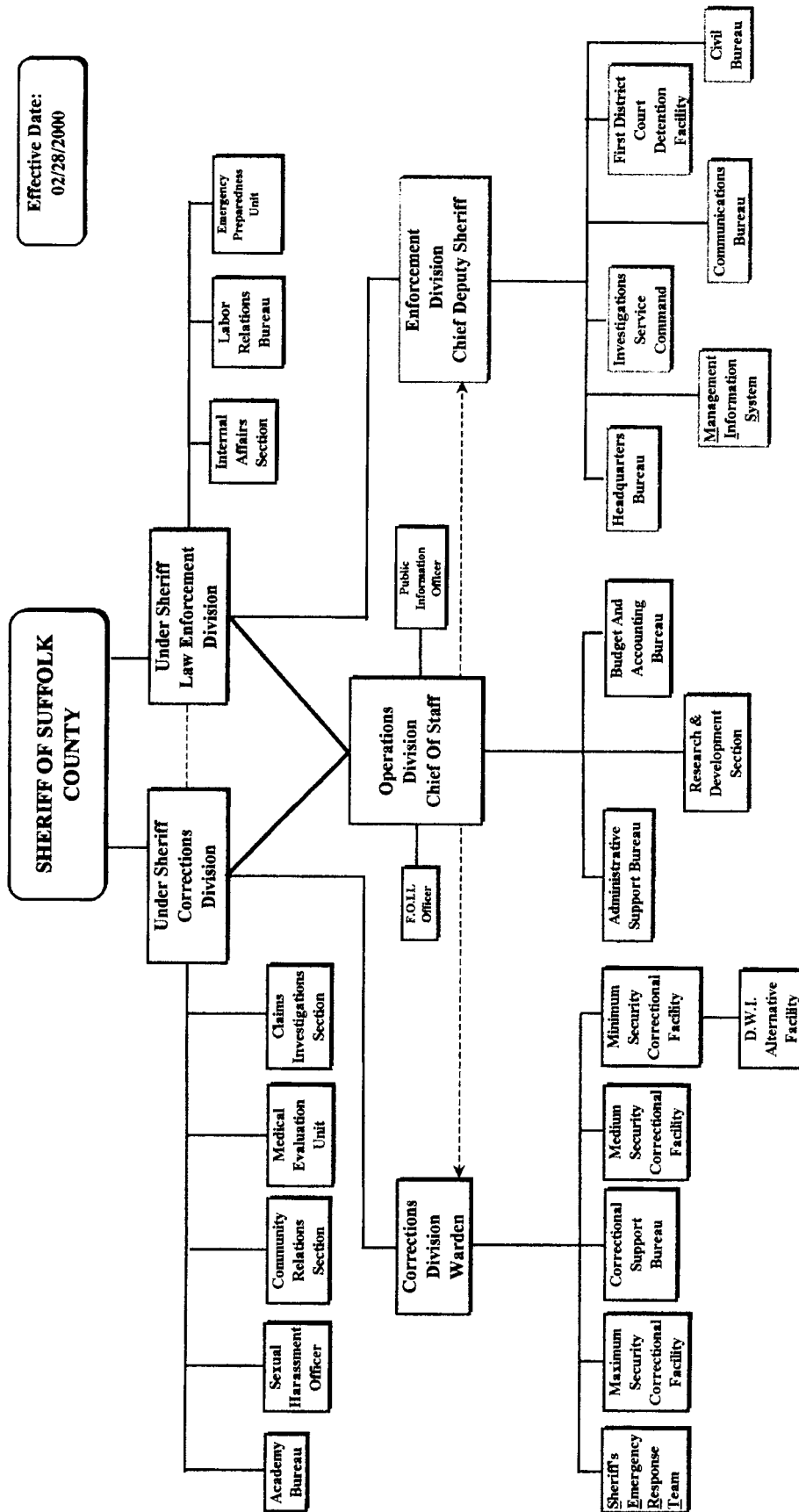
The Sheriff and the County Executive have the authority to declare a state of emergency. The Sheriff Department's Office of Emergency Preparedness oversees the deployment of Peace Officers, Police Departments, Fire Police, Reserve Police, special Deputies, and Auxiliary Police. This office works closely with the Commissioner of Fire Rescue and Emergency Services once a disaster has been declared.



*Photo by Henry Mangels*

**Party fishing boats at Captree State Park Boat Basin, West Islip, NY**

FIGURE 13.2 SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



Effective Date:  
02/28/2000

## PUBLIC SAFETY

***Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services (FRES).*** The County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services (FRES) has the goals of preserving life and property from the ravages of fire and other emergency situations, sustaining life in medical emergencies, and protecting public safety during natural and man made disasters.

Operations are centralized through the Suffolk County Fire Marshall's Office which coordinates, contracts with and administers the operations and responses of the County Emergency Management Office, Fire/Rescue Communications, Fire Training Academy, Arson Task Force, and Auxiliary Police Program.

FRES programs and services support and protect the residents, employees and visitors of Suffolk County where they live, work and play. FRES provides expertise and coordination in fire prevention education and safety, building codes, fire prevention inspections, fire investigation, 911

calls involving fire/rescue, and operation of the County's Emergency Operations Center, man-made and natural disaster preparedness education, hazard mitigation, radiological monitoring equipment, auxiliary police, preparation of emergency response plans and policies, and training of the fire and emergency services.

Volunteer fire departments, trained by FRES, make up the backbone of fire protection in Suffolk County. There are ten fire divisions corresponding to the 10 town boundaries, 87 fire districts served by 109 volunteer fire departments.

***Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services Commission.*** The Commission cooperates with the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control and acts as a policy making body to the County Executive, the County Legislature and the Commissioner of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services in connection with county establishment and maintenance of fire training and mutual aid programs.



*Courtesy of Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead*

**Colonial House and Big Oak, Sayville, NY**



*Photo by Hal B. Fullertom  
Courtesy of Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead*

**Locomotive #92 stopped at Cross Island Cycle Path, 1897, Patchogue, NY**

Because of the bicycle craze of the Gay Nineties which caused heavy bicycle traffic, the railroad posted warnings at its crossings.