

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri

Bob Gualtieri began his law enforcement and public service career as a detention deputy working in the Pinellas County jail in 1982. After attending the police academy, he joined the Dunedin Police Department as a patrol officer and later rejoined the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office as a patrol deputy. Sheriff Gualtieri served in many different components of the agency, including several years conducting domestic and international drug trafficking investigations as part of a DEA task force.

Sheriff Gualtieri earned his bachelor's degree from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg and his law degree from Stetson University College of Law. He is admitted to practice law in all Florida courts, before the United States Supreme Court, as well as the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, and the United States District Courts in the Northern, Middle, and Southern Districts of Florida.

In 2006, Sheriff Gualtieri became General Counsel for the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office before being appointed chief deputy (second in command) in 2008. He served in the dual role of general counsel and chief deputy until the governor appointed him sheriff in 2011 and was elected sheriff in 2012 and was subsequently re-elected in 2016 and 2020.

The sheriff is a past president and current legislative committee chair of the Florida Sheriffs Association (FSA) and serves on the board of directors of the Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA). Sheriff Gualtieri is a member of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Police Executive Research Forum.

On a national level, The United States Attorney General appointed Sheriff Gualtieri to serve on the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. The Commission issued a 300-page report in 2020 that has improved policing across the country. Sheriff Gualtieri has represented NSA and MCSA while working with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to develop a lawful process that prevents the release of criminal illegal aliens back into the community from our jails.

Following the school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (MSDHS) in February of 2018, Governor Rick Scott appointed Sheriff Gualtieri to serve as the chair of the MSDHS Public Safety Commission. The commission issued a 500-page report in January 2019 that resulted in significant improvements to school safety across Florida. He is nationally recognized for his work on school safety and continues to advocate for more effective school safety measures in Florida and across the country.

For his accomplishments and dedication to Pinellas County and law enforcement across the country, the National Sheriffs' Association named Sheriff Gualtieri its 2019 Sheriff of the Year among 3,100 sheriffs nationwide, and the Major County Sheriffs of America named him its 2022 Sheriff of the Year among the 110 sheriffs nationwide who represent the largest sheriff's offices in the United States. He also received the 2020 Police Executive Research Forum Leadership Award, the 2019 Homeland Security Leadership Award, the 2019 Stetson University Distinguished Alumni Award, and was named 2014 Sheriff of the Year by Crisis Intervention Team International for his work on mental health issues. The sheriff is also a recipient of the 2017 FSA President's Award and the 2018 NSA President's Award.

During his tenure, Pinellas County has experienced a continual decrease in crime making the county one of the safest large counties at the state and national levels. At the same time, Sheriff Gualtieri has decreased the county jail population through innovative services, many of which are being replicated by other jurisdictions: Pinellas Safe Harbor, an emergency homeless shelter and jail-diversion program that provides services to the homeless and keeps them out of the criminal justice system; Adult Pre-Arrest Diversion program, which keeps minor crime first time offenders out of jail; a Mental Health Unit that diverts people to the mental health system and away from the criminal justice system; Operation H.O.M.E. (Habitual Offender Monitoring Enforcement), a countywide effort to reduce teen crime; a School Guardian Unit to ensure safer K12 campuses in Pinellas County, and a Threat Management Division to more effectively pool the agency's resources to prevent tragedy.

Sheriff Gualtieri is active in many community organizations and serves on the boards of directors for the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Suncoast and the Pinellas Sheriff's Police Athletic League.