Understanding Gang Culture and Law Enforcement Strategies in Southwest Virginia

Course Description:

This two-hour in-service training course provides Virginia law enforcement officers with a comprehensive overview of gang culture, with a particular focus on the unique dynamics present in Southwest Virginia. The course fulfills the cultural diversity training requirement by examining the social, cultural, and criminal aspects of gang activity and equipping officers with investigative strategies tailored to local contexts.

Participants will explore the origins, structures, and behavioral patterns of various gang types, including street gangs, prison gangs, and outlaw motorcycle gangs. Special attention will be given to the presence and influence of gangs within Southwest Virginia communities and correctional institutions. Through case studies, regional data, and interactive discussion, officers will gain insight into the cultural factors that contribute to gang affiliation and persistence.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define and distinguish between street gangs, prison gangs, and outlaw motorcycle gangs.
- Identify cultural and behavioral markers associated with gang membership and activity.
- Analyze the presence and impact of gangs in Southwest Virginia communities.
- Explore gang dynamics within correctional facilities in Southwest Virginia.
- Apply investigative techniques and intelligence-gathering strategies to gang-related cases.
- Understand the cultural diversity within gang populations and how it affects law enforcement engagement and community relations.

Target Audience: Sworn law enforcement officers in Virginia seeking to fulfill the 2-hour cultural diversity in-service training requirement.

Location: Virginia Highlands Community College, 160 Opportunity Lane, Abingdon, Virginia. OTC Building, Room 112

Time: 11/20/25 from 12:00 noon until 2:00 p.m.

Training Fee: Free

Course Registration: Complete the highlighted areas on the attached form and forward to the academy.