



## OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

LAWRENCE A. STELMA - SHERIFF



KENT COUNTY Michigan – Sheriff Stelma announces his retirement.

“For 46 years I have had the privilege of serving this community, and I consider this privilege a gift from God,” Sheriff Stelma said as he notified the Kent County Board of Commissioners of his intent to retire November 1, 2018. While the decision to retire was difficult, the Sheriff emphasized that he is "confident that the next generation of leadership will serve this community well and bring this organization to new heights.”

Sheriff Stelma’s service to the residents of Kent County began in January of 1972 as a deputy in the jail, and has continued for nearly half a century, with experience spanning almost every division of the department. He was elected Sheriff in 2001 and has since been re-elected for 5 consecutive terms. In 2017 he was named “Sheriff of the Year” by the Michigan Sheriff’s Association. Sheriff Stelma’s investment in his staff, and his strong belief in mentorship have been key elements that have developed the Kent County Sheriff’s Office into one of the most innovative and strategic departments in the country.

“It’s been a tremendous honor and privilege to work for a leader whose fundamental goal is to guide and develop his staff through mentorship. His approach to mentorship and his unwavering leadership are directly tied to the culture we are so proud of at the KCSO,” Undersheriff LaJoye-Young said. “We will miss him dearly and we wish him all the best on his next adventure.”

In a recent staff meeting, the Sheriff was asked what he plans to do in retirement. “A whole lot more hunting and fishing,” he responded, with his famous half smile and a nod.

Sheriff Stelma has submitted his intent to retire to the County Clerk, and the legislated process to appoint a replacement will be occurring once the statutorily required appointing authority has been assembled.

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