



Rich Stanek

Hennepin County Sheriff, ret.

Richard W. Stanek was the 27th Sheriff of Hennepin County. He was first sworn in on January 1, 2007, was re-elected in 2010 and 2014, and retired at the end of his third term. Retired Sheriff Rich Stanek is a life-long resident of Hennepin County, growing up in "Northeast" Minneapolis. He is a 35-year veteran of law enforcement – serving with the Minneapolis Police Department, rising through the ranks from Patrol Officer to Commander of Criminal Investigations. While serving as a police officer, he was elected to the Minnesota State Legislature five times, where he served as Chair of the Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee. In 2003, the Governor appointed him Commissioner of Public Safety & Director of Homeland Security for Minnesota.

Upon taking office in 2007 as Sheriff, Rich redirected the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office mission to include fighting violent crime, leveraging technology to prevent crime, and enhancing outreach with diverse communities. These initiatives are conducted in partnerships with federal and local law enforcement agencies, and they have contributed to an historic decrease in violent crime countywide.

He created new crime-fighting units at the Sheriff's Office that serve law enforcement agencies and communities countywide. The Hennepin County Violent Offender Task Force conducts focused investigations on the county's most violent offenders. The Criminal Information Sharing & Analysis unit works with law enforcement partners to provide analysis on crime trends and criminal activity in an effort to prevent and solve crime.

Rich has brought new awareness to several emerging public safety threats. He coordinated town hall meetings and legislative advocacy to target the heroin epidemic, prescription drug abuse, and human trafficking. In Minnesota, he has led the effort to improve treatment for inmates with mental illness by expediting medically-appropriate care. On the national level, he participated in President Obama's law enforcement working group that addressed the intersection of mental illness and gun violence, and at his direction, the Sheriff's Office was named as one of 15 demonstration sites for the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

Throughout his career, Rich has created opportunities to connect at-risk kids with positive role models. He founded the Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation, which provides programs for disadvantaged youth and supports Sheriff's Office volunteers. He also serves in leadership roles for local non-profit groups that help youth including Treehouse and the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities.

While serving as Sheriff, he was elected as the President of the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association, 2nd Vice-President of the National Sheriffs' Association, and Vice-President of the Homeland Security Committee for the Major County Sheriffs of America. On the national level, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce appointed him to the board of FirstNet, which is developing a wireless broadband network for public safety.

Rich earned a Criminal Justice Degree from the University of Minnesota, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Hamline University.