

# Sheriff's Office of Sussex County

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Press Release # 20-3

Date of Incident 4/19/20

Type of Incident SCSO Joins County in Mourning the Passing of Undersheriff Tomasula.

Date of Release 4/20/20

Prepared By Sgt. Kieran McMorrow #1243

Sheriff Michael F. Strada is deeply saddened to announce the passing of Sussex County Sheriff's Office Undersheriff and former Newton Police Chief John Tomasula following a courageous battle with cancer.

A lifelong Sussex County resident, Undersheriff Tomasula began a literal lifetime of public service as a young man when he first joined the Newton Volunteer First Aid & Rescue Squad. Volunteering in this capacity lead him to an opportunity to work as a Police Dispatcher for the Newton Police Department and then to his eventual hiring as a Newton Police Officer in 1985.

Throughout his service with the Newton Police Department, Undersheriff Tomasula worked in virtually every facet and rank of law enforcement within that agency. From foot patrol, bicycle patrol, Detective Bureau, and Community Policing; he rose through the ranks ultimately accepting the position of Chief of Police in 2000. A role in which he served for 10 years until his retirement in 2010.

Having assisted in the planning, restructuring, and operation of a new police facility and 9-11 Communications Center during his tenure as Chief of Police, Undersheriff Tomasula was uniquely suited to the task when, in 2014, Sheriff Strada asked him to assist in the planning and construction of a new Countywide 9-11 Communications Center. Once again, he answered the call to serve and accepted a position as Director of Communications for the Sussex County Sheriff's Office. In this role, he was instrumental in the establishment and continued success of our current Sussex County 9-11 center. He remained 9-11 Director until accepting the position of Undersheriff of the Bureau of Corrections in 2018. Undersheriff Tomasula continued to serve in this role right up to his untimely passing.

Well known and deservedly respected throughout the first responder community in Sussex County, the loss of Undersheriff Tomasula will surely be felt by many. Said the Sheriff, "John was a true leader with unwavering, strength, commitment, and integrity. He will be missed by many but not forgotten."

Sheriff Strada and the men and women of the Sussex County Sheriff's Office offer our sincerest condolences to the Tomasula family and join all who had the privilege of knowing Undersheriff Tomasula in mourning his passing.