

Sheriff

Armando B. Fontoura
Essex County Sheriff

Sheriff Armando B. Fontoura is responsible for operating the largest and most active Sheriff's Department in New Jersey. The agency serves the people of Essex County and the State's largest Superior Court vicinage.

A career law enforcement officer, Armando Fontoura was appointed Sheriff in 1990, elected in 1991 and re-elected in 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009. He is the longest tenured Sheriff in Essex County history.

Sheriff Fontoura is a graduate of the FBI's National Academy and National Executive Institute. He is the past president of the Police Management Association and is an active member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Sheriff's Association.

Prior to his election as Sheriff, Armando Fontoura rose through the ranks of the Newark Police Department. In a police career that began in 1967, Fontoura earned the rank of Captain and served as Chief Assistant to the Police Director. As Chief Assistant, he helped formulate policy, issued daily directives and was responsible for the Office of Public Information.

During his career, Sheriff Fontoura held supervisory positions in the Patrol Division and the Detective Division. Working with the FBI to thwart a series of bank robberies that had plagued the area, he coordinated the critically acclaimed and highly successful Bandit Squad. He was later appointed as Project Director for the Newark Police Department's Victim Service Center and the Sexual Assault Rape Analysis Unit (SARA).

In 1986, Fontoura was appointed Essex County Undersheriff. He played a critical role in implementing a full-time Bomb Detection Unit, a multi-discipline K-9 Squad and an expanded Public Education Unit.

As Sheriff, Fontoura directs New Jersey's oldest and most active county-wide Bureau of Narcotics. Working in response to citizen complaints and in tandem with the federal Drug Enforcement Administration, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and municipal police agencies, the Sheriff's Bureau of Narcotics arrests 1000 drug dealers annually and has dramatically improved Essex County's quality of life.

The Essex County Division of Police was added to Sheriff Fontoura's command in 1997. In 2007, the Division of Police was disbanded and the officers from the division became Sheriff's officers assigned to the Sheriff's Patrol Division. Augmented by the Deputy Sheriffs, the Patrol Division ensures the safety and security in our nation's largest and oldest park system — the Essex County Park System. As County Coordinator for the Essex County Office of Emergency Management, Sheriff Fontoura directs the regional response to natural and man-made disasters and acts of terrorism.

Sheriff Fontoura supervises one of the busiest and most active Bomb Detection Squads on the eastern seaboard. The Bomb Squad has responded to crime scenes such as the North Caldwell bomb attack by the notorious Unabomber and the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. It also assists federal, state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the northern New Jersey region. Bomb Squad activities are often augmented by the work of the Sheriff's K-9 Unit where 15 highly trained canines and their handlers successfully sniff out bombs, drugs, weapons, arsonists, missing persons and cadavers.

Under Fontoura's direction, the Essex County Sheriff's Office has implemented a new state-of-the-art court security system and has instituted a more efficient records management system. Sheriff Fontoura has coordinated the

formation of aggressive multi-agency Task Forces with the FBI, the New Jersey State Police, the United States Marshals Service and municipal police departments. In 1996, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms awarded Fontoura's department with the metropolitan area's first Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS), making the Essex County Sheriff's Office the repository for all ballistics evidence in northern New Jersey.

Sheriff Fontoura was appointed to serve on the White House Anti-Crime Strategy Council and the White House National Forum on Drug Control. In 1993, President Clinton designated Sheriff Fontoura to join him on the podium at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in New Brunswick as both men addressed the impact of violent crime on the cost of health care in America. In 2004, Governor Richard Codey appointed Sheriff Fontoura to serve as a charter member on New Jersey's Gangland Task Force.

Also in 2004, Sheriff Fontoura was appointed Commissioner of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA). The NJSEA operates sports facilities and entertainment venues throughout New Jersey, including the Meadowlands Sports Complex, Monmouth Park Racetrack, the Atlantic City Convention Center and the Camden Aquarium, among other venues.

That same year, the Most Reverend John J. Myers, Archbishop of Newark, appointed Sheriff Fontoura to serve as a board member of the Northern New Jersey Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force.

In 2007, following the tragic shootings at Virginia Tech University, acting Governor Richard Codey appointed the Sheriff to the New Jersey Campus Security Task Force.

A frequent newsmaker and guest expert on network and nationally syndicated television news and public affairs programs, Sheriff Fontoura has appeared on NBC's "Dateline," ABC's "Prime Time" and CBS's "48 Hours" and "Eye on America." He has analyzed and commented on topics ranging from terrorist bombings and the ban on assault weapons to gang violence and emergency management.

Sheriff Fontoura devotes considerable time and energy to many civic and charitable causes. As a member of the Greater Newark Fresh Air Fund's Board of Directors, he is a prime organizer for their Summer Camp program which enables economically disadvantaged youth to experience the wonders of nature. During the past quarter century, he has raised more than \$400,000 in charitable contributions for the Fund's Summer Camp program.

Sheriff Fontoura is also a member of the Board of Directors or on the Advisory Board of various prominent charitable organizations including the United Way, the Salvation Army, the Star-Ledger Christmas Fund, the 200 Club of Essex County, the Ironbound Boys' and Girls' Club and the Public Employees Charitable Campaign. His annual Thanksgiving Food Drive for the Homeless donates bulk foodstuffs to scores of local social service pantries and his Holiday Toy Drive for Needy Families donates gifts to thousands of children. Sheriff Fontoura is also a Governor for the Cathedral Health Care System.

Sheriff Fontoura has previously served as Vice Chairman of the Newark Human Rights Commission and as Vice Chairman of the Newark Collaboration Group. He has also served as Vice President of the Essex County Mental Health Association where he continues to be a member of the organization's Board of Advisors, and he is a Lay Trustee for Our Lady of Fatima Church in Newark.

Throughout his distinguished law enforcement career, Sheriff Fontoura has been the recipient of many professional and civic awards. These honors include his selection by NBC as the metropolitan area's "Good Cop," UNICO's "Man of the Year," the Newark Jaycees' "Law Enforcement Officer of the Year," the Boy Scouts' "Good Scout" award, the Star-Ledger's "Jersey Man of the Year," and the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund's "Award of Excellence."

Before he began his career in law enforcement, Sheriff Fontoura worked as a teacher in the Newark public school

system after earning his bachelor's degree in education at Newark State Teacher's College, now Kean University.

A resident of Fairfield, Sheriff Fontoura and his wife, Mary, are the proud parents of three daughters and have been blessed with five grandchildren.