

Customer Stories

Hillsdale County  
Sheriff's Office

# Rural Michigan sheriff's office joins FirstNet to improve community response

**Hillsdale County Law Enforcement use  
smart devices and increase  
field connectivity for personnel**

- **Agency/Organization Needs** – Communication is central to the small agency of 24. And staff needed better technology to respond to community requests.
- **Networking Solution** – Samsung devices compatible with FirstNet, including Gear S3 wearables and Galaxy Smartphones.
- **Business value** – A cost-effective solution to fit the department's operational needs.
- **Industry Focus** – Law enforcement
- **Size** – Small agency of 24 personnel, including deputies and supervisors

Hillsdale County Sheriff's Office in rural Michigan serves a population of 47,000 people across 600 square miles.

Communication is central to their daily work of protecting the community, whether at their office headquarters or in the field. The small agency of just 24 personnel, including deputies and supervisors, had staff expressing the need for better technology to help them be more effective when responding to community requests. In an internal department survey, smartphones were cited as the most important tool desired by the agency's deputies.

Todd Moore, Operations Lieutenant, applied for a community grant to fund the deputies' technology requests. When that was denied due to the high expense, he continued researching options and heard about FirstNet, a communications network built with and for public safety, when and where they need it.

Lt. Moore worked with FirstNet to create a solution package that fit the department's operational needs.

Within a short time, FirstNet, Built with AT&T, equipped all Hillsdale County deputies with Samsung devices compatible

# Time-saving connections and modernized reporting



**“FirstNet is moving us into the next generation of law enforcement. It’s a huge help for us and we’re able to keep up with the times with dependable technology.”**

**Todd Moore,  
Operations Lieutenant,  
Hillsdale County  
Sheriff’s Office**

with the FirstNet network, including Gear S3 wearables and Galaxy Smartphones. “FirstNet is a great program that was cost-effective for a smaller agency,” said Moore.

Dependable connectivity has made the biggest impact for Hillsdale County. Before FirstNet, deputies had to travel as much as 30 minutes back to the office to make necessary calls for case follow-up, due to the lack of mobile communication. The entire staff is much more efficient since deputies can now make calls on-scene or directly from their car over the FirstNet network, saving countless hours and valuable resources.

It has also helped the agency make progress toward other goals, such as “going paperless,” with personnel conducting all reporting electronically.

“We use the smartphones as a staff camera to take crime scene photos and upload them into our report writing system,” Lt. Moore said. “We also use them to scan all documents, including booking sheets and written statement forms, allowing us to move closer to being a paperless agency.”

## **Deputy safety, community engagement**

The network and new devices continue to strengthen personnel safety. The smartwatch wearables include a feature that allows deputies to send an “SOS” notification with the push of a button to dispatch if they are in a compromising situation, need backup and can’t call or radio for assistance.

Hillsdale County puts a high priority on staying connected with the community and has created a mobile app that allows the public to receive department issued notices in real-time, unlike ever before. The public is also able to make direct contact with all staff members via email through the app’s “contact us” tab. Lt. Moore noted the department eliminated voicemail completely because calls now transfer to the deputies’ smartphones.