

# STATE OF FLORIDA

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 19-14 (Executive Order of Suspension)

**WHEREAS**, Article IV, Section 7 of the Florida Constitution provides in relevant part that, “the Governor may suspend from office ... any county officer for ... neglect of duty ... [or] incompetence”; and

**WHEREAS**, Scott Israel is presently serving as the Sheriff for Broward County, Florida, having been reelected by the voters of Broward County in 2016 for a four-year term; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Florida Statute § 30.15, it is the duty of elected sheriffs to be the conservators of the peace in their respective counties; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Florida Statute § 30.07, “sheriffs may appoint deputies to act under them who shall have the same power as the sheriff appointing them, and for the neglect and default of whom in the execution of their office the sheriff shall be responsible”; and

**WHEREAS**, sheriffs are responsible for appointing command staff who are responsible for the training, response and security within the counties, including airports, seaports and schools within their jurisdiction; and

**WHEREAS**, sheriffs are responsible for the recruitment, hiring and promotion of their command staff and deputy sheriffs; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 14, 2018, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Broward County, Florida, experienced a tragic shooting, taking the lives of seventeen students and staff members; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Broward County Sheriff's Office had a total of 21 interactions with the shooter, including two incidents that an internal affairs investigation later found warranted additional follow-up; and

**WHEREAS**, the first of the above incidents occurred in February 2016 when the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooter posted a picture of a gun with a statement similar to "I am going to get this gun when I turn 18 and shoot up the school"; and

**WHEREAS**, Broward County Deputy Eason, acting on behalf of and in place of Sheriff Israel, did not complete an incident report, but instead noted in CAD, "No threats noted and info forwarded to (SRO) Peterson at school."; and

**WHEREAS**, the second of the above incidents occurred in November 2017 when Broward County Sheriff's Office received a call that the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooter "had weapons and wanted to join the military to kill people" and "that [he] 'might be a Columbine in the making' and was a threat to kill himself."; and

**WHEREAS**, Broward County Deputy Treijs, acting on behalf of and in place of Sheriff Israel, did not complete an incident report, but instead noted in CAD that the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooter was autistic, his location was unknown, and directed the caller to contact another police department; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 14, 2018, Broward County Deputy Scot Peterson was at all times acting on behalf of and in place of Sheriff Israel while serving as the School Resource Officer at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 14, 2018, Broward County Deputy Peterson exercised the discretion of Sheriff Israel consciously deciding not to engage the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooter, while the shooter was actively killing and attempting to kill the students and teachers of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission Report dated January 2, 2019, there were six other Broward County Sheriff Deputies acting on behalf of and in place of Sheriff Israel who were in close proximity to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School that “did not immediately move towards the gunshots to confront the shooter”; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel is responsible for developing, implementing and training his deputies on policy related to active shooters; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel is responsible for inserting into the Broward County Sheriff’s Office Active Shooter Policy that a deputy “may” enter the area or structure to engage an active shooter and preserve life; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 15, 2018, Sheriff Israel stated to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission “that he wanted his deputies to exercise discretion and he did not want them engaging in ‘suicide missions.’”; and

**WHEREAS**, as noted by the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission Report dated January 2, 2019, Broward County Sheriff’s Office policy for responding to an active shooter situation is inconsistent with current and standard law enforcement practices; and

**WHEREAS**, even if the duty to engage an active shooter was discretionary, the responsibility for the exercise of that discretion falls upon the elected sheriff; and

**WHEREAS**, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission Report further revealed a failure on the part of Sheriff Israel and his deputies to timely establish an incident command center; and

**WHEREAS**, to meet the Sheriff’s duty to be the conservator of the peace, it is necessary for the Sheriff to provide adequate, up-to-date, frequent, thorough and realistic training to handle high-risk, high-stress situations, including mass casualty incidents; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel's deputies interviewed by the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission could not remember the last time they attended active shooter training or what type of training they received; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 6, 2017, a tragic shooting occurred at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport in Broward County, Florida, taking the lives of five and injuring dozens more; and

**WHEREAS**, during the shooting at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport the Broward County Sheriff's Office failed to contain and maintain security resulting in a breach of airport security; and

**WHEREAS**, an internal investigation into the Fort Lauderdale Airport shooting uncovered a lack of leadership by Sheriff Israel, including: a failure by Sheriff Israel to establish proper containment procedures for the crime scene, a failure by Sheriff Israel to establish a centralized command and response, a failure by Sheriff Israel to provide his deputies adequate, thorough and realistic training, and a failure by Sheriff Israel to establish an appropriate response to a mass casualty incident; and

**WHEREAS**, the investigation also revealed that Sheriff Israel's neglect of duty and incompetence lead to "most of the law enforcement personnel who responded [lacking] clear instructions, objectives, and roles."; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel has egregiously failed in his duties as Sheriff for Broward County; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel failed to maintain a culture of vigilance and thoroughness amongst his deputies in protecting the peace in Broward County, Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel has demonstrated during multiple incidents that he has not provided for the proper training of his deputies; and

**WHEREAS**, two separate reports into the recent mass casualty shootings in Broward County specifically found that Sheriff Israel has not and does not provide frequent training for his deputies

resulting in the deaths of twenty-two individuals and a response that is inadequate for the future safety of Broward County residents; and

**WHEREAS**, two separate reports into the recent mass casualty shootings in Broward County specifically found that Sheriff Israel has not implemented proper protocols to provide guaranteed access to emergency services, nor proper protocols to have timely, unified command centers setup to control a crime scene, leading to confusion, a lack of recognized chain-of-command, and ultimately a failure to contain the dangerous situation; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheriff Israel has contravened his oath of office as set forth in Article II, section 5, of the Florida Constitution, to "...faithfully perform the duties" of Sheriff of Broward County, Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, due to his demonstrated neglect of duty and incompetence, Sheriff Israel can no longer demonstrate the qualifications necessary to meet his duties in office; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the best interests of the residents of Broward County, and the citizens of the State of Florida, that Sheriff Israel be immediately suspended from the public office, which he now holds;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS**, Governor of Florida, pursuant to the Constitution and the laws of the State of Florida, do hereby find, determine, and for the purposes of Article IV, section 7, of the Florida Constitution, allege as follows:

- A. Scott Israel is, and at all times material was, the Sheriff for Broward County, Florida.
- B. The office of sheriff is within the purview of the suspension powers of the Governor, pursuant to Article IV, section 7, of the Florida Constitution.
- C. The actions and omissions of Scott Israel as referenced above and as noted in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission Report, dated January 2, 2019 and attached hereto,

constitute neglect of duty and incompetence for the purposes of Article IV, section 7, of the Florida Constitution.

D. If, after execution of this suspension, additional facts are discovered that illustrate further neglect of duty and incompetence—or other constitutional grounds for suspension of Sheriff Israel—this Executive Order may be amended to allege those additional facts.

**BEING FULLY ADVISED** in the premises, and in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the State of Florida, this Executive Order is issued, effective immediately:

Section 1. Scott Israel is hereby suspended from the public office that he now holds, to wit: Sheriff for Broward County, Florida.

Section 2. Scott Israel is hereby prohibited from performing any official act, duty, or function of public office; from receiving any pay or allowance; and from being entitled to any of the emoluments or privileges of public office during the period of this suspension, which period shall be from the effective date hereof, until a further executive order is issued, or as otherwise provided by law.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed, at Tallahassee, this 11th day of January, 2019.

  
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RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

  
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SECRETARY OF STATE

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TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA  
FILED