

School Resource Officers (SROs)**DEFINITION**

"School Resource Officer" SRO means an officer whose primary job function is to work with youth at a school site who has specialized training to work with youth at a school site and is:

- (a)
 - 1. A sworn law enforcement officer certified under KRS 15.380 to KRS 15.404; or
 - 2. A special law enforcement officer appointed pursuant to KRS 61.902 and certified under KRS 15.380 to KRS 15.404; or
 - 3. A police officer appointed as a certified SRO; and
- (b) Employed:
 - 1. Through a contract between a local law enforcement agency and a school district;
 - 2. Through a contract as secondary employment for an officer, as defined in KRS 16.010, between the Department of Kentucky State Police and a school district; or
 - 3. Directly by a local Board of Education.¹

PURPOSE

The purpose of the SRO program is to: promote and foster a safe environment in schools, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation; provide a law enforcement presence on school property and at school-sponsored events; enhance educational programs relating to safety and positive behaviors; and provide a liaison to community and law enforcement agencies. The purpose of the program is not to enforce or administer matters of school discipline and student conduct which are the responsibility of other District or school personnel.

ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

An SRO will have such training, certification, and commission as is required by provisions of KRS Chapters 15, 61, and 158. Per KRS 158.4414, an SRO who fails to successfully and timely complete SRO training requirements shall lose his/her SRO certification and shall no longer serve in the capacity of an SRO in a school. An SRO is also expected to obtain training on the use of physical restraint and seclusion as required of all school personnel except additional training applicable to "core team" school personnel designated to respond to dangerous behavior.²

An SRO is vested with law enforcement jurisdiction and authority as described in KRS 61.902 to KRS 61.930 and other applicable law, including, but not limited to, investigating and responding to possible criminal offenses and to health or safety threats to students or school personnel.

As authorized under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), SROs are designated as the District's "law enforcement unit" possessing the law enforcement authority and exercising safety and security functions described in state law and referenced above. Records created and maintained by an SRO for a law enforcement purpose do not constitute education records under FERPA.³ District staff other than law enforcement personnel are not responsible for the creation of law enforcement records and are expected to observe restrictions on access to such records. An SRO is expected to provide guidance and insight to District officials and staff on such restrictions.

School Resource Officers (SROs)

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

An SRO who is directly employed by the District is a classified employee. An SRO is therefore generally covered by District classified employee policies, including, but not limited to, policies regarding terms and conditions of employment; fringe benefits; employee discipline; and reductions in force.⁴ However, as applied to an SRO, such general District classified employee policies may be subject to the terms of his/her contract with the District; his/her job description; and his/her authority to carry out certain law enforcement functions as permitted by law, including, but not limited to, statutory provisions permitting officers to carry and use weapons.⁵

ASSIGNMENT

The Board shall ensure, for each campus in the District, that at least one (1) certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time in the school building or buildings on the campus. If sufficient funds and qualified personnel are not available for this purpose for every campus, the Board shall fulfill the requirements on a per campus basis, as approved in writing by the State School Security Marshal, until a certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time on each campus in the District.

BOARD MAY AUTHORIZE POLICE DEPARTMENT

KRS 158.471 provides that the Board is authorized to establish a police department for the District, appoint police officers and other employees, prescribe distinctive uniforms for the police officers of the District, and designate and operate emergency vehicles. Police officers appointed shall take an appropriate oath of office in the form and manner consistent with the constitution of Kentucky. Police officers shall be granted with the protections provided in KRS 15.520 and shall be certified in accordance with KRS 15.380.³

If the Board establishes a police department, the Superintendent/designee shall develop standard operating procedures governing the department.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

SROs with active SRO certification shall successfully complete forty (40) hours of annual in-service training that has been certified or recognized by the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council for SROs. Any SRO who fails to successfully complete training requirements within the specified time periods, including approved extensions, shall lose his/her SRO certification and shall no longer serve in the capacity of an SRO in a school.

FIREARM REQUIREMENT

Each SRO shall be armed with a firearm, notwithstanding any provision of local board policy, local school council policy, or memorandum of agreement.²

School Resource Officers (SROs)**SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT**

No later than November 1 of each year, the Superintendent shall report to the Center for School Safety the number and placement of SROs in the District. The report shall include the source of funding and method of employment for each position.

GUARDIANS

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, the Board, if unable to meet the requirement for each campus in the District, that at least one (1) certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time in the school building or buildings on the campus, may in consultation with and approval by the State School Security Marshal, employ one (1) or more Guardians to provide safety and security measures for schools within the District. The use of Guardians shall not be used to replace the certified SRO, but only to provide safety and security resources until a certified SRO is available.

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, the Board that has met the requirement for each campus in the District, that at least one (1) certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time in the school building or buildings on the campus, may employ one (1) or more Guardians to provide additional school safety and security measures within the District.²

REFERENCES:

¹KRS 158.441

²KRS 158.4414

³KRS 158.471

KRS 15.380 to KRS 15.404; KRS 15.520

KRS 61.902; KRS 70.290

KRS 158.4415; KRS 158.4431

KRS 158.471; KRS 158.473; KRS 158.475; KRS 158.477; KRS 158.479; KRS 158.481

RELATED POLICIES:

02.311; 05.48; 09.4361