



**KNOXVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE**



**Standard Operating Procedure – School Resource Officer**

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This is the standard operating procedure of the School Resource Officer for the Knoxville Police Department and is developed under the guidelines of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies standards. I have reviewed and approved this document for implementation on this date.

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I. School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Objectives

- A. Establish a positive working relationship with the school personnel in a cooperative effort to prevent juvenile delinquency and assist in student development.
- B. Help maintain a safe and secure environment on campus, which will be conducive to learning.
- C. Promote positive attitudes regarding the police role in society and to inform students of their rights and responsibilities as a lawful citizen.
- D. Serve as a role model to the students at the SRO's respective school.

II. Definitions

- A. Reasonable Suspicion: Grounds for school administrators to conduct searches of student's persons or property. Not a requirement of absolute certainty but sufficient probability.
- B. Administrative Searches: Searches by school administrators when there is reasonable suspicion that the search of a student will yield contraband or the student is in violation of a school rule or in violation of the law.
- C. Probable Cause: Actions that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a crime has occurred and the person in question committed it.

III. Selection and Placement of the School Resource Officer

- A. The School Resource Officer position will be filled following posting of the position for transfer and the interviewing of applicants as prescribed by the Knoxville Police Department policy. The successful applicant will be notified of their potential transfer.
- B. A School Resource Officer applicant must:
  - a. Have knowledge of what the SRO position entails
  - b. Possesses good communication skills
  - c. Have knowledge of juvenile laws and school policy

- d. Selection to the School Resource Unit will require a minimum of a two (2) year commitment as a School Resource Officer assigned to Knox County Schools.

#### IV. Duties and Responsibilities of the School Resource Officer

- A. Primary duty is to provide protection of life and property on campus of both high and middle schools in the Knox County School System, located in the city limits of Knoxville or other schools as determined by the Chief of Police.
- B. The School Resource Officer is to arrive on campus thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of school and is to remain on campus for thirty (30) minutes following dismissal of the students, or a maximum of eight (8) hours per day, if school is in session longer than eight (8) hours.
- C. School Resource Officers are to maintain a position of high visibility where they can observe the arrival and dismissal of the students. The officer is to use discretion in determining the location based on the particular needs or problems the school may have.
- D. The SRO shall assist the principal in developing plans and strategies to prevent and/or minimize dangerous situations that may occur on campus. The Chairman of the Knox County School Safety Committee must approve any changes to the Emergency Management Plan. The SRO will review all Knox County Security Emergency Plans and Security Assessments for each of their assigned schools (including all elementary schools assigned as liaison) each year, and submit any suggestions for changes or improvements to the SRO Unit supervisor for review. The SRO will also review emergency plans and security assessments of all private schools to which they are assigned.
- E. School Resource Officers are encouraged to interact with students on an individual basis and in small groups, developing an information and intelligence network.
- F. The SRO may present programs on various topics to students. Subjects shall include a basic understanding of law, role of law enforcement, drug awareness, ethical issues, anger management and the mission of law enforcement.
- G. The SRO shall make himself/herself available for conferences with teachers, parents and faculty.

- H. The SRO shall be familiar with agencies and resources that offer assistance to youth and their families and make referrals to agencies when necessary.
- I. The SRO shall take law enforcement action to maintain a safe environment, protect life, or prevent loss/destruction of property.
- J. The SRO shall notify the principal of the school or designee about enforcement actions and make them aware of arrest or crime.
- K. The SRO shall notify the principal or designee of the school before removing a student from school.
- L. The SRO can take law enforcement action if the SRO observes a violation of a state law or an ordinance of the City of Knoxville or, at the request of the principal or the principal's designee, against intruders or unwanted guests who appear on school property.
- M. The SRO shall maintain a working knowledge of potential individuals of concern in proximity to the SRO's assigned school, whether juvenile or adult, including habitual offenders, parolees, sex offenders and others deemed appropriate by the SRO supervisor, Knoxville Police Department policy or memorandum.
- N. The SRO shall not conduct any interviews with the news media concerning a school incident unless the Knoxville Police Department's Public Information Officer and the Knox County School System's Public Information Officer have authorized it.
- O. The SRO shall follow state and federal law, Knoxville Police Department policy, and School Board policy.
- P. The SRO shall follow KPD's confiscation procedure when confiscating drugs from students on school property. The procedure enables schools to get the lab results to administer ZERO Tolerance process mandated by federal law.
- Q. When school personnel discover drugs, alcohol or other illegal contraband on campus and no criminal charges are to be filed or administrative action taken, the SRO shall be notified and the contraband shall be confiscated according to Knoxville Police Department Policy and marked to be destroyed.

- R. When school personnel discover weapons, drugs, alcohol or other illegal contraband on campus the officer shall be notified as soon as possible. If no criminal charges are to be filed and no administrative action is to be taken, the contraband shall be confiscated by the officer according to Knoxville Police Department Policy and marked to be destroyed. If School Security takes possession of any type of illegal drug or weapon then said contraband shall be turned over to the officer immediately.
  - S. The SRO shall respond to all major criminal occurrences at their assigned school.
  - T. The SRO will be responsible in conducting criminal investigations for offenses at their school and utilize the Knoxville Police Department resources as needed.
  - U. On days of inclement weather, holidays and in-service days, the SRO's schedule will be coordinated by the Safety Education Unit supervisor.
  - V. SROs will remain under the command and responsibility of the Knoxville Police Department and not employees of the Knox County School System. SRO's chain of command is as follows: School Resource Supervisor to Support Services Division Commander.
  - W. SROs will conduct random walking patrols on the school campus.
  - X. SROs will conduct bi-monthly meetings with the school principal to review arrest data and develop proactive strategies.
  - Y. The SRO shall participate in forty (40) hours of basic training in school policing within twelve (12) months of assignment to a school. Every year thereafter the SRO shall participate in a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of training specific to school policing that has been approved by the POST commission.
- V. Duties and Responsibilities of the School Resource Unit Supervisor
- The School Resource Officer Unit supervisor will:
- A. Ensure that all SROs receive training to effectively identify and address social, emotional, and health issues of students.
  - B. Utilize monthly arrest and discipline reports to identify areas of need for ongoing SRO training

- C. Direct and manage the department's Handle with Care Program
- D. Track and document monthly reports of on-campus arrests by race, ethnicity, gender, offense, location, and date/time
- E. Ensure that Patrol District Commanders receive a copy of the emergency plans and assessments for schools that are in their respective districts
- F. Record and ensure that all newly appointed SROs receive forty (40) hours of basic training in school policing within twelve (12) months of assignment to a school; and ensure that every year thereafter all SROs receive a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of training specific to school policing that has been approved by the POST commission.

VI. Special Events

- A. SROs are responsible for working after hour school events and paid overtime. Example: Football and Basketball games and other events authorized by the School Resource Officer supervisor.
- B. SROs who enter contractual agreements with the school system for coaching, after school programs, teaching or other activities shall be paid by the school system. Agreements must be approved by the Knoxville Police Department as outlined in General Order 1.7, entitled Secondary Employment.

VII. The School Resource Officer Dress Code

- A. SROs will wear a Class A uniform.
- B. When performing activities on a police bicycle, officers will be allowed to wear departmentally approved bike uniform.
- C. Other exceptions can only be made at the discretion of the School Resource Supervisor.

VIII. Incidents where School Resource Officers should not be used

- A. SROs should not be used as a disciplinarian. If the principal believes the incident is a violation of the law, they may contact the school resource officer to see if law enforcement action is needed.

- B. SROs cannot enforce school rules or policies; however the school resource officer may refer students to the appropriate school official for any violation.
- C. SROs can be present when a principal conducts an administrative search when the principal or designee fears for their personal safety. There must be some level of threat present.

IX. Juvenile Court / District Attorney's Office

The Juvenile Court District Attorney's Office will offer advice on issues that arise in the Knox County School System. The Juvenile District Attorney will be a resource the Knoxville Police Department and the Knox County Schools can use for legal advice when occurrences arise within the schools.

X. Dismissal of the School Resource Officer

In the event the principal of a school feels that a particular school resource officer is not effectively performing their duties and responsibilities and contacts the School Resource Officer's Supervisor, the Chief of Police shall be advised. The Chief of Police or designee shall meet with the School Resource Supervisor and the SRO in question to mediate or resolve the problem that may exist. If the problem cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the principal, the Chief of Police shall in his discretion take appropriate action, including removal or reassignment of the school resource officer.