

School Resource Officers

432.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy describes the Tewksbury Police Department School Resource Officer (SRO) program (G.L. c. 71, § 37P).

432.2 POLICY

The Tewksbury Police Department is committed to enhancing the safety of students and faculty on campuses located in the department's jurisdiction by forming a partnership with school administrators, faculty members, and students.

432.3 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

At the request of the school superintendent, and subject to appropriation, the Chief of Police shall appoint at least one SRO to serve in public elementary and secondary schools (G.L. c. 71, § 37P). The goals and objectives of the SRO program partnership include but are not limited to:

- (a) Creating respect for law and order in the public school system and minimizing criminal activity.
- (b) Identifying students at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system and guiding them toward more positive and socially acceptable ways to behave.
- (c) Reducing criminal activity on or near a school campus.
- (d) Enhancing communication and understanding between students, their families, district staff, and the Department.
- (e) Assisting with the coordination of security measures for school activities such as sports events, dances, and other large gatherings.
- (f) Auditing security measures, at least annually, throughout the school and making recommendations to enhance safety and reduce risk.
- (g) Maintaining a positive school climate for all students, families, and staff.
- (h) Preventing the use, abuse and distribution of alcohol and other controlled substances involving students of the Tewksbury Public Schools.

The Chief of Police shall enter into a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) and establish [Standard Operating Procedures](#) with the school superintendent concerning the SRO program, and it shall contain the minimum requirements imposed by law and be made public and placed on file annually in the Chief of Police's office (G.L. c. 71, § 37P).

The Chief of Police, in consultation with the school superintendent, shall establish procedures to provide guidance to SROs which shall address at a minimum, the items required by G.L. c. 71, § 37P.

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432.4 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER DUTIES

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee should appoint members as SROs whose duties and responsibilities include:

- (a) Responding to calls and the preliminary investigation of criminal offenses that occur on student-occupied property while the SRO is on-duty or during school hours.
- (b) Conducting follow-up investigations of misdemeanor offenses that occur on student-occupied property during school hours.
- (c) Assisting the Criminal Investigation Division with follow-up investigations that originate on student-occupied property or involve a student.
- (d) Providing education for students, faculty, and administrators as requested and when available regarding law enforcement functions.
- (e) Assisting faculty and administrators in establishing policies that contribute to the safety of school staff and students.
- (f) Participating in student conferences, as requested and appropriate.
- (g) Providing youth gang task force intelligence, as appropriate.
- (h) Protecting certain information regarding students and their family members as required by G.L. c. 71, § 37L.
- (i) Ensuring that appropriate school personnel are notified, in a timely manner, of Mandatory Reportable Incidents.
- (j) Ensuring that non-violent infractions of school rules and policies not amounting to criminal or delinquent conduct such as tardiness, use of profanity, and disruptive or disrespectful behavior remain the sole responsibility of school administrators.

432.5 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER QUALIFICATIONS

Members appointed as SROs shall be selected using criteria that includes but is not limited to (G.L. c. 6E, § 3; G.L. c. 71, § 37P):

- (a) The ability of the appointee to foster an optimal learning environment and educational community that promotes a strong partnership between school and law enforcement personnel.
- (b) Demonstrated personality and character to work effectively with children and educators in a school environment.
- (c) Whether the candidate has specialized training in:
 - 1. Cognitive development.
 - 2. De-escalation.
 - 3. Alternatives to arrest and other juvenile justice diversion strategies.

The selection shall not be based solely on seniority. The performance of SROs shall be reviewed annually by the school district superintendent and the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

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432.6 TRAINING

The Department should provide members appointed as SROs a 40-hour SRO Training Course as well as any additional specialized training appropriate for the assignment (G.L. c. 6, § 116H).