



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3313.951 Qualifications for school resource officers.

Effective: March 20, 2019

Legislation: House Bill 491 - 132nd General Assembly

(A) As used in this section:

(1) "Law enforcement agency" has the same meaning as in section 149.435 of the Revised Code.

(2) "Peace officer" has the same meaning as in division (A)(1) of section 109.71 of the Revised Code.

(3) "School resource officer" means a peace officer who is appointed through a memorandum of understanding between a law enforcement agency and a school district to provide services to a school district or school as described in this section.

(B)(1) A school resource officer who provides services to a school district or school on or after November 2, 2018, shall, except as described in division (B)(2) of this section, satisfy both of the following conditions:

(a) Complete a basic training program approved by the Ohio peace officer training commission, as described in division (B)(1) of section 109.77 of the Revised Code;

(b) Complete at least forty hours of school resource officer training within one year after appointment to provide those services through one of the following entities, as approved by the Ohio peace officer training commission:

(i) The national association of school resource officers;

(ii) The Ohio school resource officer association;

(iii) The Ohio peace officer training academy.



(2) A school resource officer who is appointed to provide services to a school district or school prior to November 2, 2018, shall be exempt from compliance with the training requirements prescribed in division (B)(1)(b) of this section.

(3) A certified training program provided by an entity described in division (B)(1)(b) of this section shall include instruction regarding skills, tactics, and strategies necessary to address the specific nature of all of the following:

(a) School campuses;

(b) School building security needs and characteristics;

(c) The nuances of law enforcement functions conducted inside a school environment, including:

(i) Understanding the psychological and physiological characteristics consistent with the ages of the students in the assigned building or buildings;

(ii) Understanding the appropriate role of school resource officers regarding discipline and reducing the number of referrals to juvenile court; and

(iii) Understanding the use of developmentally appropriate interview, interrogation, de-escalation, and behavior management strategies.

(d) The mechanics of being a positive role model for youth, including appropriate communication techniques which enhance interactions between the school resource officer and students;

(e) Providing assistance on topics such as classroom management tools to provide law-related education to students and methods for managing the behaviors sometimes associated with educating children with special needs;

(f) The mechanics of the laws regarding compulsory attendance, as set forth in Chapter 3321. of the Revised Code;



(g) Identifying the trends in drug use, eliminating the instance of drug use, and encouraging a drug-free environment in schools.

(4) The Ohio peace officer training commission shall adopt rules, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, for the approval of school resource officer training provided by an entity described in division (B)(1)(b) of this section.

(C)(1) If a school district decides to utilize school resource officer services, the school district and the appropriate law enforcement agency shall first enter into a memorandum of understanding that clarifies the purpose of the school resource officer program and roles and expectations between the participating entities. If a school district is already utilizing school resource officer services on November 2, 2018, the school district and the law enforcement agency shall enter into a memorandum of understanding within one year after November 2, 2018.

(2) Each memorandum of understanding shall address the following items:

(a) Clearly defined set of goals for the school resource officer program;

(b) Background requirements or suggested expertise for employing law enforcement in the school setting, including an understanding of child and adolescent development;

(c) Professional development, including training requirements that focus on age-appropriate practices for conflict resolution and developmentally informed de-escalation and crisis intervention methods;

(d) Clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the parties involved, including school resource officers, law enforcement, school administrators, staff, and teachers;

(e) A protocol for how suspected criminal activity versus school discipline is to be handled;

(f) The requirement for coordinated crisis planning and updating of school crisis plans;

(g) Any other discretionary items determined by the parties to foster a school resource officer program that builds positive relationships between law enforcement, school staff, and the students,



promotes a safe and positive learning environment, and decreases the number of youth formally referred to the juvenile justice system.

(3) A school district, through its school administration, may give students an opportunity to provide input during the drafting process of any memorandum of understanding being entered into pursuant to division (C) of this section.

(D)(1) In accordance with the requirements prescribed in this section, a school resource officer may work in one or more school districts or schools providing the following services:

(a) Assistance with adoption, implementation, and amendment of the comprehensive emergency management plan required under section 3313.536 of the Revised Code;

(b) Carrying out any additional responsibilities assigned to the school resource officer under the employment engagement, contract, or memorandum of understanding, including but not limited to:

(i) Providing a safe learning environment;

(ii) Providing valuable resources to school staff members;

(iii) Fostering positive relationships with students and staff;

(iv) Developing strategies to resolve problems affecting youth and protecting all students.

(2) A school resource officer shall consult with local law enforcement officials and first responders when assisting a school district's administrator in the development of a comprehensive emergency management plan.

(E) The school district or school administrator shall have final decision-making authority regarding all matters of school discipline.