

*“Keep Orlando a safe city by reducing crime and maintaining livable neighborhoods.”*

**ORLANDO POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**2211.1, SCHOOL RESOURCE SECTION**

EFFECTIVE DATE:	11/20/2024
RESCINDS:	P&P 2211.0
DISTRIBUTION GROUP:	ALL EMPLOYEES
REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY:	SCHOOL RESOURCE SECTION COMMANDER
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:	N/A
RELATED LAWS:	<a href="#">Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Act</a>
RELATED POLICIES:	P&P 1204, 1308
CHIEF OF POLICE:	ERIC D. SMITH

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**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Orlando Police Department's commitment to ensure the safety of school campuses throughout its jurisdiction. The agency will work closely with the school district to ensure best practices.

**2. POLICY**

School Resource Officers (SROs) must adhere to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Act. The primary mission of the School Resource (SRO) Section shall be the safety of all students and staff and to safeguard the

lives of all on campus. Their mission is to provide superior service to school staff and students and to use available options to reduce the introduction of children into the criminal justice system. The purpose of a successful SRO program is to “bridge the gap” between law enforcement and youth while facilitating a safe learning environment.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) High School Public Safety Act: A bill that aims to improve school safety and security. The bill was passed by the Florida Legislature on February 14, 2018, after the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The bill goals include: improving school climates by expanding mental health support for students, reducing gun violence on school campuses, and enacting red flag laws.

Additional information and legislative updates regarding the MSD Act can be found at the following link:

[Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act & Related School Safety](#)

School Resource Officer (SRO): A school resource officer is a law enforcement officer who is assigned to an elementary, middle, or high school.

School Discipline: The process used by the schools to address student behavior and/or minor incidents. SROs are NOT part of the disciplinary process.

Threat Management Team: A multi-disciplinary team consisting of school administration, mental health, and law enforcement (SRO) who evaluates the totality of circumstances and available resources to determine whether a student will be allowed to return to school after discipline for a threat of violence or from an involuntary commitment under the Baker Act criteria. Law enforcement officers serving on school Threat Management Teams must be certified through the Florida Department of Education.

### 4. PROCEDURES

#### 4.1 SRO SECTION COMMAND STRUCTURE

SROs shall be under the immediate supervision and direction of the Orlando Police Department. An SRO shall report to his or her assigned supervisor. When the assigned supervisor is not available, the SRO shall report to another supervisor within the section. The current command structure is:

1. Special Services Bureau Commander
2. Community Relations Division Commander
3. SRO Section Commander
4. SRO Supervisor
5. SRO

#### 4.2 DUTIES OF A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

They shall abide by the law enforcement agency's policies pertaining to the chain of command. They are expected to:

- a. Handle criminal incidents that occur at their assigned school during school hours.
- b. Counsel students and parents.
- c. Assist with the development and practice of assigned school's emergency plans.
- d. Comply with the OCPS/OPD contract for School Resource Officers as directed by the Department.
- e. Maintain exceptional knowledge of Florida State Statutes, particularly juvenile laws.
- f. Teach Super Kids curriculum at the elementary schools in cooperation with OCPS.
- g. Submit accurate and timely paperwork.
- h. Attend lineups, department meetings, and training as required.

- i. Comply with all applicable provisions of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act and Office of Safe Schools guidelines.
- j. Will defer to the school administration in regard to discipline issues and school code of conduct violations. School Resource Officers will not act as disciplinarians.
- k. SROs shall not be assigned any duties regularly given to school personnel, such as lunchroom or hall duty. SROs shall make reasonable efforts to be visible in student-populated areas before school, during class change, at lunch, and during dismissal when not involved in other Law Enforcement duties. SROs shall patrol the perimeter and external portion of the school when their schedule permits.
- l. SROs are required to facilitate and/or participate in monthly Threat Management Team meetings, emergency drills, quarterly active assailant drills, annual active assailant training with school administration, annual Critical Incident Response Plans (CIRP) update, and conduct an annual tour and assessment of the campus to provide recommendations related to school safety.
- m. Work the OCPS school calendar schedule, with hours specified in the OPD/OCPS contract.

#### **4.3 SRO SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

SRO Supervisors shall visit their assigned officers regularly (at least once a week) and shall ensure SROs are acting according to department policies and procedures. Supervisors must notify the chain of command of school-related incidents. In addition, SRO supervisors are expected to:

- a. Respond to all significant incidents on school campuses, to include use of force.
- b. Maintain relationships with the principal and administrators at each school, as well as the supervisory and command cadre of the OCPS District Police.
- c. Supervise officers' daily activities, reports, and pay sheets.
- d. Investigate and record complaints against officers.
- e. Compile statistics and forward a monthly report to the SRO Section Commander.
- f. Provide training on new policies and procedures as well as updated laws.
- g. Maintain their officers' schedules and coordinate to ensure coverage at all schools.
- h. Coordinate the Summer Youth Program (when applicable).
- i. Attend SRO, DJJ, school board, and departmental meetings.
- j. Ensure compliance with all Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act and Office of Safe Schools mandates.

#### **4.4 SRO SECTION COMMANDER**

The SRO Section Commander oversees those officers assigned as School Resource Officers at the schools with City jurisdiction, and any affiliated programs or events. The SRO Section Commander shall:

- a. Serves as the main liaison between the department and the school district.
- b. Represents the agency on various boards dealing with juvenile matters as directed by the chain of command.
- c. Ensures that SROs are properly trained.
- d. Organizes annual training prior to the start of the new school year.
- e. Oversees the OPD Public Safety Cadet Program (P&P 2203).
- f. Oversees any other program (i.e., Super Kids) or event (i.e., Shop with a Super Cop) that falls under the section.
- g. Serve as a liaison between the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the department in regard to Juvenile Detention Citations.

#### **4.5 TRAINING**

School Resource Officers must complete the Basic School Resource Officer Training Course within one year of being assigned to a school. The section commander will ensure that all SROs complete mandatory SRO-related trainings.

The following are mandatory training courses for officers assigned to the SRO Section:

1. SRO Basic
2. Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
3. CIT Youth
4. Autism Training
5. De-escalation Training
6. Active Threat Response/Active Assailant Training
7. Threat Management Training

SROs will attend mandatory annual in-service training immediately prior to the start of each school/academic year. The topics that will be covered in this annual training will include required training mandated by federal and state laws for School Resource Officers.

In addition to the above trainings, SROs are encouraged to take specialized advanced training related to school safety, juveniles, and criminal investigations.

#### **4.6 INCIDENT DOCUMENTATION**

All incidents shall be documented in accordance with existing policy 1113, Initial Police Reports. An email is not a substitute for an incident report. SROs are provided an OCPS email account, which is critical for safety and security duties related to SROs. That account will not be used to replace or in lieu of the city email account. The OCPS email account shall only be used for access to OCPS systems for law enforcement use only.

#### **4.7 OFF-CAMPUS NOTIFICATIONS**

SROs shall notify their immediate supervisor and appropriate school officials when they will not be on the school campus due to illness, court time, etc. SROs will coordinate their replacement with their supervisor. The SRO Supervisor will ensure the school is staffed immediately.

#### **4.8 ARRESTS AND BAKER ACTS**

SROs are reminded that neither school board members nor employees can direct arrests and/or Baker Acts of individuals. All OPD members must adhere to Policy and Procedures 1114, Mental Health Cases (Baker Act) and 1204, Juvenile Procedures when taking law enforcement action involving a juvenile suspect.

#### **4.9 RIFLE AND STORAGE**

The purpose of this section is to outline the storage and carrying of agency approved rifles on school grounds. SROs MUST remove the department assigned rifle from the safe at the end of every shift. Carrying the rifle to and from the vehicle shall be done in a safe manner. The rifle will not be left on campus unless an officer is present. Whenever the assigned SRO is unable to retrieve the rifle (i.e., officer transported to hospital), a supervisor must respond to the school and take possession of the rifle. SROs shall contact their supervisor with all questions pertaining to the safe and storage/removal of the rifle.

Storage of agency approved rifle while on school grounds:

1. Agency approved rifles shall be stored in the approved agency rifle safe or agency vehicle per policy.
2. The agency approved rifle should be placed in the rifle safe daily unless it is not tactically advantageous.
3. Only sworn members of the agency may access the agency approved rifle.
4. The agency approved rifle may only be deployed on campus when a critical incident develops, and the SRO reasonably believes a lethal response is required and the rifle provides the SRO with a tactical advantage.
5. When moving the rifle from the vehicle to the safe or the safe to vehicle, the SRO will carry the agency approved rifle using the sling and shall transport the rifle between the vehicle and the rifle safe without undue delay. SROs shall follow current training practices when handling their rifle.
6. SROs who have an assigned safe shall program a unique six-digit code and biometric print into the safe's

- memory bank.
- 7. SROs will not share their code with anyone other than approved members of the Orlando Police Department.
- 8. Supervisors will program a unique master code into each safe for their assigned schools.

#### 4.10 SCHOOL THREAT INVESTIGATIONS

Threats of violence to schools will be received in various formats. This can include information from students, faculty, parents, and anonymous reporting platforms such as Fortify FL or Speak Out (Crimeline). Officers and SROs will adhere to the following guidance in regard to threats of violence to schools:

##### A. TIPS

- a. All tips through anonymous report platforms such as Fortify FL or Speak Out, are routed to the SRO Section Commander as well as OPD Communications Supervisors.
- b. During school hours, the SRO Section Commander and/or SRO Supervisor will route the tip to the appropriate SRO (school).
- c. After school hours and weekends, OPD Communications Supervisors will review the tip and notify the on-duty Watch Commander for any tip with actionable information or potential threat that cannot wait for school hours.

##### B. SCHOOL IN SESSION

- a. SROs will investigate all threats of violence to a school when school is in session.
- b. SROs will conduct all necessary interviews of all individuals still on campus and determine a resolution accordingly.
- c. In the event that an interview must occur off campus, then the SRO will coordinate with their supervisor to see if a Relief Squad SRO is available to assist. If an SRO Relief Squad officer is not available, the SRO Supervisor will coordinate with Patrol for assistance.
- d. The SRO will contact OPD Crime Center analysts and OCPD Intel Analysts for assistance as needed.
- e. The SRO will keep their Chain of Command informed.
- f. The SRO Supervisor and/or SRO Section Commander will make appropriate notifications as needed to CID, OPD Intel, and other relevant entities.
- g. This applies to schools staffed by an OPD SRO and listed in the OCPS/OPD contract.
- h. Threats to charter and private schools will be investigated by Patrol.

##### C. AFTER SCHOOL HOURS/WEEKENDS

The School Resource Unit will respond to calls involving threats of violence to schools or threats to cause bodily harm or disrupt operations while on school grounds. This applies to a traditional or alternative Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) in the City of Orlando jurisdiction or a recognized charter school in the City of Orlando jurisdiction.

##### a. Tips (Fortify or Speak Out/Crimeline)

- i. OPD Communications shall notify the on-duty Watch Commander.
- ii. The on-duty Watch Commander will assess the threat and determine what resources will be deployed, to include on-call SRO Investigators.
- iii. Typically, the on-call SRO Investigators will respond if there are subjects to be interviewed, or additional investigative measures taken (research/database/intel).
- iv. If the on-duty Watch Commander determines that on-call SRO Investigators should respond, OPD Communications will notify the on-call SRO Sergeant.
- v. The on-call SRO Sergeant will review the tip and proceed accordingly.
- vi. If the location of the suspect is out of the City of Orlando jurisdiction, but is located in Orange County, the Watch Commander will notify the Orange County Watch Commander, and obtain mutual aid if applicable, for an attempt to contact a suspect or vital witness. This is to ensure consistency and continuity of the investigation.

- b. Patrol
  - i. If it is a normally received call for service, Patrol responds and makes initial assessment.
  - ii. If Patrol determines that there is a threat of violence to a school, the Patrol Supervisor will contact the on-call SRO Supervisor.
  - iii. If the investigation involves additional interviews and resources, the SRO Supervisor will activate the on-call SRO Investigators.
  - iv. Support the responding SRO Investigators as needed.
  - v. If Patrol conducts the initial investigation and does not have any viable leads, they will forward a copy of the completed report to the on-call SRO Supervisor by the end of their shift. The assigned SRO to the involved school will assist with any follow-up on the next scheduled school day.

c. CID

The on-call SRO Supervisor will contact the on-call Violent Crimes Unit Supervisor and the Intel Commander for the following:

- i. Significant evidence and high probability of an imminent act of deadly violence on school campus (manifesto, specific target list, specific plan, etc.).
- ii. Hate crime.
- iii. An act of terrorism is suspected.
- iv. Knowledge of radicalized individual.

If the threat does not directly involve the school or is likely not to occur at the school, then established call-out procedures for CID should be followed.

d. On-Call SRO Supervisor Responsibilities

- i. If the on-call SRO Sergeant is made aware of a threat (before OPD Communications and/or on-duty Watch Commander) and deploys the on-call SRO Investigators, the SRO Sergeant will communicate with the applicable on-duty Watch Commander regarding:
  - 1. The nature of the threat.
  - 2. Where the SRO is responding to.
  - 3. Requesting mutual aid if needed.
  - 4. Keep them abreast of the status of the investigation.
- ii. Check the applicable SRO folder in LERMS and ensure cases of threats of violence to a school are assigned to an SRO. A case not applicable to a school can be reassigned to the Violent Crimes Unit.

The SRO on-call rotation list will be provided to OPD Communications Supervisors and Violent Crimes Units Supervisors.

e. On-Call SRO Investigator Responsibilities

- i. Be available to respond to a location with city jurisdiction within an hour of being activated.
- ii. Go on duty via radio.
- iii. Exhaust all viable leads.
- iv. Contact OCPS Intel for assistance regarding student information.
- v. Contact the OPD Crime Center for analyst assistance as needed.
- vi. Charge criminally (arrest, juvenile custody order or at large) when applicable.
- vii. Author search warrants and subpoenas when appropriate.
- viii. Notify SRO chain of command via email with a brief summary of investigative findings prior to going off shift.

**4.11 CRITICAL SCHOOL INCIDENT/ACTIVE SHOOTER**

The SRO shall immediately conduct an initial evaluation and assessment of the critical incident to validate its accuracy. Upon validation of a critical incident, the SRO shall take actions in accordance with their training and Policy and Procedures, 1308, Major Incidents.

## 5. FORMS AND APPENDICES

N/A