

School Resource Officer Laws Updated

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The unfathomable tragedy in Uvalde, Texas, has caused many school boards and school administrators to review their school safety plans. The month of June is also when the Indiana Department of Homeland Security accepts applications for the [Secured School Safety Grant](#) program. Applications for Fiscal Year 2023 are due by 4:30 p.m. on June 30, 2022.

The Secured School Safety Grant program has provided more than \$110 million to Indiana schools for school safety purposes since it was established by the General Assembly in 2013. Grant monies are most often used to pay for the employment of a school resource officer.

The law defines a school resource officer as an individual who: (1) has successfully completed the minimum training requirements of the Indiana law enforcement training board for law enforcement officers (as established in [IC 5-2-1-9](#)); (2) has received at least 40 hours of certified school resource officer training; and (3) is employed by a law enforcement agency, appointed as a police reserve officer, or as a school corporation police officer (see [IC 20-26-18.2-1](#)).

The General Assembly clarified during the 2022 legislative session that a school resource officer “is a person assigned to one or more school corporations during school hours” and does not include “a law enforcement officer who is assigned to a school to provide security outside a school building for protection from outside threats, traffic duty, or other duties not consistent with the duties of a school resource officer.” See [P.L. 139-2022](#), SEC. 10, effective July 1, 2022.

Every officer regularly working in schools must complete specialized training

The training to be a school resource officer must be provided by the Indiana law enforcement training board, the National Association of School Resource Officers, or another school officer training program approved by the Indiana law enforcement training board (see [IC 20-26-18.2-1](#)). The training must include instruction regarding skills, tactics, and strategies necessary to address the special nature of school campuses and school building security needs. [P.L. 139-2022](#) added a provision allowing the training to be completed within 180 days of the date the individual is assigned the duties of a school resource officer. (In school corporations with less than 1,000 students, the training must be completed within 365 days).

A school resource officer may be employed: (1) by one or more school corporations; (2) by one or more school corporations through a contract between a local law enforcement agency and the school corporation(s); (3) by a local law enforcement agency that assigns the school resource officer to one or more school corporations through a memorandum of understanding between the law enforcement agency and the school corporation(s); or (4) through a contract between the school corporation(s) and an Indiana business that employs persons who meet the school resource officer qualifications.

After June 30, 2023, school corporations must enter into a memorandum of understanding with the law enforcement agency that employs or appoints the law enforcement officer who will perform the duties of a school resource officer.

Irrespective of how the school resource officer is employed, the contract of employment, the memorandum of understanding, or the contract with the business entity must state the nature and scope of the school resource officer’s duties and responsibilities.