

South Carolina Department of Public Safety

Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs



State-Funded School Resource Officer Program Open Solicitation

Award Period Ends: June 30th of each year

Updated: March 2024

This solicitation will remain open until rescinded

I. Introduction

The State-Funded School Resource Officer (SRO) Program is administered by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs (OHSJP) pursuant to the South Carolina Code of Laws, Regulations, Appropriations Act, provisos, and directives. Any changes to the above, between the date of this solicitation release and the award date, will be incorporated into the award and special conditions.

The purpose of the SRO Program is to fund full-time certified law enforcement officers to serve as SROs in schools that otherwise would lack the adequate resources to hire their own SROs. SRO Program funds may be used to pay for the salary and employer contributions (fringe benefits), as well as law enforcement equipment and training for new and existing state-funded SROs based on a documented need.

This OPEN SOLICITATION is only for requesting salary/fringe, training, and equipment for new state-funded SRO positions that have not been previously awarded. The solicitation for continued funding for existing state-funded SRO positions, training, and replacement equipment along with new positions will be available in January/February of each year.

II. Eligible Applicants

The SRO Program is open to traditional South Carolina School Districts, including the South Carolina Public Charter School District and schools authorized by an institution of higher learning (e.g., Charter Institute at Erskine, Limestone Charter Association). Other special school districts and schools administered by an agency of the state of South Carolina (e.g., SCDC, SCDJJ, Governor's Schools, etc.) should fund any required SROs through the agency's normal budget process.

In addition, the following points should be noted regarding eligible applicants:

- A. School Districts must apply for funding through OHSJP by submitting a simple one page Application Part 1 (Appendix A of this solicitation). **School districts must provide their law enforcement partner, who will be providing the SRO, with a signed copy of Appendix A with SROprogram@scdps.gov copied.**

Districts are encouraged to provide their law enforcement partners a signed copy of Appendix A as soon as they identify a law enforcement partner who is in a position to assign or hire an officer for a school that does not have an SRO and for which funding does not exist. Law enforcement agencies must have a reasonable expectation to be able to hire/assign officers to new state-funded SRO positions **within 180 days of being awarded the new state-funded SRO position.**

Law enforcement partners will complete and submit the Application Part 2 outlined in paragraph XI of this solicitation. It is the responsibility of the school districts to coordinate with their designated law enforcement agencies. **Absent extenuating circumstances, state-funded SRO positions requested under this open solicitation will not be awarded until the law enforcement partner has filled all existing state-funded SRO positions currently awarded to them.**

- B. Charter Schools, which do not fall under the South Carolina Public Charter School District, the Charter Institute at Erskine, Limestone Charter Association, or other school superintendent authorized by an institution of higher learning, desiring a state-funded SRO should be included in the local school district's application.
- C. Law enforcement agency partners will be required to provide information for the following individuals while completing the Application Part 2 in *SCDPS Grants*:
1. **Project Director** – The Project Director is an employee of the implementing law enforcement agency and the person involved in the daily operations of the project. The Project Director cannot be the Law Enforcement Agency Head unless the same individual is holding both positions with a current SRO Program award, otherwise, written approval of the SRO Program must be obtained. The Project Director is responsible for the timely submission of special condition documents, obtaining purchase pre-approval from Grants Accounting, submitting Requests For Payment/Quarterly Fiscal (RFP) reports, and any other required documents or reporting. **The Project Director will be required to attend an annual SRO Program Project Management Course.**
 2. **Financial Officer** – The Financial Officer is the person serving as the Chief Financial Officer for the city or county.
 3. **Financial Point of Contact** – The Financial Point of Contact is the person that will be assisting the Project Director with providing necessary supporting receipts and payroll records for Requests For Payment (RFP). **The Financial Point of Contact will be required to attend an annual SRO Program Project Management Course.**
 4. **Law Enforcement Agency Head** – The law enforcement agency head is the Sheriff, Chief of Police, or Director of the Law Enforcement Agency. The law enforcement agency head cannot be the Project Director unless the same individual is holding both positions with a current SRO Program award, otherwise, written approval of the SRO Program must be obtained.

III. Funding Policy

Projects may be funded on a yearly basis based on an evaluation of current-year award performance and availability of funds. Requests for new state-funded SROs are limited to schools without an SRO. SRO Program funds are not available to provide a second SRO to a school or replace locally-funded SRO positions.

In the event a new state-funded SRO position is awarded to an agency with an existing State Fiscal Year (SFY) SRO Program award, the existing award will be revised to include funding for the new position(s), otherwise a new award may be created for the remainder of the SFY with an award ending date of June 30 of the current SFY. In the case of a partial year of funding, salary/fringe or other annual costs will be appropriately pro-rated and equipment may be moved to the next SFY award.

IV. Distribution of Award Funds

Absent extenuating circumstances, all award funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis. RFPs must be submitted at the end of every quarter, but may additionally be submitted for shorter time periods. Contact SROAccountingTeam@scdps.gov with any questions regarding reimbursement or other financial matters.

V. Matching Requirement

The SRO Program does not require any matching funds.

VI. Guidelines for the Use of Grant Funds

A. Allowable Expenses:

1. Funding is provided for 100% of the SRO's base salary and employer contributions (fringe benefits) normally related to full-time employees of the implementing law enforcement agency. Compensation for state-funded SROs will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is consistent with that paid to locally-funded SROs of the law enforcement agency. In cases where the law enforcement agency does not have locally-funded SRO positions, compensation will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is comparable to that paid to the local law enforcement agency's non-supervisory patrol or special unit officers that have a similar level of training, experience, and responsibility. Employer contributions may include: Social Security & Medicare (FICA), Retirement, Workers Compensation Insurance, and Health Insurance. Generally, an officer newly hired or assigned to a vacant state-funded SRO position may attend SRO certification training or training required to obtain and/or maintain their law enforcement certification during the school year. However, SCDPS OHSJP reserves the right to deny reimbursement to an agency for these periods of training in cases where it detects a pattern of selected officers failing to successfully pass training or not remaining in a state-funded SRO position for a minimum of one full school year after completing training.
2. Law enforcement equipment may include the normal uniforms, uniform accessories, body armor, weapon(s), fully-marked SRO patrol vehicle, and other law enforcement equipment associated with outfitting a law enforcement officer of the implementing law enforcement agency.
3. In-state or online SRO training or continuing education courses as provided or recognized by the National Association of School Resource Officers or the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy including travel-related costs associated with said training based on current South Carolina law.
4. Training and law enforcement equipment may be funded based on the availability of funds. All equipment requests must be thoroughly explained and justified in the budget narrative.

5. The law enforcement agency may be reimbursed for mileage based on the current GSA Mileage Rate for the assigned patrol vehicle of each state-funded SRO, not to exceed 12,000 miles per SRO for a twelve month award period (shorter award periods will be pro-rated). This mileage reimbursement is for the operational costs (fuel, maintenance, insurance, etc.) of the state-funded SRO's assigned vehicle regardless of the funding source for the vehicle.
6. The following applies to patrol vehicles purchased with SRO Program funds:
 - a. Must be a vehicle type typically used in the ordinary course of performing routine patrol duties for the implementing law enforcement agency. The OHSJP will only reimburse the lesser of 100% of the base price paid or 100% of the base state contract price for all vehicles and equipment installed in the vehicle (including but not limited to radar, in-car radio, single cell cage, console, emergency equipment and lighting, siren, in-car camera, center console, docking station, scanner/printer, installation and install supplies, push bumper) and all other associated costs. The OHSJP will not reimburse for add-ons to the vehicle (e.g., upgraded engines).
 - b. Must be clearly identified as an SRO vehicle and fully marked with external emergency blue lights (external roof mounted light bar) and full-color graphics in the same manner as the regular fully-marked patrol vehicles of the implementing agency. An external roof mounted light bar is mandatory on state-funded SRO vehicles regardless of whether or not they are utilized on locally-funded vehicles. Subdued or Ghost graphics are not allowed. If not otherwise clearly identified with "School Resource Officer", in any size lettering on the vehicle, the vehicle must have "SRO" on each rear quarter panel area of the vehicle, which must be a minimum of four inches in height.
 - c. Must affix any OHSJP-required and supplied decals as instructed.
 - d. May be equipped with the standard law enforcement equipment of the implementing law enforcement agency's patrol vehicles.
 - e. Must be assigned to a state-funded SRO for the useful life of the vehicle, a minimum of six years.

B. Unallowable Expenses:

1. This open solicitation is for requesting new positions and training/equipment for those new positions. Supplemental funding for existing state-funded SROs is not allowable under this solicitation and should be requested during the annual continuation solicitation in January/February of each year.
2. Lighting, graphics, or window tinting not standard to normal patrol vehicles of the implementing law enforcement agency are not allowable, with the exception of lettering "School Resource Officer", "SRO", or OHSJP-required decals in order to comply with the above patrol vehicle marking requirements. Subdued or Ghost graphics are not allowed. If funded from sources other than this award, temporary (e.g.,

magnetic) school or mascot logos are allowable with the authorization of the law enforcement agency head.

3. Overtime is not an allowable expense, however, nothing prohibits the implementing law enforcement agency from utilizing compensatory time off during school breaks in lieu of overtime or the payment of overtime from other sources.
4. Other equipment not issued to all patrol officers of the implementing law enforcement agency unless specifically required by the SRO and fully justified in the agency's budget narrative.
5. Equipment or training costs obligated outside the award period are not reimbursable.

C. Financial Requirements

1. An assurance that SRO Program funds will not be used to supplant local funding must be provided in the application as stated in the award Terms and Conditions. This certification attests that SRO Program funds will be used to supplement existing locally funded SROs with additional state-funded SROs, not replace local funds already appropriated for the same purpose. Potential supplanting will be the subject of post-award monitoring and audit. Violations of this requirement can result in recoupment of monies provided under this award in addition to possible civil, and/or criminal penalties.
2. All purchases must be approved by Grants Accounting in writing prior to obligating any award funds.
3. Payment of funds will be made on a reimbursement basis requiring supporting documentation.
4. Items with a minimum cost of \$2,500 and any items deemed sensitive, regardless of cost, will require the attachment of a Property Control Form with submission of a RFP along with inventory tracking and SCDPS authorization prior to disposal. Sensitive items include: handguns, shotguns, rifles, electro-muscular disruptor (taser), body armor or other ballistic protection, body-worn cameras, laptops, radar, portable radios, and school vaults.

CI. Program Requirements

1. All state-funded SROs must be assigned full-time to one designated school listed in the approved application and, in the absence of extenuating circumstances, the state-funded SRO must be at the assigned school during normal school hours.
Extenuating circumstances include illness or other authorized leave, attendance of training required to maintain the SRO's law enforcement commission, required court attendance, a natural disaster, or a declared state of emergency. Every attempt should be made to schedule training, annual leave, or compensatory time off during normal school breaks.

2. The Project Director and the Financial Point of Contact will be required to attend an in-person Project Management Course at the beginning of the award period.
3. The Project Director will be responsible for the timely submission of award documents, personnel assignment changes, and any other required reporting.
4. In accordance with the below regulation, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the school district superintendent and the law enforcement agency head must be submitted to SROprogram@scdps.gov as part of award Special Conditions.

Pursuant to South Carolina Code of Regulations 43-210, prior to placing a school resource officer at a school or in a district office, a memorandum of understanding must be executed between the school district, and the employing local law enforcement agency. The role of the school district, individual schools, local law enforcement agency, school administration, and the school resource officer shall be clearly defined in the memorandum of understanding. The role of the school resource officer must clearly be defined pursuant to S.C. Code Ann 5-7-12 and in the memorandum of understanding. The provisions of this regulation and Regulation 43-279 must be included in the memorandum of understanding.

5. Each School District is required to provide a consolidated end of the quarter report of SRO assignments regardless of funding source or providing law enforcement agency.
6. In order to provide technical advice, ensure program compliance, and maintain proper inventory control of state-funded equipment, site monitoring will occur. Site monitoring at schools provided state-funding for an SRO will be unannounced by a uniformed SRO Program Coordinator during normal school hours with every attempt being made to avoid unnecessary disruptions. Site monitoring for the law enforcement agency will be scheduled in advance.

VII. Suspension or Termination of Funding

The OHSJP may suspend funding (in whole or in part), terminate funding, or impose another sanction on an awardee for any of the following reasons:

- A. Failure to comply with the requirements or statutory objectives of the SRO Program guidelines or other provisions of law.
- B. Failure to adhere to the standard terms and conditions or special conditions of the award.
- C. Implementing substantial program changes to the extent that, if submitted originally, the application would not have been approved for funding.
- D. Failure to submit reports (programmatic and/or financial) in a timely manner.
- E. Filing a false certification in this application or other report or document.

VIII. Application and Funding Review Process

All applications will be reviewed equally by the Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs staff. Applications will be carefully reviewed to ensure that any supplanting issues related to SRO positions, training, or equipment are addressed. The OHSJP staff will use the following criteria in the development of funding recommendations for the South Carolina Public Safety Coordinating Council.

- A. Jurisdictions with limited resources - In making determinations of eligibility, the department shall use the most recent index of taxpaying ability as the districts indicator of ability to pay with districts of the lowest index of taxpaying ability receiving priority consideration.
- B. Budgetary Review - Each application will be reviewed to ensure costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable.
- C. Demonstration of need – In addition to the justification of need that the law enforcement agency demonstrates in their budget narrative, the OHSJP will take into consideration geographical areas of greatest need, jurisdictions with limited resources, and current or past grant performance in making awards for training and equipment.

IX. Funding Priorities

In accordance with its statutory authority, the OHSJP has established the following priorities for SRO Program funding for this open solicitation:

- 1. New state-funded SROs salary/fringe utilizing the most recent index of taxpaying ability as the district's indicator of ability to pay, with districts of the lowest index of taxpaying ability receiving priority consideration.
- 2. Allowable equipment and training which is reasonable and allocable for new state-funded SROs subject to the availability of funds, and demonstration of need.

X. Notification Process

Applicants will be notified in writing by the OHSJP whether their application has been approved or denied for funding. Law enforcement agencies with a current SRO Program award will have that award revised to include the new funding, if approved. In the case of a law enforcement agency being awarded its first state-funded SRO, if approved, a new award will be created with an award period ending June 30.

XI. Application Process

- PART 1. The school district applicant must submit a signed copy of the Application Part 1 (Appendix A) to **the participating law enforcement partner(s) related to the current request** and copy SRProgram@scdps.gov.

- a. It is the responsibility of the school district to provide their law enforcement partner a signed copy of Appendix A as soon as possible in order for the law enforcement agency to meet the requirements of completing Application Part 2 outlined below.
- b. No further application action is required on the part of the school districts.
- c. **School districts do not need to register at, or have access to, *SCDPS Grants*.**

PART 2. Law enforcement agencies will complete the Application Part 2 at [SCDPSgrants.com](https://scdps.sc.gov/ohsjp/school-resource-officer-program)

- a. Apply under the *SRO Program Open Solicitation*. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to view the solicitation workshop presentation located at <https://scdps.sc.gov/ohsjp/school-resource-officer-program>.
- b. The implementing law enforcement agency must upload the completed Appendix A for the new position(s) into *SCDPS Grants* prior to submitting their portion of the application in *SCDPS Grants*.
- c. The application must be fully complete and submitted via *SCDPS Grants* by the law enforcement agency providing the state-funded SRO. This solicitation will remain open until rescinded.
- d. Once the law enforcement agency completes their portion of the application in *SCDPS Grants* and submits it, notification of approval or disapproval should be received within approximately 30-45 days. This period of time may be longer if requests have to be made for additional information or in light of other mitigating circumstances.
- e. Appendix B *SRO Program Application Check List* is an optional checklist to assist the law enforcement agency in completing their online portion in *SCDPS Grants*.

For programmatic questions, contact SROprogram@scdps.gov. For any financial questions, contact SROAccountingTeam@scdps.gov.

APPENDIX B

SRO Program Open Solicitation Application Check List

The following checklist will assist the law enforcement agency in providing all required information in *SCDPS Grants* for Part 2 of the application.

Budget Tab:

- Proposed expenditures are reasonable and adhere to application guidelines. **Funds are only requested for the new state-funded position(s).**

Personnel category includes:

- Position Title (e.g. SRO, Master Officer, SRO Sergeant, etc.) followed by (New)
- School District (e.g. Aiken, Lexington 5, Spartanburg 7, Williamsburg, etc.)
- School Name (e.g. Beechwood Middle, Main Street Elementary, Timmons ville High, etc.)
- % of Time On Project must equal 100%
- Annual Base Salary
Should be highest salary that the agency would hire a certified SRO officer at. SCDPS will prorate for the remainder of the award period based on the date of the award.
- Total Fringe Benefits – projected annual cost based on the award period
"Total Fringe Benefits" is the total employer contributions for Social Security & Medicare (FICA), Retirement, Workers Compensation Insurance, and Health Insurance. Should be estimated at the highest fringe cost (e.g. married with family) based on the above annual base salary. SCDPS will prorate for the remainder of the award period based on the date of the award.

Travel category:

- Travel Requests follow solicitation guidelines/GSA rates
- Annual patrol vehicle mileage reimbursement request does not exceed 12,000 miles per state-funded SRO. SCDPS will prorate for the remainder of the award period based on the date of the award.

Equipment category:

- Items listed under equipment have a value of \$2,500 or more or are deemed sensitive items (see solicitation for items deemed sensitive)
- Brand name not listed. Does not include leased, rented items or software

Other category:

- Items listed under Other have an individual value of less than \$2,500 or do not fall into one of the above categories.

Budget Narrative Tab:

- Documented need for requested items is fully justified and explained in detail

Other Relevant Requirements:

- A copy of the School District's Part 1 (Appendix A) has been uploaded to the application.
- The name, title, address, phone, and email information must be completed on the online application for the Project Director, Financial Officer, Financial Point of Contact, and Law Enforcement Agency Head.