



# ASCIP *RISK ALERT!*

---

**Date:** February 2, 2000

**Attention:** ASCIP Members

**Subject:** CAMPUS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
LIABILITY & JURISDICTION

ASCIP has, since its inception, provided property and liability insurance coverage to its membership with the understanding that some member educational agencies have a campus police force or a campus security organization which exists to maintain reasonable order at their various locations with local law enforcement agencies providing any additional services as may be required. However, some campus police departments have extended their activities beyond the boundaries of their owned or leased properties and are engaged in or considering conducting off-campus law enforcement activities under circumstances which ASCIP had not previously contemplated. Where these activities occur, they represent a significant increase in risk to the educational agency and may be considered under some circumstances to be beyond the jurisdiction and the established purpose of campus police.

The conduct of red-light traffic stops and similar law enforcement activities by campus police on public streets adjacent to or between campus locations may be permitted by State law, however that permission appears indistinct regarding the distances from a campus site and the circumstances under which such activity may occur. Writing traffic citations for moving violations and involvement in non-school related law enforcement issues may be beyond the established mission of campus police and pose a significantly increased risk to both the campus police officer and to members of the general public who may openly question or resist an unfamiliar police officer's authority. Additionally, campus police officers who may not be sufficiently experienced in car stop procedure or who may lack adequate communications equipment, backup availability, or other safety resources while undertaking such activity could themselves become victims should a traffic enforcement stop unknowingly involve an armed felony suspect choosing combat rather than flight.

Similar concerns extend to on-campus activity by unarmed campus security agents who may find themselves confronting situations better left to traditional law enforcement intervention. The concept of observe and report from a safe distance appears to have been set aside in some situations in favor of confrontation and projection of authority. Since the increase in school-related shooting incidents, some campus security departments have been upgraded to police departments and non-POST certified departments have moved towards POST certification. Armed officers are now considered by some to be essential. Although these actions are visible statements of concern regarding the possibility of a shooting incident on a school or college campus, their value in preventing such acts has not been established. Clearly, campus police performing traditional law enforcement activities off-campus may not enhance a school's ability to prevent acts of violence on campus.

ASCIP recommends that members with campus police or security departments review how these important services are utilized and evaluate their current or proposed functions based upon their mission statements, their role in campus violence prevention, and their ability to perform their desired functions in a safe and appropriate manner.

*Reviewed July, 2006*