

## **FCC Special Police Officer (SPO) Transition – FAQ Document**

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### **1. What is changing with campus Public Safety?**

FCC is transitioning to a hybrid model where some Public Safety Officers (PSOs) will become Special Police Officers (SPOs). SPOs will have additional training, state certification, and limited police authority to respond more effectively to emergencies. However, Public Safety will continue to operate with a mix of PSOs and SPOs.

### **2. Why is FCC making this change?**

- To enhance campus security and improve emergency response times.
- To align with best practices already in place at other Maryland community colleges.
- To provide trained personnel with greater authority to intervene in safety incidents.
- To maintain a safe and welcoming campus with a proactive, community-oriented approach.

### **3. Will SPOs carry firearms?**

Not currently.

### **4. How will this affect students and employees?**

- Day-to-day operations will remain the same.
- Officers will still focus on community engagement, education, and safety awareness.
- SPOs will wear slightly modified uniforms with new badges and patches to differentiate their role.
- SPOs will have additional authority to take immediate action in emergencies.

### **5. What legal authority do SPOs have?**

SPOs are granted limited police authority under Maryland law. They will be able to:

- Respond to security incidents on campus with enhanced authority.
- Take appropriate actions to maintain safety in urgent situations.
- Coordinate effectively with local law enforcement.

### **6. When will this transition take place?**

- The transition will occur over the next couple of weeks, with a transition target date on or slightly before June 1, 2025.

- During this time:
  - The Maryland State Police (MSP) will conduct a site inspection of FCC's Public Safety operations.
  - Public Safety Officers transitioning to SPOs will be sworn in at the Frederick County Courthouse.

## 7. Will this change impact the overall culture at FCC?

No. FCC remains committed to a community-focused approach to safety. The transition is about improving security while ensuring a welcoming campus environment.

## 8. How can I learn more or ask questions?

- Attend a Virtual Town Hall Meeting (dates to be announced).
- Email the Director of Public Safety, Robin Shusko, at [rshusko@frederick.edu](mailto:rshusko@frederick.edu).

## 9. I'd like to know specifically how these positions differ.

| Public Safety Officer (PSO)   | Special Police Officer (SPO)  | FCC SPO Role (Hybrid)  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Role:</b> Primarily focused on safety, security, and prevention of incidents.                            | <b>Role:</b> Has law enforcement authority to enforce laws and make arrests.                                      | <b>Role:</b> Combines safety and prevention with the ability to enforce laws as needed.  |
| <b>Authority:</b> Limited to monitoring, reporting, and intervening in non-criminal incidents.              | <b>Authority:</b> Sworn and certified with law enforcement powers granted by a local or state authority.          | <b>Authority:</b> Authorized to monitor, report, and address non-criminal incidents while possessing enforcement authority when necessary. |
| <b>Training:</b> Requires basic safety and security training; emphasis on protocols and emergency response. | <b>Training:</b> Requires extensive training, often including police academy certification and firearms training. | <b>Training:</b> Comprehensive training that integrates advanced emergency response and selective law enforcement capabilities.            |
| <b>Focus:</b> General campus safety, customer service, and enforcement of college policies.                 | <b>Focus:</b> Enforces local/state laws in addition to college policies.  | <b>Focus:</b> Broad campus safety measures, including enforcement of both college policies and relevant laws.                              |
| <b>Jurisdiction:</b> Restricted to the college campus; may act as a liaison with local law enforcement.     | <b>Jurisdiction:</b> Operates within a specific area but with broader legal authority than a PSO.                 | <b>Jurisdiction:</b> Primarily campus-based, with extended authority to address specific incidents   |

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|  |  | requiring law enforcement intervention.  |
| <b>Equipment:</b> Generally unarmed; may carry tools like radios, flashlights, and basic first aid supplies.         | <b>Equipment:</b> May carry flex cuffs, batons, and other law enforcement tools, depending on certification. | <b>Equipment:</b> Equipped with necessary tools for both safety measures and selective enforcement, as per policy.                           |
| <b>Interventions:</b> Handles minor incidents such as lost property, minor disputes, and directing traffic.          | <b>Interventions:</b> Handles criminal incidents, conducts arrests, and issues citations.                    | <b>Interventions:</b> Manages minor and criminal incidents, escalating as needed based on situation complexity.                              |
| <b>Reporting Structure:</b> Reports to campus administration, focusing on operational safety.                        | <b>Reporting Structure:</b> May report to both the campus and local/state law enforcement agencies.          | <b>Reporting Structure:</b> Reports to campus administration with clear protocols for coordination with local law enforcement when required. |
| <b>Legal Scope:</b> Limited authority; cannot detain or arrest suspects unless authorized in specific circumstances. | <b>Legal Scope:</b> Empowered to act as law enforcement officers with arrest powers.                         | <b>Legal Scope:</b> Hybrid authority to handle both campus and law enforcement roles effectively under defined circumstances.                |