



## STUDENT INTERROGATIONS, SEARCHES, AND ARRESTS

Southeast Technical College Policy STC 915

### 1. Purpose

Southeast Technical College (STC) administrators are authorized to make searches of persons' personal property and vehicles and STC owned/provided property under the conditions outlined below.

### 2. General Statement of Policy

#### **Student and Student Property Searches**

A student and/or a student's personal property (e.g., purse, backpack, book bag, cell phone, electronic devices, luggage taken on college-sponsored trips, etc.) may be searched with the student's permission or when an administrator has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student (i) is in possession of unauthorized items, (ii) that the search will produce evidence of a violation of a college rule, or (iii) when there is a potential harm to self or others.

#### **Searches of Student Property at Events**

Student property, including but not limited to backpacks, book bags, athletic bags, and purses, may be searched for weapons, drugs, contraband, or prohibited items as a condition of admittance to or participation in any STC sponsored public event, such as graduation ceremonies or other college programs.

#### **Searches of STC Owned/Provided Property**

STC owned/provided property is temporarily assigned to individual students but remains the property of STC at all times. Students have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality when using STC owned/provided property.

However, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of STC owned/provided property. Students are not to share STC owned/provided property unless assigned by the administration or designee (e.g., students should not share private locker combinations with other students).

#### **Maintenance Searches**

STC has a reasonable and valid interest in ensuring that STC owned/provided property is properly maintained. For this reason, periodic inspections of STC owned/provided property are permissible to check for cleanliness and vandalism. General maintenance inspections may be conducted by STC staff if instructed by an STC administrator or designee, at any time without notice, without the student's consent, and without a search warrant.

Any contraband discovered during such searches will be confiscated by the administration. The administration may refer a student to outside agencies for assistance or to law enforcement officers, depending upon the severity of the situation.

### **Non-maintenance Searches**

STC owned/provided property and its contents may be searched by an STC administrator or designee when reasonable suspicion exists that the property contains unauthorized, illegal, or contraband items. Whenever possible, the student should be aware of and involved in a search of such property. Emergency situations may necessitate a search with or without the student's knowledge. Such searches should be conducted in the presence of another adult witness.

### **Vehicle Searches**

Students are permitted to park on STC premises as a matter of privilege, not a right. STC retains authority to conduct routine patrols of the STC parking lots and inspections of the exterior of vehicles. Entry, search of the interior, or seizure of a student vehicle shall be governed by warrant requirements generally applicable to law enforcement agencies and will have one STC administrator and another STC employee present.

#### **Scope of any Search**

Before any search is conducted, the administration will consider the intrusiveness of the search considering the age, gender, and nature of the alleged violation. The scope of any search will be limited to only what is necessary due to the policy/rule violation under investigation. If the search discovers items not related to the policy/rule violation under investigation, but items are found that are in violation of the law or another school policy/rule, the student may be subject to additional discipline for that additional violation.

#### **Law Enforcement Involvement**

Any search and/or seizure on/of STC owned/provided property by law enforcement officials will occur only when law enforcement officials properly advise school personnel that they have lawful authority to conduct the search and/or seizure.

### **Housing**

STC housing staff will follow Southeast Technical Housing Foundations policy.

## **3. Definitions**

**STC owned/provided property** includes, but is not limited to buildings, parking lots, desks, instruments, electronic devices, storage containers, storage areas, lockers, computer systems and equipment, voicemail, and vehicles. This property is intended for use for educational purposes and STC business only.

## **4. Reporting Procedures**

Any search of STC owned/provided property will be documented with the following information:

- Date

- Name of person(s) doing the search

- What was searched and name of owner of property searched

Why was the search conducted  
Where did the search happen  
How was the search conducted (electronic, physical, other)  
This document will be forwarded to the President's Office of STC.

## 5. Related Policies

STC 841 – STC 841.1– Acceptable and Ethical Use of Technology Resources  
STC 709– Code of Conduct

## 6. Dissemination of Policy and Training

### **Informing Students and Parents**

STC shall inform students and parents/guardians of minors of this policy regarding searches through the STC Handbook/Catalog and provide written copies on request.

The policy is located on STC's website under Consumer Information – Southeast Tech Policies

### Legal References:

SDCL 13- 39A-1  
SDCL 1339A-11  
SDCL 13-39A-14

### Board Approved:

Policy		Board Action		
adopted:	03-22-04	33778	(formerly JIH/STC	07-01-25)
reviewed:	03-22-10	35655		
amended:	04-23-12	36350		
reviewed:	05-28-13	36633		
reviewed:	08.01.18	ST00322		
reviewed:	05.13.19	ST00387		
revised:	02-05-25	ST00892		