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Police Power
In Ohio, independent colleges have statutory authority to establish a campus police department. If an institution’s Board of Trustees establishes a campus police department, several new conditions become applicable to the institution’s operations:

- The campus may hire only individuals who have completed a course at the Ohio Police Officer Training Commission or have completed a basic police officer training program certified by the commission.
- The campus police officers will be vested with the same powers and duties as a city or municipal law enforcement officer.
- The campus will be required to carry appropriate liability insurance to cover the officers in the course of employment.
- The campus will not be permitted to employ an individual as an officer if that person has been convicted of a felony, pleaded guilty to a felony, or pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor as part of a plea bargain to avoid a felony conviction.

Most notably, however, the police department will be subject to Ohio’s public records law. A 2015 Ohio Supreme Court decision ruled that any police force, regardless of employer, inherently serves such a government function that it must be subject to public records laws. The Ohio Attorney General’s office oversees the implementation and maintaining of public records, also referred to as ‘sunshine laws.’

In 2016, AICUO successfully lobbied for civil liability protection for nonprofit institutions of higher education regarding the lawful release of public records. The legislation reads:

> No nonprofit institution that holds a certificate of authorization issued under Chapter 1713 of the Revised Code shall be liable for a breach of confidentiality or any other claim that arises from the institution’s disclosure of the public records pursuant to a request for public records made under section 149.43 of the Revised Code, except for claims based on the institution’s failure to disclose public records as required by law.

Concealed Carry of Weapons
Ohio permits the concealed carry of weapons (CCW) by individuals who have met the requirements to obtain a license to carry a concealed weapon. While CCW is permitted in Ohio, the law originally stated that CCW’s were not allowed on colleges and universities except in a locked vehicle. In 2016, the Ohio legislature passed legislation which allows the board of trustees of colleges and universities to voluntarily vote to allow CCW on campus. Regardless of the stance of the board of trustees, concealed carry weapons are still permitted in vehicles, as long as the securely locked inside.
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References:
Ohio Attorney General's Concealed Carry Regulatory Information
Ohio Revised Code Sections:

2923.12 Carrying Concealed Weapons Generally
2923.126 (B)(5) College and University Exemption

Smoking Ban
In 2006, voters of Ohio passed an indoor smoking ban. The ban covers all public places and places of employment. The law places the burden of enforcing the ban on the proprietor of the location. Certain areas are excluded from this ban including private residences and private clubs. Due to the unique nature of campus residence halls as both places of employment and private residences, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) clarified the applicability of the law on college campuses. ODH’s regulation allows campuses to treat residence halls as private residences, allowing smoking in designated campus dorms.

In 2012, the Ohio Board of Regents unanimously passed a non-binding resolution urging all of Ohio’s colleges and universities to become 100 percent tobacco-free.

References:
Ohio Department of Health Smoking Ban Information Page
Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code Sections
ORC §3794.02 – Smoking Prohibitions
ORC §3794.03 – Exclusions from the Ban
OAC §3701-52 – Smoking Ban Administrative Rules
Environmental Standards
The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) has entered into state plan agreements with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) in the following areas: air, water, waste, and lead-based paint. This means that the state agency has oversight authority over these aspects of federal law. Institutions must obtain permits in these areas of the OEPA for necessary activities.

References:
U.S. EPA State Partnerships for Ohio
Guide to Environmental Permitting in Ohio