

§103.1209. Mandatory School Drills.

(a) Requirement. Each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall conduct emergency safety drills in accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.114.

(b) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this section, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) Drill--A set of procedures that test a single, specific operation or function. Drill examples include evacuating for a fire or locking down from an internal threat.

(2) Secure (Lockout)--A response action schools take to secure the perimeter of school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose a threat or hazard outside of the school building. Secure (Lockout) uses the security of the physical facility to act as protection to deny entry.

(3) Lockdown--A response action schools take to secure interior portions of school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence inside the school. The primary objective is to quickly ensure all school students, staff, and visitors are secured away from immediate danger.

(4) Evacuate--A response action schools take to quickly move students and staff from one place to another. The primary objective of an evacuation is to ensure that all staff, students, and visitors can quickly move away from the threat. Evacuation examples include a bomb threat or internal gas leak.

(5) Shelter-in-place for hazmat--A response action schools take to quickly move students, staff, and visitors indoors, perhaps for an extended period of time, because it is safer inside the building than outside. Affected individuals may be required to move to rooms without windows or to rooms that can be sealed. Shelter-in-place for hazmat examples include train derailment with chemical release or smoke from a nearby fire.

(6) Shelter for severe weather--A response action schools take to quickly move students, staff, and visitors indoors, perhaps for an extended period of time, because it is safer inside the building than outside. For severe weather, depending on the type and/or threat level (watch versus warning), affected individuals may be required to move to rooms without windows on the lowest floor possible or to a weather shelter.

(7) Fire evacuation drill--A method of practicing how a building would be vacated in the event of a fire. The purpose of fire drills in buildings is to ensure that everyone knows how to exit safely as quickly as possible.

(c) Frequency. TEC, §37.114(2), requires the commissioner of education to designate the number of mandatory school drills to be conducted each semester of the school year, not to exceed eight drills each semester and sixteen drills for the entire school year. Neither this rule, nor the law, precludes a school district or an open-enrollment charter school from conducting more drills as

deemed necessary and appropriate by the district or charter school. Following is the required minimum frequency of drills by type.

- (1) Secure (Lockout)--One per school year.
- (2) Lockdown--Two per school year (once per semester).
- (3) Evacuate--One per school year.
- (4) Shelter-in-place for hazmat--One per school year.
- (5) Shelter for severe weather--One per school year.
- (6) Fire evacuation drill--Four per school year (two per semester). In addition, school districts and open-enrollment charter schools should consult with their local fire marshal and comply with their local fire marshal's requirements and recommendations.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §103.1209 issued under the Texas Education Code, §37.114.

Source: The provisions of this §103.1209 adopted to be effective September 6, 2020, 45 TexReg 6110.