

School Security Frequently Asked Questions

January, 2019

1. Where do I submit my plan and also the drill report?

Submit the plans and reports in electronic format or on a disc, to your Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Regional Coordinator. You should send your plan in a digital format (PDF or DOC(X) file) via email to your Regional Coordinator, if the file size is less than 10mb. If the file(s) is greater than 10mb, please copy the files to a DVD or CD and mail the disc(s) to the respective Regional Office mailing address. Regardless of delivery method, be sure to include a scanned image of your plan signature page.

2. Who is my DEMHS Regional Coordinator and what is their contact information?

<http://www.ct.gov/demhs/cwp/view.asp?a=1903&q=295316> Your Regional Coordinator covers one of five geographic planning/operational regions. Follow this link and click on the map where your facility is located to find the RC's contact information.

3. Will DEMHS review my plan and return it to me if it does not meet the plan standards?

It is important that each plan contain the information specific to the school or schools for which the plan is submitted. If you use the plan template which has been provided by DEMHS, you must complete the sections that require details relevant to the school, such as your table of organization in an emergency. DEMHS staff can provide you with a checklist to determine if your plan addresses all of the plan standards.

Although DEMHS staff will not be conducting an intensive review of each plan, if it is determined that a plan is missing a key element such as a completed signature page, the checklist will be sent to you with the missing items identified. Please complete those items and re-submit an updated plan.

4. How often must the school file a school safety and security plan with DESPP/DEMHS?

Under Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-222m, each local and regional board of education must annually review and update, if necessary, its plans. There is also a requirement that the plans be submitted annually to DESPP/DEMHS. Therefore, by November 1st of each year, local and regional boards of education must submit to their DEMHS Regional Coordinators an electronic copy of that year's plan. There is a form to accompany the plan, which should indicate: (1) there are no changes to the plan(s) or (2) there are limited changes to the plan(s), along with an updated signature page for the plan(s). The third option is to indicate (3) that a revised plan or plans is being submitted, if the current plan(s) have undergone a major revision.

5. What is the requirement that a school district provide an annual report to DESPP regarding fire drills and crisis response drills? What form should the report take and when is it due?

Under Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-222n, the school safety and security plan standards require that local law enforcement and other local public safety officials evaluate, score (we have interpreted this to mean "assess"), and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills conducted pursuant to

Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-231. Section 10-222n also requires that local and regional board of education must annually submit reports to DESPP regarding such fire drills and crisis response drills. DESPP/DEMHS has set the date of filing these annual reports as July 1st of each year, for the preceding school year. While it is of course impossible for every official to attend every drill at every school, it is a best practice to have the town public safety team (fire, police, emergency management, etc..) attend at least one drill per year as a team. That way, team members can share observations and ideas with each other. Then, each individual public safety official can attend a representative sampling of the other drills in the year.

6. I represent a charter school/Regional Education Service Center (RESC)? Do we have to file a school security plan and the drill report?

Yes. Charter and RESC-run schools are considered to be public schools and Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and as such are captured by local/regional Boards of Education. Therefore, requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. Sections 10-222m and 10-222n apply to them.

7. I represent a Unified School District, which is part of the Department of Correction. Do we have to file a school security plan and the drill report? No

8. Can I submit one plan for my school district?

Yes, a school district can submit one plan for the district, provided there is a separate annex with specific information for each school in the district.

9. Do the school system need to submit need to submit a signed, completed plan in order to be eligible for the school security grant program?

Yes. When the program first began in 2013, DEMHS allowed schools to receive grants as long as the plan was in progress. However, the first plan was due no later than July 1, 2015. Therefore, for schools that have already been awarded grants, the plan must be signed before final reimbursement is made. For any new awards, the plan must be signed before the grant will be awarded.

10. Are private schools eligible for the school security grant program?

Yes, if they have a signed plan that meets the school security standards.

11. Does DEMHS approve the school security plans?

DEMHS does not approve the plans, but does provide a plan checklist to help the school system evaluate its plan to see if it meets the required standards (See Number 3 above). DEMHS will also assist in answering any questions the school district may have.

Also, DEMHS will not accept a plan that clearly does not meet the required standards (for example, if the submitted plan contains little or no school-specific information, or the template has just been submitted back with none of the blanks filled in.)

12. How can I get answers to any additional questions I may have?

Please feel free to submit any questions to the DEMHS School Security group at SchoolSecurityPlanStandards@ct.gov