



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3737.73 Prohibition against failure to instruct pupils in fire drills and tornado safety precautions.

Effective: September 29, 2011

Legislation: House Bill 153 - 129th General Assembly

(A) No principal or person in charge of a public or private school or educational institution having an average daily attendance of twenty or more pupils, and no person in charge of any children's home or orphanage housing twenty or more minor persons, shall willfully neglect to instruct and train such children by means of drills or rapid dismissals, so that such children in a sudden emergency may leave the building in the shortest possible time without confusion. The principal or person in charge of a school or educational institution shall conduct drills or rapid dismissals at least nine times during the school year, which shall be at the times and frequency prescribed in rules adopted by the fire marshal. However, no drill or rapid dismissal under this division need be conducted in any month that a school safety drill required under division (D) of this section is conducted as long as a total of nine drills or rapid dismissals under this division are conducted in the school year. The principal or person in charge of a children's home or orphanage shall conduct drills or rapid dismissals at least once each month while the home is in operation. In the case of schools, no principal or person in charge of a school shall willfully neglect to keep the doors and exits of such building unlocked during school hours. The fire marshal may order the immediate installation of necessary fire gongs or signals in such schools, institutions, or children's homes and enforce this division and divisions (B) and (C)(3) of this section.

(B) In conjunction with the drills or rapid dismissals required by division (A) of this section, principals or persons in charge of public or private primary and secondary schools, or educational institutions, shall instruct pupils in safety precautions to be taken in case of a tornado alert or warning. Such principals or persons in charge of such schools or institutions shall designate, in accordance with standards prescribed by the fire marshal, appropriate locations to be used to shelter pupils in case of a tornado, tornado alert, or warning.

(C)(1) The fire marshal or the fire marshal's designee shall annually inspect each school, institution, home, or orphanage subject to division (A) of this section to determine compliance with that division, and each school or institution subject to division (B) of this section to ascertain



whether the locations comply with the standards prescribed under that division. Nothing in this section shall require a school or institution to construct or improve a facility or location for use as a shelter area.

(2) The fire marshal or the fire marshal's designee shall issue a warning to any person found in violation of division (A) or (B) of this section. The warning shall indicate the specific violation and a date by which such violation shall be corrected.

(3) No person shall fail to correct violations by the date indicated on a warning issued under division (C)(2) of this section.

(D)(1) On or before April 1, 2007, and on or before each first day of December thereafter, the principal or person in charge of each public or private school or educational institution shall conduct a school safety drill to provide pupils with instruction in the procedures to follow in situations where pupils must be secured in the school building, such as a threat to the school involving an act of terrorism; a person possessing a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance, as defined in section 2923.11 of the Revised Code, on school property; or other act of violence.

(2)(a) The principal or person in charge of each public or private school or educational institution shall provide to the police chief or other similar chief law enforcement officer of the municipal corporation, township, or township or joint police district in which the school or institution is located, or, in absence of any such person, the county sheriff of the county in which the school or institution is located advance written notice of each school safety drill required under division (D)(1) of this section and shall keep a written record of the date and time of each drill conducted. The advance notice shall be provided not later than seventy-two hours prior to the date the drill will be conducted and shall include the date and time the drill will be conducted and the address of the school or educational institution. The notice shall be provided by mail, facsimile, or electronic submission.

(b) Not later than April 5, 2007, and not later than the fifth day of December each year thereafter, the principal or person in charge of each public or private school or educational institution shall provide written certification by mail of the date and time each school safety drill required under division (D)(1) of this section was conducted to the police chief or other similar chief law



enforcement officer of the municipal corporation, township, or township or joint police district in which the school or institution is located, or, in the absence of any such person, the county sheriff of the county in which the school or institution is located. If such certification is not provided, the principal or person in charge of the school or institution shall be considered to have failed to conduct the drill and shall be subject to division (D)(4) of this section.

(3) The principal or person in charge of each public or private school or educational institution shall hold annual training sessions for employees of the school or institution regarding the conduct of school safety drills.

(4) The police chief or other similar chief law enforcement officer of a municipal corporation, township, or township or joint police district, or, in the absence of any such person, the county sheriff shall issue a warning to any person found in violation of division (D)(1) of this section. Each warning issued for a violation of division (D)(1) of this section shall require the principal or person in charge of the school or institution to correct the violation by conducting the school safety drill not later than the thirtieth day after the date the warning is issued. The violation shall not be considered corrected unless, not later than forty days after the date the warning is issued, the principal or person in charge of the school or institution provides written certification of the date and time the drill was conducted to the police chief or other similar chief law enforcement officer or county sheriff who issued the warning.

(5) No person shall fail to correct violations by the date indicated on a warning issued under division (D)(4) of this section.