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New School Security and Safety Standards Encourage, but no Longer Mandate, ICS Courses for All Employees

The Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) within the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) recently released revised school security and safety plan standards that no longer require that all school employees complete certain Incident Command System (ICS) courses. Beginning this school year, local and regional boards of education were required to develop and implement school security and safety plans based on the state standards. The previous set of standards required basic National Incident Management System (NIMS) training for school employees, and specified that such training included the ICS 100 SCa online course. State guidance for those previous standards had clarified that the 100 level training was mandatory for all school employees, as was advanced training for school administrators, and those courses must have been completed by the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

The new standards relax those training requirements. The new standards still specify that school security and safety plans must use an organizational command structured based on NIMS and ICS, but now state that “[b]asic NIMS training for school employees *may* include ICS 100 SCa.” (Emphasis added). This language implies that basic NIMS training is still required for all employees, but the online ICS 100 course is no longer mandatory as part of that training.

This new language represents a significant change for boards of education that were faced with the logistics of requiring all school employees to complete the ICS 100 SCa course by the end of this school year. Importantly, the DEMHS still “strongly recommends” that boards of education have all school employees complete the free ICS 100 SCa course and that certain administrators complete advanced ICS courses. Boards of education may wish to consider the benefit of providing this training to their employees, although it is no longer mandatory.

In addition to promulgating new school security and safety plan standards, DEMHS has also developed and sent boards of education updated school security and safety plan templates based on these new standards for boards to use in developing and revising their school



security and safety plans. There are now two versions of the templates that boards may use. One version is a plan template for individual schools and the other version is a plan template for an entire school district that would include school-specific annexes. Boards' school security and safety committees should review the new school security and safety plan standards and the State's revised plan templates and update their plans as necessary.

Click [here](http://www.ct.gov/demhs/lib/demhs/school_security/2015/schoolplanstandardsv2.pdf) for the new standards [http://www.ct.gov/demhs/lib/demhs/school_security/2015/schoolplanstandardsv2.pdf].

Questions or Assistance:

For more information about school security and safety standards and plans, please contact Julie Fay at jfay@goodwin.com or 860-251-5009 or Peter Maher at pmaher@goodwin.com or 860-251-5507.

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