

A large, thick black L-shaped graphic is positioned on the left and bottom right sides of the slide, framing the central text.

# SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS IN A COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT

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# Agenda

- Purpose
- Requirements
- Recommendations
- Best Practices
- Comments & Questions

# Purpose

- In the current state of emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not feasible nor safe to conduct many of the state-required drills where students, faculty and staff would move throughout the schools at the same time and within close proximity to each other; therefore, an alternative method of compliance while maintaining as safe an environment as possible must be developed.

# Purpose

- Overarching Legal Precedent: [Ala. Code 1975, § 16-1-44](#)
- Severe Weather Drills
  - *Code of Alabama § 16-1-44(e), which directs to*
  - [Alabama State Fire Marshal Regulation 482-2-102-.01c](#)
- Fire/Evacuation Drills:
  - *Code of Alabama § 36-19-10 which points back to § 16-1-44(e)*
- Lockdown Drills
  - *Code of Alabama § 16-1-44(g)*
- The following recommendations should be considered:

# Drills Available for Virtual

- Tabletop/Workshop-style drills are effective
  - Should not take the place of physical escape/sheltering routes at least until required trainings.
  - After routes are walked, discussion and roleplay encouraged
  - Teachers - take advantage of the opportunity of the virtual learning environment by encouraging students to talk with their family members about emergency protective actions within their home or place of learning



# Drills for In-Person Education

- Drills must be conducted within certain time constraints; however, they do not state they must be done all at once
- To minimize cross-contamination of classes/persons, fire and severe weather drills should be conducted over the course of a few days
  - Allows for each class, by themselves and while maintaining proper face coverings and social distancing, to walk their respective routes
  - Ensures students and teachers are familiar with the routes and expectations prior to a dangerous event

# Severe Weather Drills

- Coordination with other classes and school administration must be done in advance to ensure timing and route/shelter locations are clear of others and can be cleaned if necessary
- Younger children (Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade) should practice the appropriate protective position while properly spaced for social distancing precautions as to ensure children retain muscle memory actions
  - *Protective position includes backs against the wall with a book or object covering their heads and necks*
- Older students may be shown the appropriate protective position

# Fire Drills

- Coordination with other classes and school administration must be done in advance to ensure timing, route & meeting destination locations are clear of obstructions and other people for social distancing requirements
- Coordinate with your local fire department to practice the interaction that will be necessary during a real-world event (i.e. accountability, access, FDC locations, etc.)



# Lockdown/Active Shooter/Intruder Drills

- Lockdown drills can still be conducted by each classroom while maintaining appropriate social distancing and face coverings.
- These drills are usually procedural and can be done while adhering to COVID-19 health guidance (i.e. locking a door, ensuring student accountability, discussing “what if” scenarios and perhaps movement to various locations within the classroom away from a door).

# Other Best Practices

- Utilize local first responders in your drills
  - *Coordination between school administration and first responders is critical*
  - *Universal safety precautions must be strictly adhered to by first responders and staff to limit possible exposures*
- Ensure substitute teachers and other regular visitors are made aware of emergency plans in the event they must initiate protective actions
- Document all drills, briefings and discussions, whether virtual or in-person, and upload into nSIDE for credit

# Questions and Comments