

## School Building Security Protocols

**Lines of Business:** General Liability, Educators Legal Liability, Property, Workers' Compensation

**Risk Control Strategy/Key Issues:** To establish a program of access control to limit unauthorized building entry, increasing security in the school for students and employees.

### Suggested Policy Elements:

#### 1. Policy statement:

- Management commitment to controlling access should be defined. With the recent outbreak of violence occurring throughout the country, it is imperative that all facilities be as secure as possible to provide a safe working environment for all students and employees. This issue should be outlined and stressed that the measures taken are on the behalf the entire school community.
- Assign responsibility and accountability for the plan to an individual, with delegated responsibility to on-site individuals at each facility. These field personnel will report up to and be responsible for on-site compliance. The principal individual will be held accountable for conditions and compliance for all facility locations and will have the authority to act to achieve the organization's goals. This function must be included as part of the assigned person's regular performance review.

#### 2. Building Security:

- Individuals assigned at each facility must be held accountable for the facility, the activities there, and compliance with the organization's goals and objectives.
- An initial assessment should be made of all facilities, to determine how easy it is for an intruder to gain access. All entrances must be monitored or secured to restrict access by unknown persons. Install entryway and internal corridor cameras where feasible, either operating 24/7 or only during off hours. Determine if non-school functions or activities create additional access and security risks.
- Develop screening procedures for visitors, volunteers, contractors and service personnel. Sign-in procedures by themselves are insufficient. Well intentioned people will follow the rules for visitor check-ins. Persons who intend to do harm will try to circumvent screening procedures. Unless previously notified, the individual who handles check-in should verify with the appropriate party, that a particular visitor has arrived for an appointment. Once verified, the visitor should be accompanied to their destination by a staff member. A visitor badge, issued at the checkpoint, adds security.
- All school personnel should be trained regarding non-confrontational methods of approaching strangers in the school building or on the grounds. All staff should be directed to report any unauthorized person that they may come across.
- Encourage and provide training so that students will report any unusual activities, behaviors, or unauthorized persons whom they encounter on the grounds or the building. Encourage students to buy into the idea that they share responsibility for their own safety, and for promoting security within their school. Confidentiality may be an issue to address.

- When an employee has been terminated or leaves the school's employment any security codes, passwords, combinations or locks with keys that have not been returned must be changed to maintain the integrity of the building security.
- Locks or other devices that preclude access to employee areas must control all non-public entrances. No compromising of the entrances must be allowed such as propping open the doors to the parking lots to allow for easier access when an employee leaves to smoke or obtain something from their vehicle. Discipline of an employee abrogating these controls should be measured and enforced for all employees equally.
- Police/security patrol of the facilities should be considered where and when it is deemed necessary by management. If the location has experienced prior issues with access by unauthorized persons or parties then this additional patrol would be warranted. If there is a rise in personnel around the facilities or employees express concern, local law enforcement agencies should be contacted and asked to increase their local presence around the specific facility. Where possible the identities of the individuals in question or their descriptions should be provided.

### **3. Access Documentation:**

- Schools should have all visitors sign in and sign out when they leave the premises. No visitor should be allowed to wander the facility without a visitor ID badge. Contactor employees should have been submitted to a background search if they are to be permitted access to all areas of the school for extended lengths of time. They should be issued ID badges with limited use life and so color coded to allow for easy identification.
- After hours sign in/out should be required of all personnel entering or leaving the facility whether they are employees or guests.
- Log noting all security issues should be maintained and the records kept as permanent records of the security of the organization.

### **Program Activities Calendar:**

- Annual Training First Quarter of the School Year
- Annual Records Compliance Review

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## **SAMPLE BUILDING ACCESS PLAN POLICY CHECKLIST**

A review of all points of access should be made to determine how they are controlled and who has access through these entryways. How is access controlled and by what means:

- Keys
- Key Cards
- Combination pads
- Intercom doorbells
- Intrusion Alarms

These access points should then be listed and reviewed in an ongoing basis. Positioning of these areas should be reviewed and evaluated for types of controls that should be in place. Some of suggested controls are:

- Surveillance cameras
- Communication devices
- Hand-held metal detectors
- Walk-through metal detectors

Not all of these controls are suitable for all facilities. Stationary metal detectors are fine for courthouses and other municipal facilities where access is controlled through a central point. Schools should concentrate on hand held detectors and a visible presence at entryways, as well as, on the grounds during changing of classes, the start and end of the day and during school wide activities.