



Safety Drills During COVID-19

COVID-19 has changed the way we live and interact with each other. We must now consider all things through the COVID-19 lens and school safety drills are no exception. It is still best practice to conduct safety drills in the same manner that they would be carried out in an actual emergency with an additional layer of response to address the public health threat of COVID-19.

Considerations for drills during a COVID-19 pandemic response:

- Implement and maintain 6 feet physical distancing.
 - Consider staggering classroom releases
 - Check the corridor and exit the classroom when there is room
- Enforce the use of masks or face coverings.
- Provide hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations after exiting and entering building.
- Keep in mind that when a threat poses an imminent or substantial threat to life, the threat response must take precedent over the health risk(s) of COVID-19. In these scenarios, physical distancing and masking takes a back seat to evacuation to protect lives and prevent injury.

Drill frequencies and requirements have not changed:

Reference [MN Statute 121A.037](#):

- Fire - five drills per year:
All fire drills still need to be conducted with students present.
- Lock Down - five drills per year:
Out of the five required lock down drills, not all need to be conducted with students present. MnSSC recommends schools conduct age appropriate lock down drills with students at least a couple of times a year.
 - It is best practice to conduct at least one drill with **staff only** prior to student arrival on campus. Tabletop or scenario-based drills work well for these staff only exercises. These practices promote confidence in the ability to take appropriate action in a lock down situation by increasing emergency decision-making skills.
- Severe Weather/Tornado - one drill per year:
All weather drills still need to be conducted with students present.

The [Minnesota School Safety Center](#) cares about the safety of all schools. The MnSSC provides training and resources to schools to help them prepare, respond, mitigate and recover from all hazard emergencies.