

Substitute Teacher School Safety Training Tips and Guidance

[Public Chapter 735](#) amends [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-2-203\(a\)\(14\)](#) to include the requirement that substitute teachers receive the annual school safety training required by [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-805\(7\)](#) or other instruction on emergency response procedures developed by the local board of education. Below are some tips and guidance to help meet the requirement.

Tips:

- Substitute teachers move from school to school, for this reason it is important to keep emergency procedures, [safety protocols](#), security protocols, [child abuse](#), [bullying prevention and reporting](#) and [reporting of threats or concerns](#) consistent across the district.
- Create a training video to ensure all new hires have quick access to the training upon starting employment/contract.
- Have new hires complete a quiz or evaluation to check for understanding and get feedback for continuous improvement.

Considerations for Content of Required Substitute Teacher Training:

- **[Emergency Operations Planning Classroom Emergency Response Flip-Chart](#):** This flip chart should be consistent with the functional procedures (evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place etc.) in the district and it should also be consistent with each school's as required by [Public Chapter 563](#).
- **School Security Policy and Practices:** Policy and practices that align with [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-817](#) requiring exterior doors to be closed and locked and never propped open. Ensure substitute teachers know the key control and management system policy for the schools they will be working in. Also, ensure classroom doors are closed and latched to meet the [State Fire Marshal's Office requirements](#).
- **Visitor Management Procedures:** ensure your substitute teachers are aware of the visitor management procedures of your schools. It is best practice that all schools require visitors to enter through one designated entrance and sign-in in one designated area staffed by administration or security personnel. Visitors should be required to provide a government issued identification, be visually screened or screened through a metal detector, checked through local and school databases (such as the sex offender registry, banned visitors list etc.) given a visitor badge to wear while on school property, and escorted by school personnel if required.
- **[Emergency Go Kits](#):** If your classrooms have emergency go kits, make sure substitutes are aware and are familiar with its location and contents.

- **Emergency Communications:** If your schools have mobile panic alert devices, make sure they are aware of how to use them or any method of communication in the classroom (phones, radios or other applications).
- **Behavioral Threat Assessment Reporting of Concerns:** [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-805\(6\)](#) requires emergency operations plans to have violence prevention and intervention strategies to include dissemination of information materials regarding the early detection and identification of potentially threatening behaviors and violent acts to teachers, administrators, school personnel, parents or guardians and students. Furthermore, [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-2701\(c\)\(3\)](#) requires that the district threat assessment team shall provide guidance to students, faculty, staff, and others in the LEA on how to recognize, address, and report threatening or dangerous behavior. The [SAFE TN](#) app can provide a free resource for reporting and what to report.
- **Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Reporting:** ensure your substitute teachers are aware of your district's policy on [bullying and harassment prevention, reporting and investigation procedures](#).
- **Suicide Prevention:** Ensure substitute teachers know the [warning signs](#) and how to report concerns according to your district suicide prevention policy.
- **Child Abuse Reporting:** [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1601\(b\)](#) requires that each LEA and public charter school ensure that all school officials and employees working directly with students annually complete the child abuse training program required in [Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-1-408](#). Ensure they understand the importance of keeping records [confidential](#).
- **Violence Prevention Programs:** [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-805\(6\)](#) requires emergency operations plans to have, among other things, violence prevention and intervention strategies such as de-escalation training, non-violent conflict resolution training, and comprehensive school counseling and mental health programs. Ensure your substitute teachers are aware of the violence prevention and intervention strategies of the emergency operations plan. Resources for [violence prevention programs](#) include [coordinated school health, social and personal competencies, school climate measurement, creating a healthy and supportive school environment](#), and [school-based mental health supports](#).
- **Role of School Resource Officer and/or School Security Officer in Keeping the School Building Safe and Secure:** Ensure substitute teachers know that School Resources Officers and School Security officers are not to be called on for discipline issues in the classroom and are to ensure the security of the building and the safety of students and staff in the building, on the campus grounds and at school sponsored events.
- **Internet Safety or Cybersecurity:** [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-805\(9\)](#) requires emergency operations plans to have policies and procedures to protect the cyber infrastructure against cyber-attacks and other cyber security threats and incidents. Ensure your substitute

teachers know the policies and procedures for their role in protecting the cyber infrastructure.