

Welcome to the School Safety Town Hall!

Housekeeping:

- If you are joining us via **Zoom**:
 - Use the “Q and A” feature throughout our training to ask questions.
 - There is no requirement to submit your name.
- Ashley will facilitate all questions.
- Check your SPAM folder for emails from schoolsafetyprograms@schools.utah.gov.

School Safety Town Hall

Utah State Board of Education School Safety Center

November 13, 2024 | 2:30 - 3:30 PM



**Utah State
Board of
Education**



**SCHOOL
SAFETY
CENTER**

Agenda

- School Safety Center
- Armed and Trained School Personnel
 - Overview
 - School Resource Officer (SRO)
 - School Guardian
 - Armed School Security Officer
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Live Q & A

School Safety Center

- Training
 - TRP
 - Threat Assessment
 - Standard Response Protocols/Standard Reunification Method
- School Safety Needs Assessment (SSNA) & SSNA Summary Form and Application for Alternatives
- School Safety and Support Grant
- Utah School Safety Playbook
- Q&A Resource

Armed and Trained School Personnel Overview

An LEA shall ensure every school has **at least one of the following personnel** who is physically present at the school's campus while school is in session, as required by [Utah Code Section 53G-8-701\(5\)](#):

- School Resource Officer (SRO)
- School Guardian
- Armed School Security Officer

Armed and Trained School Personnel School Resource Officer (SRO)

A law enforcement officer who contracts with or whose law enforcement agency contracts with an LEA to provide law enforcement services for the LEA.

Model Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Armed and Trained School Personnel School Guardian

School guardian as described in [Title 53-22-105](#):

- a. Does not include a principal, teacher, or individual whose primary responsibilities require presence in the classroom to teach, care, or interact; exceptions based on student enrollment;
- b. Is a school employee who volunteers for the program, and:
 - i. has a valid concealed carry permit;
 - ii. successfully completes the [recommended mental health screening](#); and
 - iii. successfully completes the School Guardian Training Program requirements.

The selection of a School Guardian is protected information.

- a. An individual who intentionally or knowingly provides the information regarding the identity of a School Guardian to an individual or entity is guilty of a class B misdemeanor [Title 53-22-105\(15\)](#).

Armed and Trained School Personnel

Armed School Security Officer

An armed private security officer licensed as an Armed School Security Officer has met the requirements of [Utah Code Section 53G-8-704](#) and:

- a. Has a valid concealed carry permit; and
- b. Successfully completes the School Guardian Training requirements.

Reminder: Application for Alternatives

H.B. 84 (2024) states a LEA, school administrator, or private school may apply to the State Security Chief for an alternative to the requirements described in:

1. **Section 53-22-105:** *School Guardian Program* requirements;
2. **Section 53G-8-704:** *Contracts between an LEA and a contract security company for armed school security guard.*

In approving or denying an application, the State Security Chief may consider factors that impact a school's or LEA's ability to adhere to the requirements, including the school's or LEA's:

1. Population size;
2. Staffing needs or capacity;
3. Geographic location;
4. General demonstration of need for an alternative to the requirements; or
5. Beginning FY26, any previous year's application(s).

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the compliance timeline for LEAs regarding the implementation?

Answer:

“Some LEAs have already started the implementation process. The objective is to have Armed and Trained School Personnel fully in place **by the 2025 - 2026 school year.**”



What is the time LEAs must have at least one Armed and Trained School Personnel on campus?

Answer:

“LEAs must ensure **at least one** Armed and Trained School Personnel is physically present on campus **while school is in session.**”



What is the campus area that Armed and Trained School Personnel must be able to respond to?

Answer:

“Armed and Trained School Personnel must be able to respond to incidents throughout the **entire** school campus, including all areas under the school's jurisdiction that are accessible to students during the school day.”



What if there is no funding for a School Guardian or School Resource Officer (SRO), or if there aren't any staff willing to become the School Guardian?

Answer:

“The statute mandates that every public school have an SRO, a School Guardian, or an Armed School Security Officer.”

“HOWEVER, an LEA may apply for an alternative to the State Security Chief based on factors such as **population size, staffing needs or capacity, geographic location, available funding, or a demonstrated need for an alternative to the requirements.**”

“See the 2024 Utah School Safety Playbook V1 (pg. 27) for additional details on how to apply for an alternative.”



Will a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for SROs be provided?

Answer:

“Yes. The School Safety Center Model MOU for School Resource Officers is available, however, an updated version is expected in FY26. The LEA and the law enforcement agency must jointly develop the MOU's contents.”

What qualifications must a school employee meet to be eligible for the School Guardian role?

Answer:

“To be considered for the School Guardian role, **a school employee** must meet several requirements as outlined in the 2024 Utah School Safety Playbook (pg. 12).”

Qualifications:

1. Obtain a valid Concealed Firearm Permit (CFP)
2. Pass the CFP Search
3. Pass the mental health screening
4. Pass the School Guardian Training Program, as provided by the State and County Security Chiefs.

If the principal or a teacher cannot be a School Guardian, who is able to fill the role?

Answer:

“Any school employee, except the principal or teacher, can be a School Guardian. The bill intends for the School Guardian not to have the primary duty of teaching or caring for students.”

“An LEA may apply for an alternative to the State Security Chief based on factors such as population size, staffing needs or capacity, geographic location, available funding, or a demonstrated need for an alternative to the requirements.”

“See the 2024 Utah School Safety Playbook V1 (pg. 27) for additional details on how to apply for an alternative.”

What does the School Guardian Training Program include?

Answer:

“The State Security Chief has created and disseminated the Guardian curriculum to County Security Chiefs. The **28-hour curriculum** is a minimum standard. County Security Chiefs may create additional or supplemental components as they see fit for their specific area of responsibility. The minimum curriculum includes **training on applicable laws, firearms safety, tactical casualty care, Standard Response Protocol, and qualification exercises.**”

Does the School Guardian need to undergo a psychological evaluation?

Answer:

“Yes. According to the statute, the school employee volunteering as a School Guardian must complete a mental health screener selected by the State Security Chief in collaboration with the Office of Substance Use and Mental Health (OSUMH).”

What is the *Fit To Carry Assessment* that new School Guardians pass before commencing their duties?

Answer:

"The *Fit To Carry Assessment* includes:

1. a personality assessment
2. a symptoms screener
3. an in-person interview
4. a reference check of at least one personal reference provided by the School Guardian"

What qualifications must a mental health professional have to administer the *Fit To Carry Assessment*?

Answer:

“The *Fit To Carry Assessment* must be administered by a professional who is **licensed to practice in Utah** holding a doctorate degree in psychology, education, or a closely related field; **AND** has formal training in the ethical administration, scoring, and interpretation of clinical assessments.”

How much is the *Fit To Carry Assessment* and who pays for it?

Answer:

“LEAs are responsible for paying for the *Fit To Carry Assessment*, and the estimated costs between \$350-\$600.”

What should LEAs know about School Guardian confidentiality?

Answer:

“The State Security Chief will track each School Guardian by collecting their name, contact information, and photographs. This information will be accessible to all law enforcement officers in the state. **The School Guardian's identity is private** and only available to the State Security Chief, school administrators, other school safety personnel (if applicable), local law enforcement, and the County Security Chiefs.”

“**Sharing the identity of the School Guardian with anyone not listed above is a class B misdemeanor.** The LEA should work with the School Guardian, school employees, and systems to ensure confidentiality.”

How would the School Guardian be identified in a real emergency and not be mistaken as a threat?

Answer:

“In collaboration with the School Safety Center and the School Safety and Security Task Force, the State Security Chief is developing a **unique and non-duplicatable identifier** for School Guardians. This identifier will be issued during the School Guardians' training.”

How do School Guardians receive the stipend?

Answer:

“The State Security Chief will keep a record of each School Guardian, including their name, contact information, and photographs. The stipend from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) will be **paid directly to the School Guardian.**”



Will USBE provide a sample contract for School Guardians that outlines their responsibilities and addresses the issue of liability?

Answer:

“**No**. The LEA should develop any formal contracts in consultation with its legal team.”

Live Questions & Answers

You can reach the USBE School Safety Center at
schoolsafetyprograms@schools.utah.gov.