



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Department of Fire Services



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PETER J. OSTROSKEY
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEMORANDUM

To: Heads of Fire Departments

From: Peter J. Ostroskey, State Fire Marshal

Date: April 23, 2020

Re: **School Fire Drills for Academic Year 2019-2020**

On April 21, 2020, Governor Baker issued an extension of the suspension of school operations for educational purposes at all public and private elementary and secondary (K-12) schools in the Commonwealth (not including residential and day schools for special needs students) through the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year.

As you know, 527 CMR 1.00, 10.5 and 20.2.4.2 requires the Head of the Fire Department, or their designee, to visit each school at least four times each year (preferably 2 – 3 months apart) for the purpose of conducting fire drills and questioning the teachers and supervisors.

Simply put, the closure of schools through the 2019-2020 academic year does not allow these required drills to take place. As such, it is my recommendation that enforcement of these specific provisions of the *State Fire Code* be discontinued until June 29, 2020 except at those schools that have specifically been granted permission for in-person summer learning programs prior to June 29, 2020 by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

During this period of school closures, we encourage all departments to continue fire safety messaging to their respective communities. Awareness and education is critical to fire prevention.