



School Safety Glass Standards & Guidelines

SB899 (Massey) / HB964 (Hawk)

In response to the tragic Covenant School shooting in 2023, the Tennessee General Assembly passed much-needed school safety legislation. This law created a school safety team tasked with considering appropriate building code requirements for new and remodeled school facilities. There are two areas within the current statute that require clarification to ensure schools, designers, and local education agencies (LEAs) can implement effective safety measures without confusion or delay.

This legislation provides the necessary housekeeping to strengthen school safety efforts by:

- Ensuring glass security standards are clear, tested, and enforceable.
- Granting the school safety team the clear authority to issue guidelines and initiate rulemaking through the State Fire Marshal.
- Creating consistency across Tennessee schools, reducing design delays, and stabilizing project budgets.

Clarifies the Standard for Intrusion-Resistant Glass Treatments

- The current statute uses inaccurate and limiting terminology to describe glass with intrusion-resistant properties.
- Without defined performance standards or testing requirements, the law creates a false sense of security and leaves schools vulnerable to inferior, untested products marketed by disreputable companies.
- The proposed changes ensure that minimum performance and testing standards are established—critical in defending against active shooter attacks and enhancing the overall safety of Tennessee’s students and educators.

Strengthens the Role of the State-Level School Safety Team

- Currently, the safety team can provide recommendations but lacks explicit authority to develop guidelines and direct the State Fire Marshal to issue enforceable rules.
- Without this clarity, LEAs and designers face inconsistent interpretations, project delays, and budget uncertainty—leaving critical safety upgrades stalled or applied unevenly across the state.
- The proposed language aligns the process with Tennessee’s established building code amendment procedures and ensures uniform implementation of safety standards statewide.