



# School Safety and Security

November 2018

## Door Locks and Code Compliance

### Overview

Recent events involving school violence have many communities looking for ways to make schools more secure. While all types of emergencies should be considered, it's important to understand the basic requirements that have governed life safety programs for many years. School officials are encouraged to work with public safety officials to create a comprehensive plan that does not result in unintended consequences. These plans should be continuously evaluated, updated, and practiced to provide students, teachers, and faculty a safe response to a variety of emergencies.

### Code Compliance

The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association, version 2009) 101 Life Safety Code has been adopted within the State of Maine and includes the following requirements for doors and locks within educational buildings:

- Any required exit door subject to use by 100 or more persons shall be permitted to be provided with a latch or lock only if the latch or lock is panic hardware or fire exit hardware.
- Required panic hardware and fire exit hardware shall not be equipped with any locking device, set screw, or other arrangement that prevents the release of the latch when pressure is applied to the releasing device.
- Door leaves shall be arranged to be opened readily from the egress side whenever the building is occupied.
- Locks, if provided, shall not require the use of a key, a tool, or special knowledge or effort for operation from the egress side.
- A latch or other fastening device on a door leaf shall be provided with a releasing device that has an obvious method of operation and that is readily operated under all lighting conditions.
- The releasing mechanism shall open the door leaf with not more than one releasing operation.
- The releasing mechanism for any latch, other than for existing installations, shall be located not less than 34 in. (865 mm), and not more than 48 in. (1220 mm), above the finished floor.

For additional information on code compliance and fire safety, please visit the Maine State Fire Marshal's Office webpage at <https://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/index.htm>.



*For more information on the bulletin topic, please contact the MEMA Public Information Officer Susan Faloon at [susan.faloon@maine.gov](mailto:susan.faloon@maine.gov)*