



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
TATE REEVES, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
SEAN J. TINDELL, COMMISSIONER

April 8, 2024

Greetings,

During its 2023 session, the Mississippi Legislature passed, and the Governor signed Senate Bill 2079, known as the "School Guardian Act" which allows school districts to select employees to be trained as armed Guardians. The intent of this program is not meant to replace School Resource Officers but to be an added layer of protection against would-be school shooters.

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing school safety, I am excited to announce that, per legislation, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) has developed a 14-day comprehensive training program designed to empower these Guardians with the skills and knowledge necessary to defend our schools from an active shooting attack and to ensure a secure learning environment. This program is being administered by the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security (MOHS) with the inaugural training class being held June 9-22, 2024, at the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers' Training Academy (MLEOTA).

Each school district is encouraged to nominate an employee for admission to the Guardian Training Course. Your school district's participation will contribute significantly to the overall success of the program and help ensure that we have safer schools in Mississippi.

The following should be taken into consideration when submitting your nominees:

1. They must volunteer to be a Guardian. A Guardian takes on the duty to defend against an active attack, this means they will be obligated to step into the line of fire. As a Guardian they must know and fully understand the responsibility of the duties asked of them.
2. Guardians will not openly carry their firearm, nor are they to act as security guards. As a Guardian they are to remain anonymous until the time comes that they must act.
3. They should be in reasonable physical shape as this course is vigorous and involves hand-to-hand fighting techniques along with other strenuous activities.
4. Nominees will be subject to a background check and a mental health evaluation before they are accepted into the program.

We believe that investing in the training of key personnel is crucial for maintaining a safe and conducive educational atmosphere. There are no guarantees that your nominee will graduate from this course as we have intentionally designed it to be challenging. Prior to attending the Guardian training, nominees must possess an Enhanced Concealed Carry Permit and must pass a firearms qualification at MLEOTA. If your nominee successfully completes the training course, they will be certified by the MOHS and provided with appropriate credentials.

Please submit your nominees to MOHS no later than May 15, 2024, by calling 601-933-7200 or emailing info@homelandsecurity.ms.gov.

I look forward to us working together in prioritizing the safety of our educational institutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'ST', is positioned above the name Sean Tindell.

Sean Tindell