

# Ohio School Boards Permitted to Allow Employees to Carry Guns in Schools

By David Hirt

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 99 into law yesterday, which allows school boards and governing bodies to permit individuals, including board employees such as administrators, teachers, cafeteria workers, and custodians, who have completed minimal training to bring their firearms and other deadly weapons and dangerous ordinance to school.

Individuals permitted to bring deadly weapons and dangerous ordinance to school must have completed 24 hours of training of a program yet to be developed, or an approved basic peace officer training program, or be a law enforcement officer. A school board may, however, require additional training. If a school board allows people to bring their deadly weapons to school, the board must complete an annual criminal background check on those individuals and must notify the public that it has authorized one or more individuals to have deadly weapons on its premises. The identity of the individuals who are permitted to have deadly weapons and dangerous ordinances at school need not be disclosed, and records that identify those employees are not public records. The provisions of House Bill 99 take effect on September 11, 2022.

The effect on a board of education's liability insurance premium, or ability to obtain liability insurance, after the board authorizes board employees to bring deadly weapons to school remains to be seen. Liability insurance carriers may exclude coverage for claims of injury and death caused by employees whom the board permitted to bring weapons at school. If so, school boards and their employees will be exposed to expensive litigation defending claims for damages, and liability for significant monetary damages, related to an authorized board employee bringing a weapon to school.

If you would like more information about the requirements and perils of allowing individuals, including board employees, to bring deadly weapons and dangerous ordinance to school, please contact any of the listed Roetzel attorneys.

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