



The University of Texas System
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July 23, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Presidents, The University of Texas System

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FROM: William H. McRaven 

The 84th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature passed S.B. 11, commonly referred to as “campus carry,” which authorizes the carrying of concealed handguns into campus buildings. The law takes effect on August 1, 2016. This memorandum outlines the process that our campuses and System Administration will follow to implement the requirements of the law.

As I have stated before, above all else, we will do everything in our power to maintain safe and secure campuses. As we implement this paramount principle into specific campus practices, we will be guided by consultative processes at each campus that engage students, faculty and staff. We will carry out this work in a coordinated manner, facilitated by U. T. System Administration, to share ideas and knowledge. The consultative process will result in campus-specific rules, policies and practices, which we anticipate will vary from campus to campus. However, we expect that some categories of buildings will be treated similarly at each campus, such as those areas common to each type of campus where there is consensus that concealed handguns should be excluded or times or events during the academic year when consideration should be given to limitations.

As we get started with this process, it is helpful to understand the essential elements of the law, which are:

- Effective August 1, 2016, the holder of a concealed handgun license may carry a concealed handgun on the campus of both academic and health related institutions. “Campus” includes all land and buildings owned or leased by the institution.
- An institution may adopt policies concerning the storage of handguns in residential facilities.

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The University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas at El Paso
The University of Texas – Pan American
The University of Texas
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The University of Texas at San Antonio
The University of Texas at Tyler

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The University of Texas
Medical Branch at Galveston
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Health Science Center at Houston
The University of Texas
Health Science Center at San Antonio
The University of Texas
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Tyler

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- In addition, after consulting with students, staff and faculty regarding the nature of the student population, specific safety considerations and the uniqueness of the campus environment, the president of the institution may adopt policies regarding the carrying of concealed handguns by license holders.
- The policies adopted by the president may not generally prohibit license holders from carrying concealed handguns on the campus.
- Where campus policy prohibits concealed handguns from any portion of a building, the institution must post effective notice of that exclusion.
- Within 90 days after adopting policies for the campus, the president must submit those policies to the Board of Regents for review. The law permits the Board to amend the policies, but only by a two-thirds vote.
- The institution must widely distribute the policies, including prominent display on its website.
- Not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, each institution must report to the Texas Legislature a description of the institutional policies and the reasons the institution has established those policies.
- The legislation requires that we consider the individual characteristics of each campus in adopting these policies, and that the consultation with students, faculty, and staff include these considerations.

I note that H.B. No. 910, separate legislation on "open carry," expressly prohibits a license holder from openly carrying a handgun on the campus of an institution of higher education.

Guidance regarding legislative intent may be gleaned from discussion of the legislation on the floor of both chambers and in conversations with members and staff. For example, all the following were mentioned as possible areas of exclusion: laboratories that contain chemical agents, student counseling and crisis centers, health clinics, on-campus day care centers and places where MRIs are operating. Another excluded area, one which I personally endorse, would be our hospitals. Non-university hospitals are excluded under other provisions of state law, and I see no reason why our hospitals should be treated differently. Identifying consensus categories of buildings to be designated "exclusion zones," as I will call them, on all our campuses will be a useful first step and will help frame the agendas for the conversations on the individual campuses.

It will be the responsibility of each president to convene a campus working group consisting of students, faculty and staff. I encourage each president to consider expanding the consultation to include parents, alumni and other stakeholders in campus life, such as representatives of businesses that conduct operations on the campus. I also encourage each

president to begin identifying both the individuals and the type of persons to be included in these consultations, so that they may begin quickly at the appropriate time.

I have asked Deputy Chancellor David E. Daniel to be the point person from the U. T. System Administration to facilitate and coordinate our planning efforts. I have asked Dr. Daniel to assemble a working group that includes a liaison from each campus to begin discussing implementation of the law and identification of consensus exclusion zones. I ask each president to provide Dr. Daniel with the name of your campus liaison by August 1. The campus liaison will be responsible for working closely with the president, communicating with all appropriate campus personnel such as police, academic officers and business officers, and bringing information and suggestions to the working group. The liaison should be a member of the campus working group (perhaps the chair of that group) to ensure good communication within and between the working groups.

Target deadlines for accomplishing our work are:

August 17, 2015	Presidents name liaisons to System-wide working group
September 10, 2015	System-wide working group organized and convened
September 15, 2015	Campus working groups fully engaged and operational
November 1, 2015	Consensus recommendations regarding any categories of space to be designated as exclusion zones at all campuses
December 4, 2015	Campus presidents submit preliminary campus plans to U. T. System Administration for review
December 11, 2015	U. T. System Administration provides feedback to presidents
December 18, 2015	Campus presidents submit final plans to U. T. System Administration for review by the Board of Regents
February 10, 2016	Board of Regents meets and reviews campus plans
February 15, 2016	Campuses begin implementing plans
July 1, 2016	All new physical facilities such as storage lockers are in place, and acquisition of required elements such as signage is complete
August 1, 2016	Law takes effect

I have directed Dr. Daniel to ensure that our campuses have the support that they need, including research into legal issues, law enforcement issues, best practices at other institutions, and sharing of information between working groups, to facilitate this effort.

Presidents, The University of Texas System

July 23, 2015

Page 4

I look forward to engaging personally in this process. By working in a coordinated manner, I am confident that we will take the best possible actions to maintain safe and secure campuses.

WHM:plc

cc: Dr. David E. Daniel
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