



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

Office of Religious and Independent School Support
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September 16, 2025

Dear Religious and Independent School Leaders:

You are receiving this notice as a reminder of your upcoming obligation under Education Law Section 807-a to have your facility inspected for fire safety annually and to file a report of inspection with the Commissioner of Education. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) encourages annual filing of fire-safety inspection reports for all schools, even though this requirement does not apply to:

- Religious and independent (R/I) schools in the cities of New York (five boroughs), Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers;
- Any R/I school outside of the above areas that has a total enrollment of less than 25 students.

You must arrange to complete an inspection after July 1, 2025, but prior to December 1, 2025, and the inspection report must be filed with the Commissioner **prior to December 16, 2025.**

For the 2025 reporting year, the Office of Religious and Independent School Support (ORISS) will collect the Fire Safety Reports from R/I school leaders via the [NYSED Business Portal](#). R/I school leaders are responsible for submission of the Fire Safety Reports. Please visit the [NYSED Business Portal](#) to access the submission portal. This web-based system improves the quality of submissions by decreasing the need for follow-up communication and increasing efficiency of the Fire Safety Report submission processes. If your R/I does not have a business portal account, you may obtain one by visiting the [Directions on Accessing the Nonpublic School Annual Fire Safety Report](#) posted to our website. We highly recommend utilizing the [NYSED Business Portal](#) to submit your Fire Safety Reports, but will accept submission via email at npfiresafety@nysed.gov.

Information including directions, sign-in information, and a training webinar on how to use the [NYSED Business Portal](#) has been posted on our [Religious and Independent School Fire Reports](#) webpage.

Please ensure the Non-Public School Fire Safety Manual and Fire Safety Report forms are used to inspect facilities. Both the Non-Public Fire Safety Manual and the Annual Fire Safety Inspection Report forms can be accessed on the [Fire Inspection Reports](#) webpage.

Some reminders on the completion of fire inspection reports:

- Education Law requires that the person performing your school's fire safety inspection hold a valid certification from the NYS Department of State as a Building Safety Inspector (BSI) or a Code Enforcement Official (CEO). The inspector's contact information must be provided, so that if questions arise, we are able to contact the inspector.
- In accordance with Education Law 807-a, the following methods, or any combination of such methods, must be used to conduct a fire inspection:

- **Requesting inspection by the county fire coordinator**, or officer performing the powers and duties of a county fire coordinator pursuant to a local law of the county in which the building is located;
- **Requesting inspection by the fire department** of any city, town, village, or fire district in which the building is located;
- **Requesting inspection by a fire corporation** which is subject to the provisions of section 1402 of the not-for-profit corporation law, if such building is located within the area described in the certificate of incorporation of any such corporation;
- **Requesting inspection by a fire inspector (Building Safety Inspector or Code Enforcement Official)** who holds a valid certification.

Please direct your questions as follows:

- Inspection requirements, reporting forms, or how to use the [NYSED Business Portal](#) may be directed to ORISS at npfiresafety@nysed.gov
- Code related questions may be directed to the local jurisdiction as they would be the one to make a final determination on building situations.

The fire safety inspection is an **annual** requirement, and it is intended to ensure all R/Is are operated and maintained in a safe and healthy manner for the benefit of the students and staff in your community. A hard copy of your inspection report should be kept at the R/I and made readily available to relevant officials, if requested.

Thank you for your continued support and hard work to keep students safe.

Sincerely,



Althea Johnson - McNally
Director