



January 7, 2026

John T. Lamar, Esq.
Attorney, Tate County School Board
214 South Ward Street
Senatobia, Mississippi 38668

Re: Enhanced Carry at Athletic Events on School Grounds

Dear Mr. Lamar:

The Office of the Attorney General has received your request for an official opinion.

Background

According to your request, the Mississippi High School Activities Association (“MHSAA”) has a rule in place that specifically prohibits firearms at athletic events. The rule allows the MHSAA to discipline and penalize school districts that violate the rule, and there is no exception to the rule for members of the public with enhanced carry permits. The MHSAA has taken the position that banning members of the public with enhanced carry permits from bringing concealed firearms into athletic events on school grounds is lawful by relying on MS AG Op., *Cantrell* (Oct. 1, 2013) and stating that an athletic event on school property requiring a ticket is not an event “to which the general public is otherwise normally permitted.” As such, the Tate County School Board requests clarification from this office.

Questions Presented

1. Is it lawful for a school board to enact a policy that would prohibit a member of the public with an enhanced carry permit from bringing a concealed firearm to athletic events on school grounds?
2. If such policy is not lawful, does the MHSAA have legal authority to impose any discipline or fine on, or initiate litigation against, any school board who allows a member of the public with an enhanced carry permit to bring a concealed firearm to athletic events on school grounds?

Brief Response

1. No. As noted in MS AG Op., *Cantrell* at *4, “the legislature has expressly stated in [S]ection 97-37-7(2) that an enhanced permit holder ‘shall also be authorized to carry weapons in . . . any location listed in subsection (13) of [S]ection 45-9-101.’” Such locations include “any elementary or secondary school facility” and “any school, college or professional athletic event not related to firearms.” Miss. Code Ann. § 45-9-101(13).
2. Mississippi Code Annotated Section 7-5-25 authorizes the Attorney General to issue official opinions to various public officials and bodies “upon any question of law relating to their respective offices.” We are unable to respond to your question regarding the MHSAA’s authority.

Applicable Law and Discussion

You first ask if it is lawful for a school board to enact a policy that would prohibit a member of the public with an enhanced carry permit from bringing a concealed firearm to athletic events on school grounds.

Pursuant to Section 37-7-301(l):

The school boards of all school districts shall have the following powers, authority and duties in addition to all others imposed or granted by law, to wit: . . . [t]o prescribe and enforce rules and regulations *not inconsistent with law* or with the regulations of the State Board of Education for their own government and for the government of the schools, and to transact their business at regular and special meetings called and held in the manner provided by law.

(emphasis added).

And Section 97-37-7(2), regarding enhanced carry, provides:

A person licensed under Section 45-9-101 to carry a concealed pistol, who (a) has voluntarily completed an instructional course in the safe handling and use of firearms offered by an instructor certified by a nationally recognized organization that customarily offers firearms training, or by any other organization approved by the Department of Public Safety, (b) is a member or veteran of any active or reserve component branch of the United States of America Armed Forces having completed law enforcement or combat training with pistols or other handguns as recognized by such branch after submitting an affidavit attesting to have read, understand and agree to comply with all provisions of the enhanced carry law, or (c) is an honorably retired law enforcement officer or honorably retired member or veteran of any active or reserve component branch of the United States of America Armed Forces having completed law enforcement or combat training with pistols or other handguns, after submitting an affidavit attesting to have read, understand and agree to comply with all provisions of Mississippi enhanced carry law *shall also be*

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authorized to carry weapons in courthouses except in courtrooms during a judicial proceeding, and any location listed in subsection (13) of Section 45-9-101, except any place of nuisance as defined in Section 95-3-1, any police, sheriff or highway patrol station or any detention facility, prison or jail.

(emphasis added).

In sum, as provided in MS AG Op., *Cantrell* at *4, “the legislature has expressly stated in [S]ection 97-37-7(2) that an enhanced permit holder ‘shall also be authorized to carry weapons in . . . any location listed in subsection (13) of [S]ection 45-9-101.’” Such locations include “any elementary or secondary school facility” and “any school, college or professional athletic event not related to firearms.” Miss. Code Ann. § 45-9-101(13). Accordingly, we opined in *Cantrell* that “the school district may not bar enhanced permit holders with concealed pistols and revolvers from entry into a school facility or school athletic event to which the general public is otherwise normally permitted.” *Cantrell* at *4. This remains the opinion of our office.

Finally, Section 7-5-25 authorizes the Attorney General to issue official opinions to various public officials and bodies “upon any question of law relating to their respective offices.” Accordingly, we are unable to respond to your second question regarding the MHSAA’s authority. However, for informational purposes, we note that the Mississippi Supreme Court has stated that contractual provisions violating state law are treated as void. *See Plaza Amusement Co. v. Rothenberg*, 131 So. 350, 357 (Miss. 1930) (“If an illegal condition be annexed to a contract, it will not void the whole contract, but the illegal part will be treated as void.”); and *see Miss. High Sch. Activities Ass’n, Inc. v. R.T. ex rel. Trail*, 163 So. 3d 274, 275 n.1 (Miss. 2015) (explaining annual membership form between school and MHSAA is a contract).

If this office may be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

LYNN FITCH, ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: /s/ Maggie Kate Bobo

Maggie Kate Bobo
Special Assistant Attorney General