



Information Bulletin

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RESPONDING TO AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

(U) An active shooter is defined as a person who is actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill individuals in a confined, populated venue. Often, an active shooter's intended targets are randomly selected. The incidents are unpredictable, evolve quickly, and are frequently over within ten to fifteen minutes.¹

- (U) On 03/08/2012, a man entered a psychiatric hospital in Pittsburgh with two handguns and began firing, killing one person and wounding seven others. Police responded within minutes and fatally wounded the gunman.^{2,3}
- (U) On 01/13/2012, a 50-year-old man in North Carolina went on a shooting spree at the lumber company where he was employed. Three people were killed and another was critically injured before the shooter returned to his home and committed suicide.⁴
- (U) On 01/08/2011, a 22-year-old man went on a rampage outside of a supermarket in Tucson, Arizona where he fatally shot six people and wounded many others, including a U.S. Congresswoman.⁵

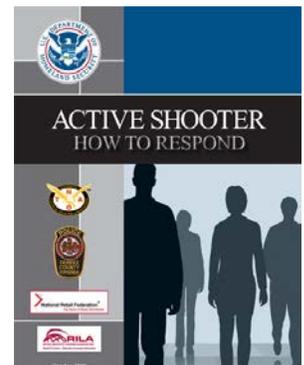


(U) To increase awareness of this type of scenario, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has provided information regarding how to respond to active shooters for distribution to law enforcement, emergency responders, and civilian personnel.

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. Remember that customers and clients are likely to follow the lead of employees and managers during an active shooter situation.

1. Evacuate – if there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises
 - a. Have an escape route and plan in mind
 - b. Leave your belongings behind
 - c. Keep your hands visible
 - d. Follow the instructions of any police officers you encounter
 - e. Do not attempt to move wounded people
 - f. Call 9-1-1 when you are safe
2. Hide out – if evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you
 - a. Be out of the active shooter's view
 - b. Protect yourself by utilizing an office or other room with a lockable door
 - c. Do not trap yourself or restrict your options for movement
 - d. Lock the door and blockade with heavy furniture



- e. Silence your cell phone and remain quiet
 - f. Hide behind large items (i.e., cabinets, desks)
3. As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter
 - a. Take aggressive action against the shooter
 - b. Utilize improvised weapons
 - c. Be committed to your actions

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

Law enforcement's goal is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard.

- Remain calm and follow the instructions of police
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)
- Immediately raise hands and keep them visible
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, but instead proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises

The first officers to arrive on the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to follow the initial law enforcement response. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons.¹

Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the scene has been stabilized and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave the safe location or assembly point until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.¹

(U) The full document is available at: http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf. For additional information regarding active shooters, DHS offers online resources, including independent study training, print materials, and a virtual roundtable at: <http://www.lpinformation.com/active-shooter>. Also, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers an independent study course specifically designed for managers and employees. The course can be found at: <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is907.asp>.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

(U) The best way to ensure an effective response to an active shooter by law enforcement, emergency responders, security personnel, and employees is to create an Emergency Action Plan and train accordingly. One of the most beneficial training methods is through participation in mock active shooter exercises. Preparedness and prevention are key components in the quest for appropriate reactions to an active shooter. For more information on creating an Emergency Action Plan for your business, visit the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health and Safety Administration's website at: www.osha.gov.

¹ Active Shooter: How to Respond. (2008, October). U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Retrieved 01/19/2012 from http://www.alerts.si.edu/docs/DHS_ActiveShooterBook.pdf.

² Stroud, M. (2012, March 9). Two dead, including gunman, in shooting at Pittsburgh hospital. *Reuters*. Retrieved 03/26/2012 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/09/us-usa-shooting-pittsburgh-idUSBRE82718N20120309>.

³ Associated Press. (2012, March 10). Pittsburgh hospital shooter was gifted, troubled student. *USA Today*. Retrieved 03/26/2012 from <http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2012-03-10/Pittsburgh-hospital-shooting/53469700/1>.

⁴ Mims, B. (2012, January 17). Co-worker ridicule might have led to Montgomery County shooting spree. *WRAL.com*. Retrieved 03/28/2012 from <http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/10608768/>.

⁵ Washington Post Staff. (2011, January 10). Arizona Shooting. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved 01/19/2011 from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/10/AR2011011003635.html>.

