

# The Office of Infrastructure Protection

National Protection and Programs Directorate  
Department of Homeland Security

Active Shooter: Preparedness and Response

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# Agenda

- Overview and Characteristics of an Active Shooter Incident
- Personal Response
- “Active Shooter – How to Respond” Materials
  - “Options for Consideration” Training Video
  - Online Training



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# Overview

- Though typically associated with schools, the threat of an active shooter exists anywhere people gather. College campuses, movie theaters, churches, malls, and restaurants have all been targeted by active shooters
- In the Spring of 2008, members of the National Retail Federation requested materials from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to provide guidance to individuals who may be victims in an active shooter situation
- The Commercial Facilities Sector-Specific Agency (SSA) collaborated with the Emergency Services SSA, representatives of the law enforcement community, and partners in the Retail Subsector to develop guidance materials concerning an active shooter situation



# Active Shooter Situation Overview

- Active shooters can attack our workplaces, schools, hospitals, etc.
- Although many perpetrators have a history of negative—sometimes violent—behavior, there is still no single, accurate one-size-fits-all profile of an active shooter



# Recent Active Shooter Incidents

- On September 16, 2013, 13 people (including the gunman) were killed at the Headquarters of the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) inside the Washington Navy Yard in Southeast Washington, D.C.
- On December 14, 2012, 27 people (including the gunman) were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School (plus one additional victim related to the gunman in a nearby residence) in Newtown, CT
- On August 5, 2012, seven people were killed in a Sikh temple (including the gunman) in Oak Creek, WI
- On July 20, 2012 ,12 people were killed and 58 were injured in a movie theater in Aurora, CO
- On January 8, 2011, 6 people were killed and 13 were injured (including U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords) in a supermarket parking lot in Tucson, AZ
- On November 5, 2007, 13 people were killed and 29 were injured at a military base in Ft. Hood, TX
- On April 16, 2007, 32 people were killed and 17 were wounded at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA



# Joint Intelligence Bulletin - December 27, 2012

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation analyzed 154 active shooter events in the United States between 2002 and 2012 that included 3 or more individuals being shot
- The shooter was deceased after 51 percent of these events (43 percent committed suicide and 8 percent were shot and killed by responders). 45 percent of active shooters were arrested and 4 percent remain unidentified
- A clear motivation was never determined in 40 percent of cases analyzed; however, the most common identified motivations were found to be workplace retaliation (21 percent), domestic disputes (14 percent), and academic retaliation by a current or former student (7 percent)
- The shooter was male in 96 percent of cases analyzed
- The shooter acted alone 96 percent of the time



# Joint Intelligence Bulletin - December 27, 2012

- Active shooter events most commonly occurred in a workplace environment (37 percent) or academic setting (17 percent)
- From investigations and analysis, many active shooters were described as social isolates, harbored feelings of hate and anger, and/or had some reported contact with mental health professionals
- Mental illness is commonly referenced as a potential contributing factor, but its causal impact on the attack can only be speculated
- Very few active shooters had previous arrests for violent crimes
- Common catalysts or triggers observed include: loss of significant relationships, changes in financial status, loss of a job, changes in living arrangements, major adverse changes to life circumstances, and/or feelings of humiliation or rejection on the part of the shooter



# Characteristics of an Active Shooter Incident

- An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area
- In most cases, there is no pattern or method to the selection of victims
- Most active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly
- Preparedness and awareness are key to helping protect our employees, our customers, and ourselves



# Potential Indicators

If others recognize and report these behaviors, the employee may be assisted, supported, and treated. It is important for employers to establish communication procedures for reporting these concerns. Depending on company policy, employees should alert the Human Resources Department or Safety/Security Department.

- Thoughts
  - Talk of previous violent incidents
  - Unsolicited focus on dangerous weapons
  - Expressions of paranoia or depression
  - Overreaction to workplace changes
- Feelings
  - Depression or withdrawal
  - Unstable, emotional responses
  - Feeling either arrogant and supreme, or powerless
  - Intense anger or hostility
- Behaviors
  - Increased use of alcohol or drugs
  - Violations of company policies
  - Increased absenteeism
  - Exploiting or blaming others



# Protective Measures – April 3, 2014 Joint Intelligence Bulletin

- Ensure you are familiar with current active shooter and other emergency response plans
- Establish safe rooms within the confines of facilities
- Establish communication protocols and means to instruct personnel on immediate personal protective actions (e.g. evacuation, shelter-in-place)
- During times of heightened threat, maintain awareness of travel patterns and, if possible, vary times and routes to avoid predictability
- Exercise caution when discussing travel or personal matters on social media, unsecured networks, and in public settings.



# Protective Measures – April 3, 2014 Joint Intelligence Bulletin

- Raise awareness among employees by conducting “all hazards” awareness training
- Ensure that emergency communications equipment is present and operable
- Reports missing or stolen equipment, including weapons, to the proper authorities
- Be familiar with the “See Something, Say Something” campaign and appropriately report all odd or suspicious activity to agency security officers, Federal Protective Service, or local law enforcement
- Increase visibility of armed security and law enforcement personnel in areas adjacent to and in front of security checkpoints to deter unwanted activity.



# Long-Term Protective Measures – April 3, 2014 Joint Intelligence Bulletin

- Protective measures in the long-term should emphasize physical safeguards, including building enhancements that present a more robust deterrent and provide a more survivable environment. Officials should consider the following measures:
  - Install secure locks on all external and internal doors and windows with quick-release capability from within for emergency escape
  - Install window and external door protection with quick-release capability from within for fire escape
  - Consider establishing safe areas within the facility for assembly and refuse during crises
  - Consider establishing/implementing an emergency communications system such as phone trees or text messages for personnel



# Responding to an Active Shooter Situation

- In an active shooter situation, you should quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. You should:
  1. **Run:** If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises
  2. **Hide:** If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you
  3. **Fight:** As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter
- It is important for employees to be trained so that they can react if they are ever confronted with an active shooter situation
- These situations evolve quickly, therefore, quick decisions could mean the difference between life and death
- If you are in harm's way, you will need to decide rapidly what the safest course of action is based on the scenario that is unfolding before you



# Run

- If you suspect a potential active shooter situation, you must quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life; if there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises
- Always have an escape route and plan in mind even if you are just visiting
- Make sure to leave your belongings behind
- Be sure to:
  - Warn others not to enter an area where the active shooter may be
  - Help others escape, if possible
  - Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
  - Do not attempt to move wounded people
  - Keep your hands visible
  - Follow the instructions of any police officers

Call 911 when it is safe to do so.



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# Hide

- If safe evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. Your hiding place should:
  - Be out of the active shooter's view
  - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door)
  - Not be a trap or restrictive of your options for movement
- To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:
  - Lock the door
  - Blockade the door with heavy furniture
  - Close, cover, and move away from the door



# Fight

- As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, should you attempt to incapacitate the shooter by acting with physical aggression
  - Act as aggressively as possible against him/her
  - Throw items and improvise weapons
  - Yell
  - Commit to your actions



# Options for Consideration Video



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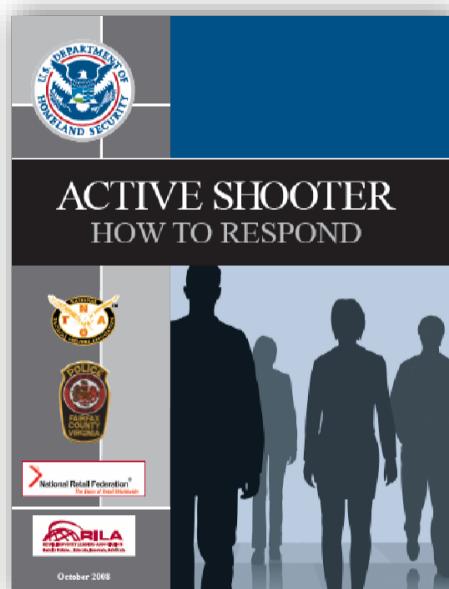
# Active Shooter “How to Respond” Program Overview



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# Training and Outreach Materials

- Materials consist of three products:
  - Basic Guide Book
  - Break Room Poster
  - Pocket Emergency Measures Guide



## HOW TO RESPOND WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

QUICKLY DETERMINE THE MOST REASONABLE WAY TO PROTECT YOUR OWN LIFE. CUSTOMERS AND CLIENTS ARE LIKELY TO FOLLOW THE LEAD OF EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS DURING AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION.

1. EVACUATE
  - Have an escape route and plan in mind
  - Leave your belongings behind
  - Keep your hands visible
2. HIDE OUT
  - Hide in an area out of the active shooter's view
  - Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors
3. TAKE ACTION
  - As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
  - Work to incapacitate the active shooter
  - Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter

**CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**

### HOW TO RESPOND WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES ON THE SCENE

1. HOW YOU SHOULD REACT WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES:
  - Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions
  - Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
  - Keep hands visible at all times
  - Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety
2. INFORMATION YOU SHOULD PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR:
  - Location of the active shooter
  - Number of shooters, if more than one
  - Physical description of shooter/s
  - Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
  - Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises

### RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

AN ACTIVE SHOOTER MAY BE A CURRENT OR FORMER EMPLOYEE. ALERT YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT IF YOU BELIEVE AN EMPLOYEE EXHIBITS POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR. INDICATORS OF POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR MAY INCLUDE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Unexplained increase in absences, and/or vague physical complaints
- Drunkenness
- Increased severe mood swings, and noticeably unstable or emotional responses
- Increasingly talk of problems at home
- Increase in unsolicited comments about violence, firearms, and other dangerous weapons and violent crimes

Contact your building management or human resources department for more information and training on active shooter preparedness in your workplace.

To download these materials visit  
<https://www.dhs.gov/cisa/active-shooter-preparedness>

## HOW TO RESPOND WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

### 1. EVACUATE

Find an escape route and plan in mind  
Leave your belongings behind  
Keep your hands visible

### 2. HIDE OUT

Find an area out of the active shooter's view  
Block entry to your hiding place and lock the door  
Turn off your cell phone and/or pager

### 3. TAKE ACTION

As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger  
Work to incapacitate the active shooter  
Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter

## PROFILE OF AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area, typically through the use of firearms.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

- Victims are selected at random
- The event is unpredictable and evolves quickly
- Law enforcement is usually required to end an active shooter situation

## CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO



# Online Training

- DHS has released Active Shooter, What You Can Do (IS-907), a new online training course available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency Emergency Management Institute at  
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS907.asp>
- The course is self-paced and takes about 45 minutes to complete.
- Upon completion, participants can take a short online "final exam" that is instantly scored. A certificate is given to participants who finish the entire course and pass the final exam



# Workshops

- DHS is partnering with police departments to conduct workshops aimed at fostering communication between facilities and their local emergency response teams in response to an active shooter event
- These one-day facilitated seminars will focus on emergency responder and facility coordination, interoperability capabilities, communications protocols, best practices, and integration of local assets
- For more information, email [Asworkshop@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:Asworkshop@hq.dhs.gov)



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For more information visit:  
[www.dhs.gov/activeshooter](http://www.dhs.gov/activeshooter)

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