

# **Campus Response in Active Shooting Situations**

## **Immediate Response – Active Shooter Situations in Public Places**

While the possibility that you will be at or near the scene of a violent confrontation in our area is very small, you should make yourselves, and your family and friends, fully aware of what you may need to do to stay safe. The first steps in doing so require you to be alert to your surroundings at all times, and to stay informed. This document provides guidance to those citizens who may be caught in an active shooting situation. The response by Law Enforcement to these situations will be different.

First, a hostage situation differs from an Active Shooter scenario. A hostage situation is one in which a person takes control over another person, is demanding some type of action, and is not allowing the victim(s) being held to leave. The hostage taker is not actively killing or injuring people. The hostage taker is holding people against their will. In hostage situations, Police will respond and attempt to communicate with the hostage taker(s).

An "active shooter" is a person or persons who appear to be actively killing or attempting to kill people in a single location. These situations have happened in schools, shopping malls, businesses, streets, and other public venues. The situations are dynamic in nature, and require immediate action by law enforcement personnel to stop the shooter.

How one responds at an active shooter situation will be determined by the specific circumstances of the encounter. If you find yourself involved in an active shooter situation, try to remain calm and use the following guidelines as a strategy for survival.

### **Some Guidelines for Responding in Active Shooter Situations:**

#### **If an active shooter is outside your building**

- **Go quickly to an area that can be locked or barricaded.**
- **Lock all doors and windows, turn out the lights and stay away from - and lower than the sightline of all windows. Barricade the door if you cannot lock it.**
- **Call 9-1-1 and advise the dispatcher of your location and what is taking place. Remain on the line to give the dispatcher any further information that may be needed.**
- **Remain in the room until a police officer or other authority gives the "all clear." Be sure it is the police or a competent authority who is giving the "all clear", and not the shooter attempting to gain entry into the room.**

#### **If an active shooter is inside the building with you**

- If the area you are in can be locked, lock it and stay away from the entry and windows. Consider barricading the door if you cannot lock it.
- If you cannot lock or barricade yourself and hide somewhere, and you can determine where the shooting is coming from, run to any exit you can reach without being seen by the shooter.
- Call 911 as soon as possible to report what is happening. Dispatchers will advise you on what to do.

#### If an active shooter enters your office or classroom

- Dial 911 on your office phone or cell phone if possible.
- If it is possible to talk, report what is happening, and provide the shooter's location and description.
- If it is not safe to speak, just leave the line open so the dispatcher can hear what is taking place.
- If you are confronted by the shooter and defenseless, attempt to negotiate with the shooter.
- Attempting to overpower the shooter with force should be considered as the last resort after all other options have been exhausted.
- If the shooter leaves the area, attempt to lock or barricade the door, or proceed to a safe location as described above.

#### If it is possible to flee an active shooting situation

- Have a route of escape in mind.
- Leave everything behind except your cell phone (do not worry about purses or book bags - those will only slow you down).
- Keep your hands visible and follow the instructions of the police. You must remember, the police may not have an accurate description of the shooter(s), so for everyone's safety, you may be detained by the police.
- Do not stop to assist wounded victims or attempt to move them. Do tell the police where these victims are located.

#### What you should expect from law enforcement responding to an active shooter

- Police are trained to proceed as quickly as possible to the sound of the gunfire.
- Their purpose is to stop the shooter.
- Officers may be in plain clothes, patrol uniforms, or SWAT Uniforms armed with long rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns. They will have identification.

- **Do as the officers direct you, and keep your hands visible at all times to show the officers you are not a threat.**
- **If possible, tell the officers where the shooter was last seen, and provide a full description of the shooter and any weapons used.**
- **Also be aware that the first responding police officers will not stop to assist injured people. Others will follow to treat the injured. First responding officers are trained to proceed as quickly as possible to the gunfire and to stop the shooter.**

*Keep in mind that even once you are in a safe location, the entire area is a crime scene. The police usually will not let anyone leave until the situation is completely under control. Police may ask for a statement of what you heard and observed. Your cooperation with the Police will be vital.*