

APPENDIX D

Active Shooter Preparedness (How to Respond)

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides training, products, and resources to a broad range of stakeholders on issues such as active shooter awareness, incident response, and workplace violence. In many cases, there is no pattern or method to the selection of victims by an active shooter, and these situations are by their very nature unpredictable and evolve quickly.

The following instructions on how to respond during an active shooter incident are provided by the State of Alabama Law Enforcement Agency with credit to Pepperdine University.

REMEMBER: Law Enforcement's first priority is to confront and disable the threat.

DEVELOP A SURVIVAL MINDSET

- **Awareness and Preparation:** Take time to understand your surroundings and environment before an emergency occurs. Ask yourself, "What if?" questions and develop a plan.

IN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER EMERGENCY

Make a decision, trusting your instincts, to take action to protect yourself to survive the situation. You generally will have three options:

- **Run:** Can you safely escape?
- **Hide:** Is there a good place to hide?
- **Fight:** Will you take out the shooter?

RUN FOR SAFETY

- If you can and you deem it safe, get out, stay low and get to a safe place.
- You will have to rely partially on instinct.
- Leave belongings behind, but take your cell phone if it is handy.

HIDING IN A SAFE PLACE

- Find a hidden location.

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- Find protection behind furniture if possible.
- Find a room that locks if you can.
- If possible, close and lock the outside door to the room. Blockade the door with furniture or other heavy objects.
- Close the blinds, turn off the lights, remain quiet, silence cell phones, spread out away from other individuals, and move behind available cover.
- Stay on the floor, away from doors or windows, and do not peek out to see what may be happening.
- Make a plan with others in the room about what you will do if the shooter enters. Make a total commitment to action and act as a team with others.
- Do whatever is necessary to survive the situation.
- If possible and safe to do so, report the location of the assailant.

IF OUTSIDE WHEN A SHOOTING OCCURS

- Drop to the ground immediately, face down as flat as possible. If within 15-20 feet of a safe place or cover, duck and run to it.
- Move or crawl away from gunfire, trying to utilize any obstructions between you and the gunfire. Remember that many objects of cover may conceal you from sight, but may not be bulletproof.
- When you reach a place of relative safety, stay down and do not move. Do not peek or raise your head in an effort to see what may be happening.
- Wait and listen for directions from Public Safety and law enforcement personnel.

IF SUSPECT IS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY

- An individual must use his/her own discretion about when he or she must engage a shooter for survival.
- Make a plan as to how you will survive the situation.
- Make a total commitment to action and act as a team with others if possible.
- Do whatever is necessary to survive the situation.

HELP OUT

- Warn others.
- Help others escape.
- Keep others away from the danger area.
- Help the injured.
- Help others stay calm.

CALLING FOR HELP

- Call 9-1-1 to report the appropriate authorities. **Do not assume that someone else has reported the incident.** Be persistent; phones may be jammed.
- Calmly identify yourself and your exact location. Remain calm and answer the dispatcher's questions. The dispatcher is trained to obtain the necessary and required information for an appropriate emergency response.
- If safe to do so, stop and take time to get a good description of the criminal. Note height, weight, sex, race, approximate age, clothing, method and direction of travel, and his/her name, if known.
- If the suspect is entering a vehicle, note the license plate number, make and model, color, and outstanding characteristics. All of this takes only a few seconds and is of the utmost help to the responding officers.

WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

- When law enforcement reaches you, do not run at them or make sudden movements.
- ***The priority of the first responders will be to identify the shooter.*** Law enforcement will need to ensure that you are not the shooter.
- Do not scream, yell, point, or wave your arms.
- Do not hold anything in your hands that could be mistaken for a weapon (including cell phones).
- Be quiet and compliant.
- Show the officers your empty hands and follow their instructions.
- Give the number of shooters.
- Give the location and physical description of the shooter.
- Give the number and types of weapons.
- When it is safe to do so, you will be given instructions as to how to safely exit your location.

Find more resources for first responders and citizens at <http://alea.gov>

DHS offers free courses, materials, webinars and workshops to better prepare you to deal with an active shooter situation and to raise awareness of behaviors that represent pre-incident indicators and characteristics of active shooters. These tools are designed to help individuals, business owners, law enforcement officials, schools, houses of worship and others. Learn more at www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness.

Also, agencies can learn more about Active Shooter training at Texas State University's Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center site at <http://alerrt.org>