

THE MECHANIC GROUP



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO
DURING AN ACTIVE
SHOOTER INCIDENT?

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP
AN ACTIVE SHOOTER
EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN?

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION
READY?

THE INSURANCE SPECIALISTS

PHYSICAL SECURITY

INVESTIGATION

INTELLIGENCE

ELECTRONIC SECURITY

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ARE YOU READY FOR AN ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT?

Although the Active Shooter (A/S) phenomenon appears to be on the rise, it remains a rare occurrence. Nevertheless, your organization must remain vigilant to the potential threat due to the serious consequences.

The first step in getting ready for an Active Shooter incident is to create an Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Detailed EAP input should be sought from management, employees, human resources, in-house or contract security personnel and law enforcement. The plan should be gamed/exercised and updated periodically.

Along with creating an EAP, a firm must establish security measures that are compatible with the workplace environment, as well as clear reporting lines. Your security partner, either in-house or contract, will be a critical participant in all stages of the planning process.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO DURING AN ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT?

If an A/S incident occurs, take the following actions:

- Alert coworkers that an incident has occurred. Initiate muted specific internal security warning system. Do not create panic.
- Evacuation is the preferred option as long as it can be accomplished safely. Leave belongings behind.
- If evacuation to a safe location is not possible decide to shelter in place.

How to evacuate self and others in immediate work area:

- If possible, assist others to escape.
- Follow police officer or security personnel instructions.
- Attempt to safely and quickly move to the nearest or designated exits. Keep noise and talking to minimum.
- Do not activate fire alarm. This may expose others to attack as they evacuate.
- Call 911 or contact designated authorities by established and or alternative means.

Shelter in Place

Post the position of secure rendezvous/shelter in place locations before an A/S incident occurs. These locations will be places in which you are less likely to be discovered and are not trapped. Move to these locations if evacuation is not feasible. Lock and barricade doors. If room cannot be secured, move to nearest securable location that can be reached safely. If safe exit continues to not be possible, remain in place and follow these instructions:

- Lower profile and get out of sight.
- Use available cover from small firearms.
- Keep everyone calm, out of sight and quiet.
- Turn off lights and close blinds.
- Turn off radios, TVs and computer monitors
- Put mobile devices on vibrate.
- Silence wristwatch alarms.

- Block windows.
- Place signs in exterior windows to identify occupied areas and location of injured.
- Remain silent, whisper communicate or use visual signals. Do not respond to any voice commands until you can verify with certainty that they are emanating from a police officer.
- Do not respond to verbal enquiries or commands unless they are verified to come from a police officer.

Call 911 as soon as possible and report the following to security and/or authorities:

- Name and position.
- Specific location – building address, floor, room number.
- Number of people at your location.
- Number of injured and type(s) of injuries.
- Number of attacker(s), location, weapons (type and number) and explosives.
- Provide description(s): race, gender, physical features, clothing, language, accents and equipment.
- Advise if you or any others in your group are armed with firearm(s).
- Advise authorities of new location if you relocate.
- E-mail and/or texting are also communications options if you are unable to speak.

Self Defense Measures

- Avoid bunching up and creating an easy target for the A/S.
- Remain calm and quietly develop a contingency plan in the event the A/S confronts you.
- If you cannot speak, leave telephone line open so authorities can monitor activities in your location.
- If in a hallway, stay out of hallway center while moving, but do not hug walls to avoid ricocheting bullets. Move to nearest room, lock and barricade door.

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO DURING AN ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT? (continued)

Tactics of Last Resort

- Experience has shown that the A/S will continue to kill unless physically stopped.
- Be prepared to take any action to survive.
- If you have a firearm and are trained in its use, be prepared to use it, but let the A/S come to you.
- If you are not armed with a firearm obtain any object that can be employed as an improvised weapon. Be as aggressive as possible. Yell and throw items at the A/S. Multiple attackers can be more effective. Be fully committed to your attack.
- The best time to attack may be when the A/S has paused to reload his firearm.
- The typical A/S does not expect violent resistance. Employ surprise and attack at first opportunity. Be aggressive and use any improvised weapons at hand to overcome the A/S.
- If possible, remain in place until police contact you. If not possible because of fire or an unexploded explosive device, move quickly and quietly to the nearest exit. Consider windows.
- If A/S is incapacitated, immediately separate him from weapon and place in a safe place. Advise authorities of situation and await their arrival. Place weapon in plain view away from A/S. Do not carry or handle weapon when police arrive.

Police Interaction

- The primary concern of first responders will be locating, containing/confronting and neutralizing A/S.
- Explosive breaching and explosive diversionary devices may be used if police forced entry is required. Police K9s may be present.
- Police will bypass injured, but will ask you for critical information regarding A/S, require you to remain locked down or direct you to nearest safe exit.

- Escorted evacuation and treatment of the injured will occur after all threats are eliminated.
- You may be initially suspected and weapons will be pointed at you. Remain calm and do not yell at the officers.
- Do not move under your own volition and obey all commands. Do not move abruptly. Keep hands in view and fingers spread. Do not run toward or away from officers.
- You may be handcuffed, searched and questioned. In addition to determining your status, you may be questioned for critical information about the A/S.
- Remain in secure location until escorted out by authorities.

Recovery after A/S has been neutralized

- Injured may be triaged and initially treated on site.
- Those with serious injuries will be transported to advanced medical facilities.
- Account for all employees and customers who were with you.
- You may be detained for processing and/or questioning at the crime scene.
- You may be asked to identify suspects.
- You may be referred to mental health professionals
- You may be approached by the media for interviews. Choose your statements with discretion, understanding they will be entered in the permanent public record. Remember that even though the A/S has been neutralized, this incident is now an ongoing investigation that must eventually be adjudicated and you are a potential witness. Do not do or say anything that could result in your harassment or jeopardize the A/S's prosecution. Save your story for court.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP AN ACTIVE SHOOTER EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN?

The purpose of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is to save lives and mitigate property damage. At the earliest opportunity, consult with your security service for assistance in developing an EAP for your business.

An effective EAP should include the following components:

- A universal method of reporting emergencies such as fires, robberies, facility and property violence, medical emergencies, natural disasters, accidents and A/S.
- Emergency contact numbers and e-mail addresses for emergency responders including police, fire department and rescue squads.
- An evacuation policy and procedure, to include posted procedures and route schematics in the workplace employee only areas.
- Emergency escape routes (primary and alternate) outlined on floor plans with safe areas identified and posted in employee only areas. Escape routes for disabled persons should also be preselected and identified.
- Contact names and numbers and responsibilities designated by EAP.
- Locations, names and contact numbers for area emergency medical care facilities. Distances to these facilities.
- An emergency alert system for all proximate businesses, employees, customers and response authorities.
- Instructions on how to recognize gunfire.
- Instructions on how to evacuate.
- Instructions on how to protect customers.
- Instructions on how to shelter in place.
- Instructions on how to contact and report to police.
- Instructions on how to react to police presence and what to expect from first responders and follow on emergency personnel.
- Instructions on how to neutralize an A/S.
- Instructions on how to seek mental health and physical health assistance.

Post-Incident Procedures

- After an A/S has been neutralized or taken into custody and the threat has been eliminated, human resources and management should conduct post incident assessments and procedures to include the following:
- At a designated assembly area determine if all employees and customers are accounted for and their physical status.
- Authorities may take this responsibility, but management should establish a procedure for notifying affected families of family members status and if injured, to include location of facility they have been evacuated to.
- Conduct an initial assessment of any psychological impact on victims and if required, refer them to mental health professionals.
- Replace personnel in any critical crisis management positions who may have been vacated by A/S or other actions.
- At earliest opportunity, conduct an after action critique of implementation of ERP. Include all stakeholders and outside authorities in meeting. Write and distribute to those with a need to know an After Action Report and Lessons Learned.

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION READY FOR AN ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT?

Like all disasters, there is no way to fully simulate an A/S incident. And yet, through careful planning and regular gaming exercises, an organization can prepare for one. With this preparation, an organization will gain the opportunity to either prevent an incident or limit the scale of the disaster.

If the answer is “Yes,” to these questions, you will know that you are on the road to successful crisis management:

- Are you familiar with the A/S phenomenon?
- Are you familiar with the A/S profile?
- Do you have a security officer versed in these matters?
- Has a collective crisis management staff been established and trained?
- Do you have an EAP?
- Have employees been encouraged to be aware of their environment?
- Do employees understand that security is everyone’s responsibility? Have employees been briefed and rehearsed on the EAP?
- Have business principal’s roles in plan been defined?
- Have you conducted a security site/vulnerability survey?
- Do you have an appropriate warning system for employees and customers?

ABOUT THE MECHANIC GROUP

The Mechanic Group was founded in 1989 and has grown into the leading insurance provider to the Security and Investigation Industry in America.

With over 21 years of first-hand experience and service to the private security industry, all members of The Mechanic Group remain focused on delivering highly rated risk management and insurance solutions with stable carriers, 24/7 Customer Service and Availability and the tools, resources and information that protect our clients' businesses and their bottom lines.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

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