



Preparedness Committee  
Security and Life Safety  
Commercial Office Building Protective Measures

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Workplace Violence</b>
<b>Date:</b>	Jan 2014; Revised May 2018

**Background** A call for a workplace violence incident, including active shooter situations, requires immediate action. In these types of situations, time is of the essence and it is important that the police are immediately summoned and that building occupants have a pre-determined plan in place. In some cases, employers are made aware of certain behaviors – including behaviors by current employees, ex-employees or even domestic partners – which could provide warning for future violence. These indicators or behaviors should be taken seriously and reported to Building Management and Security. If reported, Security may be able to provide additional precautions and safeguards, such as tightened access-control measures.

**Response Measures** It is important to note that each tenant should discuss workplace violence situations and identify specific company response measures for their employees, such as securable or safe areas within their floors where employees can shelter-in-place. In a commercial building, it may be difficult to evacuate upper floors, especially if the elevators are locked-down and the only escape route is through the stairwells. Upon receiving a call for a workplace violence incident, the below measures should be considered, based on building policy.

- **Call 911** providing street address and floor number, and alert building occupants of situation through the public address and/or mass notification systems, if safe to do so.
- Lock-down building, to include all access points such as entrances, loading docks, and garages. Only first responders, such as emergency medical staff and law enforcement officers, should be allowed to enter.
- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recommends the following courses of action when faced with an active threat
  1. **Run**, rapidly move away from the threat
    - Evacuate only if escape route is available and it is safe to do so.
  2. **Hide**, shelter in place when evacuation is not an option
    - Hide in a secure area, away from suspect’s view.
  3. **Fight**, incapacitate the aggressor
    - Directly attack the perpetrator only as a last resort and if there is no option to evacuate or hide out.

HOW TO RESPOND	HOW TO RESPOND
WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY	WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES
<p><b>1. EVACUATE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an escape route and plan in mind</li> <li>• Leave your belongings behind</li> <li>• Keep your hands visible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain calm and follow officers' instructions</li> <li>• Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)</li> <li>• Immediately raise hands and spread fingers</li> <li>• Keep hands visible at all times</li> <li>• Avoid quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety</li> <li>• Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling</li> <li>• Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. HIDE OUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hide in an area out of the active shooter's view</li> <li>• Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors</li> <li>• Silence your cell phone and/or pager</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. TAKE ACTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger</li> <li>• Attempt to incapacitate the active shooter</li> <li>• Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter</li> </ul>	<p><b>INFORMATION</b></p> <p>YOU SHOULD PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of the active shooter</li> <li>• Number of shooters</li> <li>• Physical description of shooters</li> <li>• Number and type of weapons held by shooters</li> <li>• Number of potential victims at the location</li> </ul>
<p><b>CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO</b></p>	

- Recall or lock-down elevators to predetermined floors so suspect cannot advance throughout the building.
- If feasible, track suspect on CCTV and/or alarm system.
- Identify designated for Security team members, and prepare for arrive of law enforcement.

**Best Practices / Considerations** Once law enforcement arrives, they will assume control of the perimeter, and will rapidly deploy a team to confront/apprehend the suspect. During this time, the building will play a support role and will take direction from first responders. During the incident, Building Management, Engineering, or Security may be called upon to perform the following:

- Assist with and maintain access control measures.
- Continue to monitor, control, and activate building security systems.
- Provide keys, access cards, drawings, radios and/or other logistical support.
- Provide updates to tenants as directed by first responders (especially those still sheltering in place).
- Activate media policy, as appropriate.
- Medical assistance and staging, as appropriate.

**Conclusion / Follow Up** A workplace violence incident can be a traumatic event, but with proper planning and training, building employees will be more confident in their response and assistance will not be delayed.

At the conclusion of a workplace violence incident, Security should consider the below actions.

- Obtain relevant information for an Incident Report.
- Return building back to normal operations in coordination with law enforcement (noting that portions of building may be considered a crime scene and thus may be out of service for an extended period).
- Conduct after-action review with team to identify gaps in response measures and potential opportunities for improvement.
- Report findings with building management, and update response plans as necessary.
- Proper notification to ownership, insurance, risk management and media relations, as appropriate.

*Note: The above measures are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute any set standard, guideline, or code. They are offered as possible options to consider when developing response measures to issues in a commercial office building. When developing response measures, consider all variable, such as building size and design, staffing, time of day, etc. The purpose of these measures is to provide general information to those persons*

*responsible for developing site-specific protective measures, to serve as practices to consider when drafting emergency operations plans, and do not constitute any set policy or procedure.*