

# ACTIVE INTRUDER

## INFORMATION AND RESOURCES TO PREPARE FOR ACTIVE INTRUDER EVENTS

Active Intruder events are increasing in the United States<sup>1</sup>, however, the chances of an active intruder event happening are still less likely than getting struck by lightning. Incidents will typically end in ten minutes or less<sup>1</sup>. The average emergency response time is 3 minutes, so it is crucial to have a well prepared and practiced plan. Employers should work with local law enforcement on creating and practicing a site-specific plan for all foreseeable emergency situations.

Those who prepare before an active intruder situation will progress faster through the process of Denial-Deliberation-Decisive Movement.<sup>2</sup> Extreme stress can take control of your body and remove rational thinking. There are three methods to help remember what to do in an active intruder scenario. “Run-Hide-Fight”, is the most used, however critics say that the chosen words are not strong enough and prefer words that evoke a more decisive action (“Move-Escape-Attack”<sup>3</sup>). For example, “Move” instead of “run”, is better for those who respond by freezing up instead of fleeing. The NYPD created and uses the ABCs “Avoid-Barricade-Confront”, which calls on people to not just hide, but to also barricade with many layers to stop the bullets, slow the intruder and give law enforcement more time to respond.

### AVOID/RUN/MOVE

In any facility you visit, know the two nearest exits.

If your exit path does not put you in the line of fire, evacuate the building. **DO NOT** carry any personal belongings and avoid elevators and escalators.

If you are located in a high rise building and the shooter is below, ascend as many floors as possible.

Once you arrive to a safer location, move away from the entrance or door.

If the shooter is above you, descend and leave the building.

When evacuating in the stairwell, stay near the wall to allow responding officers room to move quickly and safely.

The responding officer’s attention will be focused on your hands. If you meet an officer, keep your hands up.

Once evacuated, be prepared to be detained for questioning.

### BARRICADE/HIDE/ESCAPE

If avoiding is impossible, move to a secure area. Doors with locks are better. Look Up! There could be a hiding spot or hidden exit.

Block the door with large heavy objects to make entry as difficult as possible (desks, tables, file cabinets, etc.). It may take several hours for the officers to clear the area and find you. Remain calm, quiet, and alert.

If using your body is the only means available to barricade the door, attempt to stay lower than waist level to avoid any shots fired through the door or wall.

Hide behind something that conceals you but also shields you from bullets. Think big-vending machines, copy machines, etc.

### CONFRONT/FIGHT/ATTACK

If you are left to confront the intruder, find something to defend yourself with. Remain as quiet as possible, but **DO NOT** play dead!

Overpowering should be used as the last resort. If necessary, attempt to do so forcefully and quickly, in the most violent manner possible.

If you are with other people you should work as a collective group to overcome the shooter.

Sources: <sup>1</sup>2014 U.S. Dept. of Justice, FBI Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States between 2000 and 2013; <sup>2</sup>T1Ripley, Amanda. (2008). The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes And Why. New York: Three Rivers Press.; <sup>3</sup>Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Mike Wood

# HOW EMPLOYERS SHOULD PREPARE

The employer's Workplace Violence Prevention Program must address any potential for Active Intruder situations in the workplace. It must be identified as a risk factor and control measures must be implemented. Employees must be trained annually on these procedures.

The hierarchy of controls must be used to select the proper control measures. Employers must first consider engineering controls such as metal detectors, locked/limited access entrances and devices that prevent entry during an incident. Administrative controls such as guards, sign-in systems and mandatory training are typically used.

Active Intruder incidents are also emergencies that need to be addressed in an employer's Emergency Actions Plans (EAPs). Duties need to be established ahead of time and employees must be trained on their responsibilities and expectations.

Establish an alert/emergency notification system. Do not use codes as they can be easily confused. Use words such as Lock Down, Evacuate and All Clear.

Coordinate plans with local law enforcement. Frequently execute drills and look for improvement.

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## LOCKDOWN PROTOCOL

1. Immediately seek shelter in the nearest room. Quickly check hallways and encourage others to seek shelter with you.
2. Close, lock and barricade the door if possible. Turn off the lights.
3. If safe to do so, cover windows or openings that have a line of sight into the hallway. Stay away from windows.
4. Remain silent/silence cell phones! Do not make noise or draw attention.
5. Do not attempt to leave the room or building unless directed to by law enforcement personnel. The only exception is when you believe your life is in more danger by staying, rather than trying to escape.
6. Unless you clearly perceive fire or smoke, do not evacuate for a fire alarm during a lockdown unless instructed to do so by law enforcement personnel.
7. If you are outside, seek the nearest secure area such as a vehicle or evacuate the area. Do not re-enter the building.

**Knowledge is power—but collective action saves lives.**

At CSEA, transforming knowledge into action is central to our mission of protecting workers. When hazards and close calls are documented and reported, they can be addressed before they cause harm. That's how we prevent injuries and illnesses—by making sure problems don't get ignored.

Your voice and vigilance are essential. Now more than ever, we need your help to ensure every workplace is safe, healthy, and accountable.

***THE LIFE YOU SAVE COULD BE YOUR OWN!***