

## Active Shooter Safety Tips

An active shooter is a person who is actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearm(s). There may or may not be a pattern or method to their selection of victims. These situations are dynamic and evolve rapidly, demanding immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to innocent victims. This document provides guidelines for faculty, staff, and students who may be caught in an active shooter situation, and describes what to expect from responding police officers.

### Faculty, Staff and Student Guidelines

In general, how you respond to an active shooter incident will be dictated by the specific circumstances of the situation, bearing in mind there could be more than one shooter involved in the same situation. If you find yourself involved in an active shooter situation, try to remain calm and use these guidelines to help you plan a strategy for survival.

**If you are outside when a shooting occurs**, drop to the ground immediately, face down and as flat as possible. If you are within 15-25 feet of a safe place or other cover, duck and run to it. If you are unable to run, move or crawl away from the gunfire while trying to utilize any available barrier between you and the gunfire. When you reach a place of relative safety, stay down and do not move. Wait and listen for directions from a police officer or campus administrator.

**If an active shooter is outside your building**, proceed to a room that can be locked, close and lock all the windows and doors, and turn off all the lights. If possible, get everyone down on the floor and ensure that no one is visible from outside the room. One person in the room should call 911 from the office or classroom phone or (949) 451-5234 from a pre-programmed cell phone. Advise the Information Operator of what is taking place; inform him or her of your location and remain in place until a police officer states, "All clear". Remaining in place is important because the shooter may attempt to lure victims from where they are hiding. Do not respond to any voice commands until you can verify with certainty that they are being issued by a police officer.

**If an active shooter is in the same building** as you, determine if the room you are in can be locked, and if so, follow the same procedure described in the previous paragraph. If your room can't be locked, or the door can't be barricaded with heavy furniture, determine if there is a nearby location that can be safely reached and secured, or if you can safely exit the building. If you decide to move from your current location, be sure to follow the instructions outlined below.

**If an active shooter enters your office or classroom**, try to remain calm. Dial 911 from the office or classroom phone or (949) 451-5234 from a pre-programmed cell phone if possible and alert police to the shooter's location. If you can't speak,

leave the line open so the Information Operator can listen to what's taking place. Normally the location of a 911 call made from a campus office or classroom can be determined without speaking. If there is absolutely no opportunity for escape or hiding, it may be possible to negotiate with the shooter. Attempting to overpower the shooter with force should be considered as a last resort; after all other options have been exhausted. If the shooter leaves the area, determine if there is a nearby location that can be safely reached and secured, or if you can safely exit the building. Do not touch anything that was in the vicinity of the shooter.

No matter what the circumstances, if you decide to flee during an active shooting situation, make sure you have an escape route and plan in mind. Do not attempt to carry anything while fleeing; move quickly, keep your hands visible, and follow the instructions of any police officers you may encounter. Do not attempt to remove injured people; instead, leave wounded victims where they are and notify authorities of their location as soon as possible. Do not try to drive off campus until advised it is safe to do so by police or campus administrators.

## **Responding Police Officer Tactics**

Police officers responding to an active shooter situation are trained to proceed immediately to the area where shots were last heard. Their purpose is to stop the shooting as quickly as possible. The first responding officers will normally be in teams of four (4); they may be dressed in regular patrol uniforms, or they may be wearing external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets, and other tactical equipment. The officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, or handguns to control the situation. Regardless of how they appear, remain calm and do as the officers tell you and do not be afraid of them. Put down any bags or packages you may be carrying and keep your hands visible at all times. If you know where the shooter is, tell the officers. The first officers to arrive will not stop to aid injured people; rescue teams composed of other officers and emergency medical personnel will follow the first officers into secured areas to treat and remove injured persons. Keep in mind that even once you have escaped to a safer location, the entire area is still a crime scene. Police will usually not let anyone leave until the situation is fully under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Until you are released, remain at whatever assembly point authorities designate.

This document was developed from a compilation of best practice strategies adopted by campus police departments from across the nation.