

Active Shooter Response Plan Template

I. Introduction

Effective response to an Active Shooter event requires effective planning and role reinforcement through training for personnel caught in the event, as well as for leaders and managers coordinating the response to the event. Personnel in the vicinity of an Active Shooter may need to evacuate or shelter in place depending upon circumstances unique to that event. Organization leadership and managers coordinating the response to an active shooter event need to be able to provide effective direction to personnel in the vicinity of the Active Shooter, provide clear situation information to first responders, and inform the public.

This Active Shooter Response Plan Template is designed to be a supplement to the *(Insert name of organization or facility)* Emergency Plan (EP). The template for this plan was developed by a working group comprised of Federal agencies, law enforcement professionals and experts in emergency management operations.

II. Purpose

This Active Shooter Response Plan provides instructions and guidance to effectively address the response of *(Insert name of organization or facility)* to an Active Shooter incident. The Active Shooter Response Plan provides guidance for developing and implementing procedures in response to an Active Shooter incident.

This Active Shooter Response Plan was prepared by *(Insert Name)*, *(Insert name of organization or facility)* Security/Safety Director and *(Insert Name)*, *(Insert name of County/City)* Emergency Management Director on *XX/XX/XX*. This document was prepared in coordination and cooperation with the following, and they have signed-off with their concurrence:

Chief of Police _____, & Staff _____ Police Department
Fire Chief _____, & Staff _____ Fire & Rescue
Sheriff _____, & Staff _____ Co. Sheriff's Office
Emergency Management Director _____
Emergency Medical Services Director _____
State Highway Patrol Captain _____, & Staff _____
State Bureau of Investigation _____, & Staff _____
FBI Special Agent in Charge _____, & Staff _____
Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms _____
Area Substance Abuse Council _____
Federal Aviation Administration, Flight Standard Office _____
Other – if additional or different people, continue to list.

III. Preparedness

An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated place; in most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10-15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

IV. Relevant Plans

This section provides an overview of the plans, policies, and guidance documents that are applicable to the *(Insert name of organization or facility)*. Plans may be maintained by the County or City where the organization or facility resides.

A. *(Insert name of organization or facility)* Security and Safety Guideline Reference Manual

Insert a brief description of the (Insert name of organization or facility) owner's Security and Safety Guideline Reference Manual

B. *(Insert name of organization or facility)* Emergency Action Plan

Insert a brief description of the (Insert name of organization or facility) Emergency Plan.

C. *(Insert name of organization or facility)* Security & Safety Plan

Insert a brief description of the (Insert name of organization or facility) Security & Safety Plan.

D. *Other (as appropriate)*

- *Reference other organization or facility plans.*
- *Reference County Plans (including Mass Casualty Plan).*
- *Reference City Plans.*

V. Command Structure/Response Organization

The Command Structure/Response Organization for an Active Shooter incident should mirror the normal Command Structure, as found in Section *(Insert Section Number)* of the Emergency Action Plan.

The diagram below, which depicts the command structure/response organization, is also included in the Emergency Plan.

Exhibit 1: Command Structure/Response Organization

Insert Command Structure/Response Organization Diagram

A. Jurisdiction and Liability

- *Identify laws, ordinances, and authorities that affect active shooter response activities*
- *Identify any issues of liability associated with active shooter response activities*

B. Direction, & Control – Roles and Responsibilities

- *Define for each entity, designate & identify key personnel*

C. Local, State & Federal Assistance – Roles and Responsibilities

- *Define for each entity, designate & identify key personnel*

D. Surrounding Industry/Private Sector Assistance – Roles and Responsibilities

- *Define for each entity, designate & identify key personnel*

E. Local Transportation Structure – Roles and Responsibilities

- *Define for each entity, designate & identify key personnel*

VI. Pre-Incident Planning

Active shooter incidents often begin and conclude quickly, leaving facility management and security officers little to no time to coordinate response procedures with law enforcement and employees. Facility readiness requires that managers develop and exercise response plans that apply general preparedness and response protocols to specific types of emergencies and facility capabilities (including security resources). Training and exercising the plan was a key finding of experts and facility managers who participated in active shooter exercises, allowing them to identify gaps, correct weaknesses, and validate their plan.

A. Develop Response Plans and Procedures

- Implement a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan that includes incidents beyond an environmental emergency, such as active shooter or suspicious package.
- Review and update the facility's Emergency Action Plan with assistance from law enforcement and emergency responders.
- Establish communication procedures for employees to report signs, flags, and threats of workplace violence.
- Establish alternative methods of communication with employees during an incident—including emergency notification system, e-mail, phone, cell phone, text message, and loudspeaker announcements.
- Determine how to estimate the impact of an incident on facility operations and communicate that to customers, the public, and law enforcement.
- Communicate with emergency responders to manage facility expectations of response capabilities.

B. Employee Training and Awareness

- Training captures the development of skills and/or understanding through procedurally defined learning activities focused on a specific application. This component combines the types of training and exercises and the types of personnel trained.
- Train all employees on general emergency plans and those designed for specific scenarios.
- Train security personnel in providing guidance to employees in each scenario.

C. Prepare for an Incident

- Management:
 - Learn how to recognize potential workplace violence and suspicious behavior.
 - Identify the location of the nearest exits, emergency call boxes, potential safe harbors, emergency response kits, and decontamination sites.
- Employees:
 - Become familiar with emergency procedures and regularly review checklists or materials provided on emergency procedures.
 - Identify who to call to report an incident and what information to provide about the situation.

D. Exercise Emergency Action Plans Regularly and Repeatedly

- Schedule regular drills, tabletop and functional exercises.
- Assess gaps in plans, exercises and training.

E. Establish a Relationship with Emergency Responders

- Involve emergency services responders from multiple agencies in facility training and exercises.
- Jointly map out incident management procedures and pre-identify a common, secure radio communication channel.
- Invite all emergency services responders to tour your site and provide details about the facility that will help responders to adjust their protocols if necessary.
- Gain a better understanding and awareness of the complexities involved in an integrated response to an incident, including law enforcement procedures and capabilities and the steps to preserving a crime scene.
- Educate law enforcement on the impact of a crime scene on business operations and restoration.

VII. Incident Response Considerations

Active shooter incidents often begin and conclude quickly, and the incident may be at any location in the organization or facility. This leaves facility management and security officers no time to coordinate response procedures with law enforcement and employees. The response to a specific incident will depend on the circumstances unique to that incident. However, there are general procedures that apply to all active shooter incidents.

A. Employees:

- Report the incident:
 - If possible, call **911** or facility/organizational security _____
- Evacuate if possible
 - Determine an escape route based on where an active shooter may be located.
 - Leave your belongings behind. Keep your hands empty and visible at all times.
 - Help others evacuate, if possible, but do not attempt to move the wounded. Evacuate even if others do not agree to follow.
 - Move quickly to a safe place far from the shooter and take cover. Remain there until police arrive and give instructions.
 - Remain calm. Avoid screaming or yelling as you evacuate.
 - Follow all instructions of law enforcement.
- Shelter if necessary
 - Go to the nearest room or office and lock the door(s). If the door does not lock, wedge the door shut or use heavy furniture to barricade it.
 - Identify an escape route in the event you are directed to evacuate.
 - Close blinds, turn off lights, and cover windows.

- Silence all noise, including cell phones, radios, and computers.
 - Have one person call 911, if it is safe to do so. Be prepared to answer the dispatcher's questions.
- If it is not safe to talk, keep the phone on so it can be monitored by the dispatcher.
- Stay out of sight and take cover behind large, thick items or furniture.
- Do not open the door until the person can provide an identification badge.
- Remain under cover until law enforcement advises it is safe to evacuate.
 - Positively verify the identity of law enforcement as an unfamiliar voice may be the shooter attempting to lure victims from a safe place.
- Take action, if you must
 - If there is no opportunity for escape or hiding, as a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter.
- Respond Appropriately When Law Enforcement Arrives
 - Remain calm and follow officers' instructions.
 - Raise your hands, spread your fingers, and keep hands visible at all times.
 - Do not run when police enter the vicinity. Drop to the floor, if you are told to do so, or move calmly out of the area or building.
 - Do not make quick moves toward officers or hold on to them for safety.
 - Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling.
 - Do not stop officers to ask for help or directions. Evacuate the building in the direction the officers arrived while keeping your hands above your head.
 - For your own safety, do not get upset or argue if an officer questions whether you are a shooter or a victim. Do not resist, even if you are handcuffed and searched.

B. Facility Management and Security:

- Control Access and Account for Personnel
 - Do personnel have the ability to remotely lock buildings or deactivate card readers? How does that impact the need to account for employees?
 - How will management notify employees of the situation and its location?
 - How will personnel allow site and building access to emergency responders?
 - Account for full-time, part-time, and contract employees

- Obtain the visitor log
 - Identify employees and visitors who are onsite
 - Identify employees and visitor locations
- Assist Emergency Responders
 - Use security technology, such as closed circuit television, to assist law enforcement in locating the victims and shooter(s)
 - Provide site and building maps
 - Provide facility access to emergency responders
 - Ensure critical phone calls get through to security personnel
 - Provide extra radios for emergency responders
 - Ensure incoming emergency response personnel know where to stage
 - Ensure emergency responders are aware of any safety concerns as they enter process areas
- Manage the Perimeter
 - Assist law enforcement in establishing a secure perimeter
 - Control or prevent the entrance of the media
 - Establish a media center
 - Establish a safe location to stage evacuees
- Identifying Secondary Impacts
 - Identify additional shooters or other threats
 - Determine if the shooter has knowledge of the facility or its operations
 - If necessary, execute safe shutdown procedures

C. Communication Information

This section outlines the communication equipment, systems, and terminology used at the *(Insert name of organization or facility)* for communication among all personnel (i.e., local law enforcement, fire department, Emergency Management Agency, media, facility security, etc.).

- *Identify the systems used for communication among all personnel (i.e., venue personnel, facility security), and emergency response personnel (i.e., local police, fire department, etc.).*
- *Identify the channel(s) that are used for communicating among what particular groups.*
- *Identify the equipment used.*
- *Identify the terminology used to communicate between the different personnel at the organization or facility.*

D. Warnings, Messages and Signage

In order to notify employees and visitors of the events happening at the *(Insert name of organization or facility)*, Emergency Notification Messages need to

be pre-scripted. This section includes information related to how messages will reach the employees and visitors, including sample Emergency Notifications, location and method of communicating warnings and messages, number and location of sirens, and lighting.

- *Describe the procedures for making Emergency Notifications.*
- *Describe the procedure for broadcasting different messages to different areas of the organization or facility.*
- *Describe the decision process to determine what announcement/message to provide to employees and visitors.*

- **Emergency Notification Message**
A sample announcement could be:

“Ladies and Gentlemen, we regret interrupting the event. There is no cause for alarm, but we have received information that necessitates that we gradually clear the stadium in _____ area. This is for your safety. As soon as we conclude our investigation of the situation, this event will continue. Again, we apologize for any inconvenience. Please follow the directions of the stadium personnel who will direct you through to the exits most convenient to your location.”

- **Communication of Warnings**
List information about how warnings are communicated to employees and visitors.
 - *Describe how messages reach employees and visitors.*
 - *Include: cell phone text messages, public address systems, computer messaging, audible alarms, etc.*

- **Other**

E. Physical Resources

This section outlines the process for determining the necessary supplies, resources and equipment that should be available and readily accessible for utilization during an active shooter event.

- *Prepare a needs assessment regarding the equipment and resources that might be required to deal with an active shooter event.*
- *Prepare necessary documentation (i.e., directives, orders, guides, MOUs) to execute an incident response.*

F. Activation, Staging, and Mobilization

The organization or facility Emergency Plan should contain guidance and procedures for the activation and mobilization of staging areas associated with an emergency. There should be separate staging areas for emergency responders and evacuees or victims of the active shooter incident. Information

should be provided on the preplanned location(s), personnel, equipment (i.e., decontamination, air monitoring), and other resources needed for activating, operating and demobilizing a staging area.

G. Mass Care and Family Assistance

The organization or facility Emergency Plan should contain guidance and procedures for Mass Care/Family Assistance (a scalable Emergency Support Function 6) once the evacuees or victims have been transported to staging area(s). Health and medical support for the evacuation of casualties should encompass the organic medical response assets of the organization or facility, in addition to incorporating the local Emergency Management Services (EMS) authorities' Mass Casualty Plan.

H. Health and Medical Support

The organization or facility Emergency Plan should contain guidance and procedures to address health and medical support needed at the staging areas during an emergency incident. The organization or facility should participate in the local community's Mass Casualty Plan through mutual aid agreements between the organization, local EMS and local hospitals, and home care agencies that comprise the community Mass Casualty Plan.

- *Develop mutual aid agreements*
- *Participate in community Mass Casualty Plan*

I. Incident Recovery Considerations

- Address Victims and Families
 - Established a family hotline
 - Assist with victim identification
 - Gather information related to victim identities, extent of injuries, and what hospitals are being utilized
 - Notify the family members
 - Use personnel who are specifically trained for this responsibility
 - Procure counselors for employees and families
 - Develop an action plan to handle concerns about returning to work
- Communicate Internally
 - Develop instructions for management to give to employees
 - Develop a plan for communicating the information
 - Consider if employees should return to their homes, remain onsite at a specified location, go to another site, etc.
 - Determine how facility personnel will communicate with families
- Communicate Externally
 - Identify the designated official for responding to media inquiries

- Determine what information and details facility personnel will provide to the media that will ease community concerns without inciting panic or hindering the investigation
- Continue Business Operations
 - Implement business recovery/continuity plans
 - Make re-entry decisions after site is released by law enforcement
 - Provide safety and security debriefings
 - Fill positions of deceased and injured employees
 - Take actions to ensure employees feel safe
 - Determine how the facility will continue operating with limited production or with certain areas of the facility designated a crime scene
 - Determine how the stage of the facility—shutdown, idle, restoration—affects protocols

VIII. Post Incident Review/After Action Review Process

This section provides on an overview of the After Action Review (AAR) Process. *An AAR should be conducted immediately following an exercise or event and should involve representatives from each participating agency. This should include information on the major events, all lessons learned, and review any new initiatives developed or identified during the exercise or event. The AAR should also include a discussion of all techniques, tactics, and procedures utilized during the exercise/event to include what went right and what went wrong. It should identify any issues and the consequences resulting from the potential outcomes of those issues. Following the AAR meetings and discussion, an After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) should be written which identifies areas that require improvements, the actions required, the timelines for implementing those improvements, and the organization and party responsible for this action. The AAR/IP should be shared with all stakeholders, and used to further define the plans and procedures related to events at the stadium.*

IX. Program and Plan Maintenance

The Active Shooter Response Plan will be maintained, reviewed, and updated following the Emergency Plan’s preparedness cycle that includes planning, training, exercising/responding, evaluating and mitigating. All stakeholders should participate in each phase of this cycle to ensure that the plan reflects the current operational strategies, organizational structures, and methodologies utilized by response personnel. Following each event, training, or incident, an evaluation of all response actions and in-place mitigation measures should be performed. This will allow for the identification of areas to be sustained, improved, or added to enhance the organization or facility overall preparedness.

This section provides an overview of how to utilize the preparedness cycle for maintenance of the Active Shooter Response Plan.

A. Program Maintenance

- *List the annual training, exercises, and drill plan.*

B. Plan Maintenance and Revision

- *List the maintenance and revision plans.*