

A Threatening Intruder

A threatening intruder emergency involves one or more persons, using a firearm, engaging in a random or systematic shooting spree. The vast majority of shootings in this country are over in a matter of minutes, involve persons known to one another, and are confined to a particular area. A threatening intruder incident does not follow this template. It may last for minutes or hours, range over a large and constantly changing area, and threaten everyone within close proximity of the shooter(s).

Persons may or may not receive advance warning of an active shooter. A witness, personal observation or the sound of gunshots may be the only alert you receive, leaving little time to react. The sound of gunshots, unlike special effects in movies and television, may sound muffled and make a “pop, pop, pop” noise. It is reasonable to assume that a series of such noises are gunshots and you should begin to take necessary precautions.

Traditional response to this type of incident has been to shelter in place and wait for the police to arrive. While this type of response is not completely wrong, case studies of several active shooter incidents have shown that using only this response has resulted in an increase in casualties. The school has adopted the “ALICE” response plan to assist you in your response should this type of incident occur.

ALICE

“ALICE” is an acronym for 5 steps you can utilize in order to increase your chances of surviving a surprise attack by a threatening intruder. It is important to remember that the “ALICE” response does not follow a set of actions you “shall, must, will” do when confronted with a threatening intruder. Your survival is paramount in this situation. Deal with known information and don’t worry about unknowns. You may use only 1 or 2 parts of the response plan or you may have to utilize all 5. In this type of incident, your perception is the reality and you will be deciding what the appropriate action for you to take is.

- 1) **Alert**- Can be anything.
 - Gunfire
 - Witness
 - PA Announcement
 - Phone alert
- 2) **Lockdown**- This is a semi-secure starting point from which to make survival decisions. If you decide to not evacuate, secure the room.
 - Lock the door.
 - Cover any windows in the door if possible
 - Tie down the door, if possible, using belts, purse straps, shoe laces, etc.
 - Barricade the door with anything available (desks, chairs, etc.)
 - Look for alternate escape routes (windows, other doors)
 - Call 911

- Move out of the doorway in case gunfire comes through it
 - Silence or place cell phones on vibrate
 - Once secured, do not open the door for anyone. Police will enter the room when the situation is over.
 - Gather weapons (coffee cups, chairs, books, pens, etc.) and mentally prepare to defend yourself or others.
 - Put yourself in position to surprise the active shooter should they enter the room.
- 3) **Incorm-** Using any means necessary to pass on real time information.
- Given in plain language.
 - Can be derived from 911 calls, video surveillance, etc.
 - Who, what, where, when and how information
 - Can be used by people in the area or who may come into it to make common sense decisions
 - Can be given by “Flash Alerts”, PA Announcements or Police Radio speakers
- 4) **Counter-** This is the use of simple, proactive techniques should you be confronted by the Active Shooter.
- Anything can be a weapon
 - Throws things at the shooters head to disrupt their aim
 - Create as much noise as possible
 - Attack in a group (swarm)
 - Grab the shooters limbs and head and take them to the ground and hold them there
 - Fight dirty-bite, kick, scratch, gouge eyes, etc.
 - Run around the room and create chaos
 - If you have control of the shooter call 911 and tell the police where you are and listen to their commands when officers arrive on scene.
- 5) **Evacuate-** Remove yourself from the danger zone as quickly as possible.
- Decide if you can safely evacuate
 - Run in a zigzag pattern as fast as you can
 - Do not stop running until you are far away from the area
 - Bring something to throw with you in case you would encounter the Active Shooter
 - Consider if the fall from a window will kill you
 - Break out windows and attempt to quickly clear glass from the frame
 - Consider using belts, clothing or other items as an improvised rope to shorten the distance you would fall
 - Hang by your hands from the window ledge to shorten your drop
 - Attempt to drop into shrubs, mulch or grass to lessen the chance of injury
 - Do not attempt to drive from the area

Secondary Issues

- Responding Police will have their weapons drawn and ready for use. They do not know exactly who the shooter is and will probably point weapons at you. Just remain calm and follow any directions they may give you. You may be asked questions, patted down, and given orders to exit certain ways.
- Responding Police are there to stop the threatening intruder as soon as possible. They will bypass injured people and will not help you escape. Only after the shooter is stopped will they begin to provide other assistance.
- If you come into possession of a weapon, do NOT, carry or brandish it! Police may think you are the threatening intruder. If possible, put it in a trashcan and carry it with you. If you come across Police, calmly tell them what you are carrying and why. Follow their commands.
- Be prepared to provide first aid. Think outside the box. Tampons and feminine napkins can be used to stop blood loss. Shoes laces and belts can be used to secure tourniquets. Weighted shoes can be tied around a person's head to immobilize it. Remember it may be several hours until can safely move an injured person. The actions you take immediately to treat them may save their life.
- If you are in lockdown for a long period of time, give consideration to issues such as bathroom use, keeping people calm, etc.
- Discuss before hand with people in your office or classes where you will meet up should you have to evacuate and make it a place easily accessible and far away from the scene.
- Talk to your students and co-workers before hand to know if they have any special skills. Consider strategic placement of these people in a classroom or office setting. You may have current or ex-military personnel, medically trained persons, or even people trained in martial arts that can provide assistance in this type of incident.
- Consider setting up classrooms and offices to make it harder for an Active Shooter to enter and acquire targets.