



**Workplace Violence
Prevention and
Preparedness
APMA- 2019**



An act of violence is “an individual actively engaged in hurting and/or killing or attempting to do so in a confined or populated area.” **The majority of these incidents end before law enforcement can arrive.**

1. Organizational Preparedness
2. Effective Response
3. Post-Incident Actions



Organizational Preparedness

What you need to know:

1. Emergency action plan
2. Training exercises
3. Other preventive measures and responsibilities
4. Warning signs of workplace violence

Emergency Action Plan

The benefits:

Preparing an **emergency action plan** helps all employees to know and understand proper procedures for dealing with an violent situation and its aftermath.

Resources:

When creating the plan, coordinate with:

- Internal departments such as Human Resources (HR) and training departments,
- External resources such as facility owners and operators, property management, local law enforcement, and emergency response services.

Emergency Action Plan

A successful plan should include the following:

- How to report emergencies to the proper authorities, services, and individuals stationed at remote locations within the organization.
- Evacuation policies and escape procedures, including multiple clearly posted routes and safe areas.
- Contact information for area hospitals and individuals who perform specific tasks during emergencies
- How to manage the news including Social Media.

Training Exercises

Develop training exercises that **simulate possible violent scenarios including active shooter situations:**

- Powerfully educating employees about the emergency action plan
- Reinforcing practices that may save lives

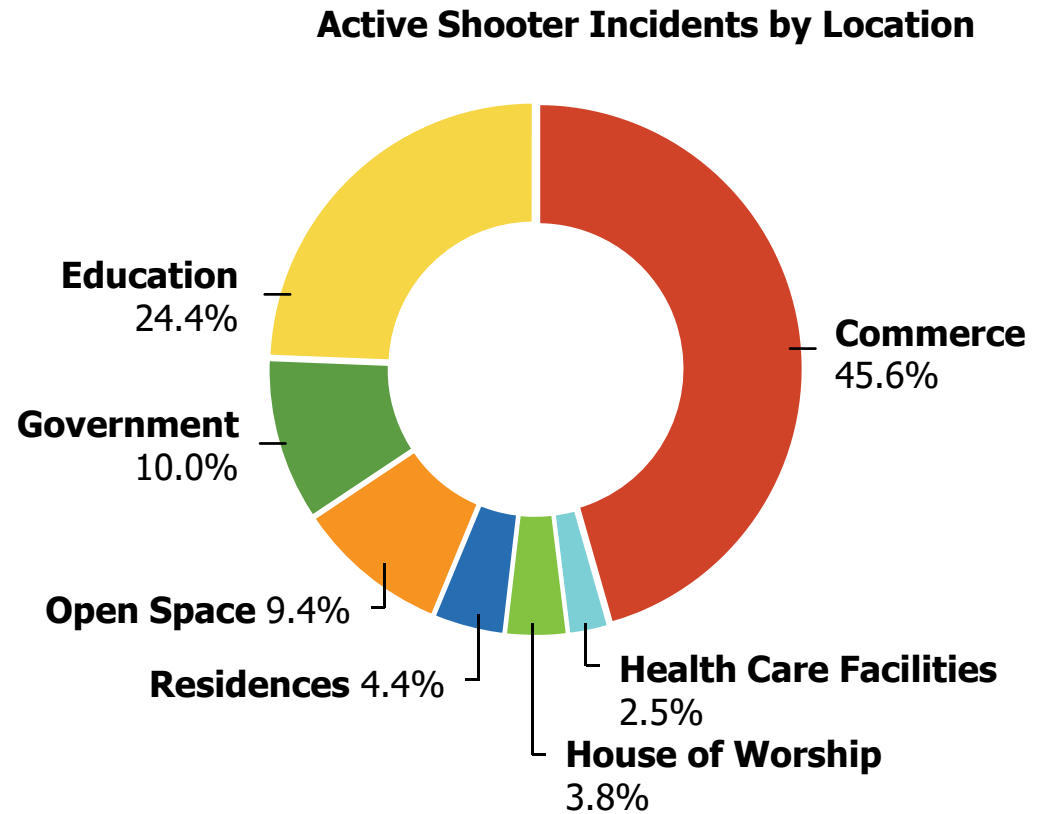
Enlisting help:

Contact local law enforcement and emergency response agencies for their assistance in designing or facilitating any trainings. Offer your facility as a site for future active shooter trainings.

- Recognizing the sound of gunfire
- How to react to violent outbursts including gunfire
- When to dial 911
- What to do when law enforcement arrives
- Developing a “survival mindset”

Preventative Measures

- Cultivate a respectful environment in the workplace.
- Watch for signs of workplace violence and take corrective actions as necessary.



Preventative Measures

Organizational Responsibilities:

- Perform screening and background checks for all new employees.
- Implement a system that allows individuals to report signs or occurrences of violent behavior.
- Provide resources for counseling.
- Assist in preparing the emergency action plan.

Preventative Measures

Responsibilities for the facility manager:

- Implement access controls throughout the premises, such as electronic security systems and keys.
- Assure that items such as floor plans, personnel lists, contact information, and facility keys are provided for appropriate managers and employees.
- Prepare and distribute crisis kits that include radios, floor plans, personnel lists, flashlights, and first aid supplies.
- Assure that facility security personnel is properly trained and able to maintain the premises' physical security.
- Post removable floor plans at all entrances and exits.



Warning Signs

Before an incident, violent offenders usually exhibit traits of potentially violent behavior over an extended period of time.

Know the warning signs and train employees to be aware of them.

Employees should report signs of potentially violent behavior to a manager or HR.

These signs may indicate issues that can be treated or managed with medication or therapy.



Warning Signs

Common traits that may be indicative of potentially violent behavior:

- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Decreased attention to personal appearance or hygiene habits
- Resistance to policy or procedural changes
- Increased severe mood swings
- Unprovoked outbursts of anger or rage
- Paranoid behavior
- Talk of previous violent incidents and empathy towards individuals committing them
- Increased talk of personal, financial, or domestic issues in the work place
- Increased absences with vague or no explanation
- Feelings of depression or withdrawal
- Repeated disregard for organizational policy
- Unstable or over-emotional reactions
- Talk of suicide or preparing for death
- Increased unprompted talk of firearms, other weapons, or violent crimes

This list only presents common signs of violent behavior: it is neither comprehensive nor to be used as a diagnostic tool.

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Violent actions or Active Shooter Response

What you need to know:

1. What to do during an active shooter incident
2. When it is safe to call 911
3. How to react once emergency personnel arrive

What To Expect

Active shooter incidents are rarely prolonged. Many are over in a matter of minutes, often before law enforcement can arrive.

They often end when active shooters stop shooting and flee the scene or take their own lives.

**The outcome of 67
Incidents in Commerce Areas
(2000 – 2013)**



- 35** shooters committed suicide.
- 12** shooters were apprehended at the scene.
- 8** shooters fled and were apprehended elsewhere.
- 8** shooters were killed by law enforcement.
- 2** shooters fled and were not apprehended.
- 1** shooter was killed by a citizen.

Evacuation

Your first plan should always be to evacuate the premises if a safe route is accessible.

Tips:

- Try to determine your route before starting to move.
- Even if others decide not to follow, continue evacuation.
- Leave behind any belongings not already on you.
- If possible, help others to escape.
- Try to keep others from moving towards areas where the shooter might be.
- If you encounter any police officers, follow any instructions they give.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Do not try to move any wounded individuals.

Hiding

If you are unable to evacuate, find a safe place to hide.

A safe hiding place should:

- Be out of view from the shooter.
- Protect you from gunfire in your direction (e.g., an office with no interior windows and a closed, locked door).
- Allow safe access to possible evacuation routes.

If the shooter approaches your hiding place:

- If possible, lock and blockade the door.
- Set any mobile devices (e.g., cell phones, pagers) to silent, and turn off any other sources of noise, such as computers, TVs, or radios.
- Find a large item to hide behind.
- Stay quiet.

If Unable to Evacuate or Hide & Calling 911

- **Do not call 911 unless it is safe to do so.** Keep calm. notify police of the shooter's location.

In an active shooter incident, your own safety should be your **first priority**.

Make sure you can either evacuate the premises or find a safe hiding place before calling 911.

If you are unable to speak or if it is unsafe to do so, keep the line open to allow the dispatcher to listen in.

Let the dispatcher know the following:

- Location of the shooter
- Number of shooters (if more than one)
- Physical description of the shooter
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter
- Number of potential victims at the location



The Last Resort

Attempting to incapacitate an active shooter is strictly a last resort. **Never** attempt to confront a shooter unless your life is in immediate danger and there are no safe evacuation routes or hiding places.

Strategies:

If you have **no other options**, the Department of Homeland Security recommends the following strategies:

- “Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Yelling
- Committing to your actions”

Remember that your goal is to **completely incapacitate** the shooter, not just to inflict harm.

21

incidents ended when
unarmed civilians managed
to incapacitate the shooter
(2010 – 2013).

When Law Enforcement Arrives

Law enforcement and other emergency responders will be dispatched to the scene of the incident as soon as they are notified.

Police:

Police officers may be outfitted with tactical equipment and high-powered firearms.

Upon their arrival, officers will proceed directly to the shooter's last known location and **will not stop** to tend to wounded individuals.

If you encounter police officers:

- Officers may shout at or push individuals to make sure they are out of harm's way. Keep calm and obey any instructions they may give you.
- Put down any items you might be carrying and raise your hands and spread your fingers. **Keep your hands visible at all times.**
- Do not make any sudden or quick movements in the direction of the officers, and avoid screaming, yelling, or pointing.
- Continue in the direction from which the officers are coming from

Part

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Post-Incident Actions

What you need to know:

1. Managing aftermath
2. Analyzing the incident

Immediate Response

- Take a count of personnel to determine whether anyone is missing and possibly wounded.
- Contact the families of those involved in the incident. In worst cases, this may include reporting casualties.
- Implement plans to provide counseling or psychological care for employees as requested or needed.
- Use the resources available – Employee Assistance Program – Local Counselors.
- Determine if any critical roles in the organization require filling due to the incident and reassign present personnel as necessary.

Analyzing the Incident

- Thoroughly document the incident.
- Document response activities.
- Identify successful actions and procedures that took place.
- Identify areas where stronger preventative measures or more training is required.
- Evaluate the existing emergency action plan's effectiveness. Make recommendations for improvement as necessary.

Summary

- Develop an emergency action plan.
- Hold training exercises.
- Train employees to:
 - Try to evacuate or hide.
 - Wait until they are in a safe place before calling 911.
 - Never try to engage the shooter except as a last resort.
 - Follow any instructions given by police or medical personnel.
- Organize medical or psychological assessments as needed.
- Perform a thorough review of the incident.
- Recommend and implement changes.

QUESTIONS!!



The presentation will be available at the APMA website.

Thank you
Lourdes Gonzalez
Gowan Co.

