

ACTIVE SHOOTER (Preparation)

A. PURPOSE: The **SAMPLE School District** recognizes that schools remain one of the safest work places in the United States but active shooter situations remain a possibility for any school. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to take steps to prepare for an active shooter event. Prevention of an active shooter situation occurs through general crime prevention and security measures already taken by schools.

B. BACKGROUND:

1. In most cases, an Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area:
 - a) active shooters use firearms(s); and
 - b) there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.
2. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly.
3. 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 before law enforcement arrives on the scene (typically within 10 to 15 minutes), individuals must be prepared to deal with an active shooter situation, both mentally and physically.

C. REFERENCE: Schools should research response processes thoroughly, taking into account physical age, developmental level and physical limitations of students and staff. Likewise, building design and layout (single story versus multiple story buildings) will affect action steps that may be taken in an active shooter situation. Below are references for schools to use in choosing a system or plan of action. PEMA and our partners DO NOT ENDORSE and specific programs or agencies. Schools must choose their response based upon the individual needs and capabilities of the school:

1. US Department of Homeland Security – Active Shooter Preparation:
<http://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>
2. Active Shooter How to Respond Document:
http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf
3. Active Shooter What Can You Do (IS-907) FEMA Independent Study Course;
<http://emilms.fema.gov/IS907/index.htm>
4. Options for Consideration Active Shooter Training Video:
<http://www.dhs.gov/video/options-consideration-active-shooter-training-video>
5. Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plan
6. Run-Hide-Fight Video from City of Houston:
<http://www.readyhouston.tx.gov/videos.html>
7. ALICE Training: <http://www.alicetraining.com/>

D. CONCEPTS: General concepts in an active shooter involve the need to make critical decisions in seconds, possibly with incomplete information.

It is essential that schools discuss options to take in an emergency well in advance and practice skills they may need to initiate in an active shooter situation. While many specific programs

exist in how to implement protective action in an emergency, the general concepts remain the same.

[In this section list your school's concept of how to respond in an active shooter situation. Sample wording is included below which may differ based upon specific program adopted by your school or district.]

Schools need to advise staff that critical decision-making at the classroom level may need to be carried out without administration guidance. Such action may include:

1. Flight:

- a) Flee or run from the situation:
 - i. Using standard classroom doors.
 - ii. Using non-traditional exits such as windows.
- b) If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Pre-incident planning should make every staff member aware of their surrounding and mentally pre-plan an escape route:
 - i. Take note of the two nearest exits.
 - ii. Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
 - iii. Leave your belongings behind.
 - iv. Help others escape, if possible.
 - v. Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter is or may be.
 - vi. Keep your hands visible (universal surrender position, hands empty, palms up and fingers spread.
 - vii. Follow the instructions of any police officers.
 - viii. Do not attempt to move wounded people.
 - ix. Call 911 when you are safe to do so.

2. Hide Out: If flight/evacuation is not possible or feasible due to student limitations (age, disability etc.):

- a) To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:
 - i. Lock the door.
 - ii. Blockade the door with heavy furniture (fortify your position).
- b) Take cover. Your hiding place should:
 - i. Be out of the active shooter's view.
 - ii. Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction.
 - a. Hide in a closet or restroom with a closed and locked door.
 - b. Hide behind large sturdy objects.
 - iii. Do not trap yourself or restrict your options for movement
- c) Silence your cell phone and/or pager
- d) Turn off any source of noise (e.g., radios, televisions, etc.)
- e) Remain calm.
- f) Dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter's location:
 - i. If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.

3. Fight: Only as a last effort and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter:

- a) Use available means to distract, deter or defeat the attacker.
- b) Physically confront the shooter, acting as aggressively as possible against him/her:
 - i. Throwing items and improvising weapons.

E. Procedures and Processes: Schools must include here the processes they plan to implement in an active shooter situation. It is important to include the following areas:

1. Alerting & Notifications: Describe who and how notifications are made
2. Response Processes: Describe what the expectations are for staff:
 - a) In imminent danger
 - b) In vicinity of danger
 - c) Away from area of danger
 - d) Outside or off campus
3. Accountability: Describe accountability for students, staff and visitors in an active shooter situation. While this may rely heavily on standard accountability for other hazards, if lockdown and fortify is used, identify how the “all clear” is indicated or relayed. If flight is utilized, identify what the accountability process is for persons who may have fled the campus

F. Training:

1. Initial Training
2. Recurrent Training

G. Exercising : Indicate the:

- a) Frequency of exercises for active shooters.
- b) Types of active shooter exercises such as drills, tabletop exercises and full-scale exercises.