



# ACTIVE THREAT PREPAREDNESS

*No One Can Prepare Your Facility Better Than You Can*

As active threat and active shooter incidents increase in the U.S., businesses and organization are seeking out resources to develop their own emergency action plan (EAP). Euclid Police are providing this information to assist in that endeavor.

Euclid Police Department, 545 E. 222 St. Euclid, Ohio 44123

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## *Role of Euclid Police Department*

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Businesses, organizations, houses of worship, and other facilities recognize that at any time they can become victim to an active threat. To safeguard employees, customers, and visitors, each facility should create and implement an emergency action plan (EAP). This plan should include some form of communication or training to better prepare individuals should an active threat crisis occur.

Each facility is unique in nature because of building structure and design, policies, number of employees, public access, and activities. Since every facility is unique, the best stakeholders to create and implement an emergency safety plan and training are the facility members. This may include management or administration, or a team of individuals who become the facility's crisis management team.

The role of the Euclid Police Department is to assist facilities by offering active shooter preparation. The Euclid Police Department does not provide active threat or shooter training or certification. The Euclid Police Department can provide knowledge and resources and offer presentations that complement existing active threat training programs.

This booklet is being provided to assist facilities in creating a safety plan and develop employee training, but should not be the only resource. Information presented may be utilized in any of the educational methods a facility chooses to establish. Questions can be directed to the Community Policing Unit at 216-289-8449.

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## *Prevention and Preparedness*

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A facility's crisis management team should develop policy and procedure on active threats and implement a training program. Education, drills and practice should be part of the training. The following information is to assist the facility in developing an emergency action plan and employee training. Identify which methods of instruction will meet the needs of the employees and develop the training program utilizing the concepts, vocabulary, action steps, and other outside resources. Regular instruction and repeated practice are best to acquire and retain the skills that save lives.

Facilities are encouraged to provide the Euclid Police Department with a copy of the facility's active threat policy and procedure and/or active threat safety plan and a copy of the floor plan or layout of the facility.

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## *Methods of Instruction*

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Select the type of format that will be best to train the employees. Several can be incorporated into a training program. Identify the goal of the training and objectives of learning. Determine how often this training will be provided and how long each session should last and who will cover the topics.

Videos, audio

Open discussion

Question and answer

Hands-on activities

Slide show presentation

Handouts, newsletters, flyers, posters

Lecture

Guest speaker

Small group sessions or entire staff at once

Online learning

Round table exercise

Evacuation drill exercise (*like a fire drill but everyone should meet at rally point*)

Simulation exercise (*randomly close off certain exits, utilize barricades in rooms, shooting noise, etc. and debrief employees about how quickly or slowly they exited or responded and if the drill was taken seriously*)

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## *Definition of an Active Threat*

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Any situation which by its deliberate nature creates an immediate threat or presents an imminent danger to your facility's occupants.

A person does not have to be actively shooting to be considered an active threat.

Any person openly in possession of a weapon or method of causing serious physical harm to people should be observed as a threat.

Employees should understand that an active threat can be something other than a shooter.

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## *Identification of an Active Threat*

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Active shooter inside or outside the building.

Active threat en route to facility after making serious verbal threats, or physical threats.

Bomb threat with bomb hidden in the facility or on a person.

Armed suspect actively given commands and making threats to people.

Multiple armed threats or active shooters.

Recognizing the sound of gunshots.

Employees should understand how to recognize an active threat and take immediate action.

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## *Immediate Steps for Communication*

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Once a threat is identified, providing clear and expedient communication is key.

Be consistent, easily understood, specific and accurate.

Plain language must be used so that everyone can understand. **Don't use code words.**

Internal communication is needed to alert people inside the facility.

Expedient and detailed communication must be made to 9-1-1.

When possible alerting employees and calling 9-1-1 should occur in tandem.

Employees should understand the policy and procedure for emergency communication.

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## *Emergency Communication*

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One of the best practices in emergency communication is to understand the 8 W's of calling 9-1-1. Callers should be prepared to give dispatchers answers to the following: where, what, who, when, why; and in violent situations: weapons, welfare, and witnesses. Always remain on the phone with a dispatcher and answer to the best of your knowledge the questions being asked of you. Stay calm and speak slowly and clearly so that the dispatcher can understand you. Stay on the phone and DO NOT HANG UP until the dispatcher tells you it is okay to hang up the phone.

These numbers should be posted and visible to employees in key locations.

**EMERGENCY 9-1-1**

**EUCLID POLICE DEPARTMENT 216-731-1234**

### 1) WHERE

Location is most important. Officers need to be dispatched to the exact location and know which access point should be used to enter. Caller should respond with the name, address, and access information:

"My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling from \_\_\_\_\_ company. We have an active threat/shooter incident happening right now.

I am in room/sector/area \_\_\_\_\_.

My area can be accessed or is closest to wing/door \_\_\_\_\_; or give north, east, west, south side."

Caller should give specific building and door location for the safest place for law enforcement to enter.

***All exterior doors and access points should be labeled and employees should know how these access points are labeled. (CPTED principle)***

### 2) WHAT

Give a brief synopsis of the emergency. Is the suspect actively shooting, making threats, behaving violently, and targeting specific people?

### 3) WHO

#### Caller Information

Caller should identify his or her name, position, and phone number where he or she can be reached in case of a disconnected line, or for call back purposes.

#### Suspect Information

Caller, if able, should identify the person causing the threat. Give as many specific details as possible such as physical description, clothing description, weapon type, and direction of travel.

#### 4) WHEN

The dispatcher may ask further questions to get details about the nature of the emergency. Caller, if able, should explain when and where the suspect entered the facility, where the suspect is currently, and which direction the suspect is traveling through the facility.

#### 5) WHY

Give a brief synopsis of why the disturbance or emergency is taking place. For example, if the disturbance is a disgruntled ex-employee who entered the facility without permission.

#### 6) WEAPONS

Caller, if able, should give a description of any weapons involved such as: firearm, blunt instrument, knife, etc. If make and model of firearm is not known, **describing the size and color of the firearm is good information.**

#### 7) WELFARE

Caller, if able, should let dispatch know about injured victims. Caller should be prepared to answer questions such as the condition of the injury, location of the victim, whether the victim is in a safe area or is he or she exposed to further injury, etc.

#### 8) WITNESSES

Caller, if able, should inform dispatcher about who else is with the caller, or in the immediate area, or in the building.

Role playing emergency calls to dispatch can be an education strategy to use during training. A dispatcher from Chagrin Valley Dispatch Center can be requested as a guest lecturer. Contact CVDC at 440-247-7321.

One component of an emergency action plan (EAP) is to develop a policy with a preferred method for reporting fires, active threats, and other emergencies. Include contact information and directions to the nearest hospitals (Euclid, Lake West, Hillcrest, etc.).

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## ***FIRST PRIORITY: Evacuating the Facility***

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When employees realize or have been notified of an active threat or shooter on the property (inside or out), employees must have a plan of action to save their lives. If the threat is inside, immediately evacuating the building using the closest and safest exit point is paramount. Do not hide as a first response if you can avoid the intruder.

Provide employees with the entire layout of the facility (floor plans and safe areas).

Provide employees points for exit and route assignments (doors, windows, roof, shipping docks, etc.).

Provide employees alternative routes if closest exit is unavailable.

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## ***SECOND PRIORITY: Denying Access***

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If evacuating the facility is not an option, then employees need to find ways to cover and protect themselves from the threat. Avoiding the shooter can include barricading an office or room, using large equipment to cover and protect your body, or continually moving through the facility as the threat moves. Concealment alone would be hiding behind a corrugated box, whereas finding cover behind large machinery would provide better protection against bullets. When denying access to an area, employees should lock doors, turn lights out, keep out of sight, silence cell phones, and barricade doors.

Identify what structures, equipment, machines, or areas provide cover along with concealment.

Identify what points or areas support a lockdown environment.

Explain what plan is in place for personnel with disabilities.

Identify what equipment is available in rooms to provide fortification such as locks, door wedges, furniture, door closure devices, and land-line telephones to facilitate securing the room and communicating.

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## ***THIRD PRIORITY: Fighting Back***

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You have the right to defend yourself. If the suspect has accessed your area or breached the barricade, the time has come to fight for your life. If multiple people are together, swarming the suspect is a technique that has saved lives. Getting shot does not always mean death. If inside a room, stand along the wall near the door. Use everything at your disposal as weapons of defense. Do not fight fair.

Identify in each area what nearby items can be used as a weapon against the suspect.

Provide an idea of what role each person will play in attacking the suspect (*i.e. who will throw items at the suspect, grab the weapon, hit or kick the suspect, hold the arms, gouge the eyes*).

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## *Officer Actions on Scene*

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An officer may arrive alone or several may arrive in a team.  
Officers may be in regular uniforms or in tactical gear with helmets and equipment.  
Officers may be carrying rifles, shotguns, or handguns.  
Officers may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.  
Officers may shout commands, or push people to the ground for safety.  
Officers will not stop to help injured persons.  
After the threat is stopped, rescue teams will enter and treat victims.

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## *Employee Actions on Scene*

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Remain calm and follow all officer commands.  
Do not keep anything in your hands, raise your hands and show your fingers.  
Keep hands visible at all times.  
Do not point, scream or yell.  
Do not stop to ask officers for help or directions to evacuate.  
Evacuees should remain in the assembly area until law enforcement instructs you to leave.  
Be prepared to act as a witness and give a statement.  
After the threat is eliminated, able-bodied employees may be asked to assist in the rescue process.

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## *Employer Actions Afterwards*

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Account for all individuals at the assembly area, determine who is missing.  
Determine method for notifying families.  
Refer mental health care specialists accordingly.  
Identify and fill any gaps in critical personnel or operational gaps.



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## *Assembly Area*

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Company policy or the safety plan should provide a predetermined and specific place where employees who have evacuated will assemble. A proper location should accommodate the total number of employees working in the facility. The location should provide access for medical emergency responders to give aid to those who have evacuated with injuries. Nearby locations should be scouted and can include on site areas, businesses, parking lots, and open public spaces. The area must be far enough away from the threat and provide a secure environment should the suspect exit the facility.

Explain where employees fleeing the facility during an active threat event should safely assemble.

Identify what path employees should take to get to the assembly area.

Identify where witnesses should assemble to speak with law enforcement.

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## *Staging Areas*

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Your company may also want to designate some possible staging areas in a safety plan. Staging areas are for both the numerous amount of people and vehicles that can arrive during an incident.

Identify what space may be best for law enforcement/EMS command central during the incident.

Identify what space may be best for EMS trucks to park and tend to wounded.

Identify what additional areas are available for the numerous police and medical vehicles that will arrive.

Identify what access point remains open for vehicle ingress and egress.

Explain where families arriving will assemble for instructions on their loved ones.

Explain how families will be reunified with employees.

Explain how the company will debrief the employees.

Identify where media trucks and media personnel will be directed.

Identify who in the facility will be responsible for speaking with the media.

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## Concepts & Vocabulary

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When developing the training program, information to be covered can include, but is not limited to the following.

- Company policy and procedure for active threat and emergency action.
- Explain the difference between an active threat, active intruder, or active shooter.
- Provide a history of past active threat and active shooter incidents.
- Explain the lessons that have been learned from past incidents.
- Familiarize all employees with the entire layout of the facility.
- Identify all rapid points for exit (*doors, windows, roof, shipping docks, etc.*).
- Identify all evacuation routes for each area or sector. Post maps throughout facility.
- Identify the assembly area and path to get there.
- Cover the run, deny, or fight strategy (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> priority).
- Introduce **situational awareness**, being aware of your surroundings and what is going on at all times and make decisions or take action based on what doesn't seem right.
- Introduce **OODA Loop**, Observe, Orient, Decide, Act.
- Introduce the survival **mindset** that when approaching a crisis situation, you must have a proactive attitude believing you will win the fight, no one will stop you, and you won't quit until there is a resolution.
- Introduce **intensity and leadership** that displaying confidence and strength will help employees succeed, and leadership actions will encourage others to not give up.
- Remind employees that being **physically fit** helps provide self-control and calmness, and allows the body to respond better to crisis situations.
- Introduce **epicenter of violence** which is the point and time at which the onset of the violent incident occurs and from which the active shooter's actions radiate outward. The epicenter of violence must already exist in order for any reactive response to occur. The epicenter of violence is also the most dangerous location to be in as the incident generally starts with little warning to facilitate a defensive reaction.

- Explain how to properly **secure and barricade a room** in the facility.
- Explain the difference between **cover** and **concealment**. Cover is using an object that is capable of stopping bullets from gunfire. Concealment is using an object that hides or obscures your position.
- Explain when to implement **emergency defense tactics** to save your life and others.
- Explain that most past active threat events **last less than 10 minutes**, unless a standoff or hostage situation occurs.
- Explain that it could take approximately **3-10 minutes for law enforcement to arrive** and take action, so during those critical minutes it is everyone's right to save his or her own life.
- Explain **the role of the first responders is to eliminate the threat**. Law enforcement will not stop to help the injured, or help employees evacuated until they have stopped the threat.
- Reinforce that while evacuating, follow all police commands and show your hands.
- Provide additional training in **basic first aid, CPR, tourniquet use** (*tourniquets should be available in your facility*).
- Identify who in the company is assigned to speak to the media and that all employees should direct media questions to that person and reply to media with "no comment".

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## *Euclid Police Department Resources*

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The crime prevention specialists at the Euclid Police Department can review the company's active threat policy and procedure or safety plan and make recommendations.

A Euclid Police Officer with active threat training can attend your program to provide insight and information, such as being part of a round table discussion, answering questions after a video or presentation is given, or watching an emergency evacuation drill and offering suggestions, etc.

A one-hour slide show presentation on Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) is available and conducted by Euclid Police Department personnel. The presentation can be made shorter by eliminating some of the videos shown. Many of the concepts for active threat response are included in this presentation.

A Crime Prevention through Environmental Designs (CPTED) security assessment can be conducted at your business offering recommendations to improve crime prevention measures.

A presentation on personal safety in the workplace and simple crime prevention measures can be given.

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## *Additional Resources*

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security Template for Active Shooter Response and more:

[https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active\\_shooter\\_booklet.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf)

<https://www.dhs.gov/human-resources-or-security-professional>

<https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>

<https://www.dhs.gov/publication/active-shooter-emergency-action-plan-guide>

How to Plan for Workplace Emergencies and Evacuations

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3088.pdf>

Civilian Response to Active Shooter Event Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0It68YxLQQ>

Active Shooter (RUN, HIDE, FIGHT) Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0>

Cuyahoga County Officer of Emergency Management

<http://ja.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/emergency-management.aspx>

FEMA Training, provides downloads and curriculum, and an online training course.

<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-907>

ALICE Training <https://www.alicetraining.com/>

Strategos International training <https://www.strategosintl.com/>

Workplace Violence Desk Reference sheet by Security Research Group

<http://www.ehstoday.com/sites/ehstoday.com/files/uploads/2012/08/Security-Research-Group-Workplace-Violence-Prevention-Reference-Card.pdf>

United States Department of Labor <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/evacuation/index.html>

Ready.gov Active Shooter <https://www.ready.gov/active-shooter>

Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center <http://www.neorfc.us/>

Rescue Task Force <https://www.rsqtaskforce.com/rtf-training>

NYPD Active Shooter

<http://www.nypdshield.org/public/SiteFiles/documents/Activeshooter.pdf>

FEMA "Faith Resources" <https://www.fema.gov/faith-resources>

FEMA Emergency plans for Houses of Worship

[https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Developing EOPs for Houses of Worship FINAL.PDF](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Developing_EOPs_for_Houses_of_Worship_FINAL.PDF)

BleedingControl.org <https://www.bleedingcontrol.org/>

Stop the Bleed

<https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed>

<https://www.rsqtaskforce.com/bleeding-control>

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## *References*

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Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) (2017). Advance Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training. Texas State University.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Guidebook (2003). National Crime Prevention Council.

Ellies, Shawn K. (2015). Evaluating an Active Shooter Curriculum for Institutions of Higher Learning. University of Pittsburgh.

OODA Loop (2017). [Online Article] Retrieved from: <http://www.businessinsider.com/ooda-loop-decision-making-2017-8>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2008). Active Shooter How to Respond.

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## *Euclid Police Contact*

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The Euclid Police Department Community Policing Unit can be reached at 216-289-8449.