

Safety Note #205

ACTIVE ATTACKER PREPAREDNESS

An “active attacker” (or “active shooter”) is defined by federal agencies as “an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.” Active attackers may use various weapons, including firearms or knives and incidents are often unpredictable and evolve quickly. There is often no pattern or method to their selection of victims and no reliable way to predict who may commit these crimes. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the attack and mitigate harm to victims. Most active attacker situations are often over within 10-15 minutes before law enforcement arrives on the scene; therefore, it is important for individuals to be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with the situation. The following information can help anyone prepare for and respond to save themselves and others if an active attacker situation occurs.

Run, Hide, Fight is a national concept used and endorsed by DHS, FEMA, and FBI:



RUN: If there is a path to escape – use it.
Identify the locations of the threat
Quickly escape from the threat as far away as possible
Leave all belongings behind except mobile phone

HIDE: If evacuation is not possible, find a secure place to hide.
Lock doors and use barricades to block entry to the hiding place
Hide in area out of the shooter’s view
Stay quiet and silence all communication devices

FIGHT: As a last resort – and only when your life is in imminent danger – take action to disrupt or incapacitate the attacker.
Commit to decisive and aggressive action – fight until the threat is neutralized
Incorporate distraction – throw items and yell
Your goal is to disarm and incapacitate the shooter

STAY SAFE!

- Pay attention to emergency alerts
- Report suspicious activity and individuals to 911
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility visits
- Help others if you are able to do so safely
- If you are in a secure location, stay until law enforcement enters

WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Tell officers where the attacker is, if you know
- Put down any items in your hands
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid quick movements toward officers such as holding onto them for safety
- Follow responder’s instructions when evacuating

For additional resources, also see these Safety Notes: [106 Workplace Violence Awareness](#), [107 Workplace Violence Prevention](#), [108 Workplace Violence Response](#), [185 Situational Awareness](#).