



NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and*  
RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

# ACTIVE SHOOTER



# RESPONSE

**RUN! HIDE!  
FIGHT!**

## Profile of an Active Shooter

- An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined, populated area—often using firearms and with no specific pattern or method in victim selection.
- Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly, and typically require immediate law enforcement deployment to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.
- Because active shooter incidents often conclude within 10–15 minutes (usually before law enforcement arrives), individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

## Good Practice for Coping with an Active Shooter

- Always be aware of your surroundings, environment, and any possible dangers.
- Take note of potential escape routes *in any facility* you visit.
- Know your facility's exits and evacuation routes (have a working knowledge of the layout).
- Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. Remember that researchers, volunteers, and guests are likely to follow the lead of employees and managers during an active shooter situation.
- When an active shooter is in your vicinity, you must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with the situation.
- Complete annual Active Shooter training as required.

## How to Respond When an Active Shooter is Nearby

- Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life in an active shooter situation. Remember that researchers, volunteers, and guests are likely to follow the lead of NARA employees and managers during an active shooter situation. You can help others escape or hide, if possible, but do NOT endanger yourself or risk your own life to do so.

### 1. **RUN!** (Evacuate)

- If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises immediately.
- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings behind to avoid slowing down.
- You can help others escape, if possible, but do not slow yourself down if they refuse.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be. (Warn others away from danger.)
- Keep your hands visible and empty at all times when evacuating, and follow all police instructions.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people—leave them for trained responders.
- Call 911 when you are safe.

### 2. **HIDE!** (Shelter in Place)

- If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the shooter is less likely to find you. Choose a hiding spot out of the shooter's view that provides protection if shots are fired in your direction (e.g., behind a locked door).
- Turn off the lights, lock door and blockade it with heavy furniture to barricade your hiding place.

## How to Respond When an Active Shooter is Nearby (Continued)

- Silence your cell phone (mute vibrating as well) and turn off any sources of noise (e.g., radios or TVs). Remain quiet and calm.
- Hide behind large objects (i.e., cabinets, desks, etc.) to stay out of sight and for cover, and stay low to the ground.
- If possible, call 911 to alert authorities to the shooter's location. If you cannot speak, leave the line open for the dispatcher to listen.

### 3. FIGHT! (Take action)

As a last resort—and only when your life is in imminent danger—be prepared to fight back to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter.

- Act as aggressively as possible toward the shooter. Use improvised weapons (throw items or use objects as weapons), yell loudly, and commit fully to your actions.

## When Help Arrives—Law Enforcement Role

- First responding officers will focus on stopping the shooter and will not stop to help injured persons. Rescue teams of additional officers and medics will follow to treat and remove the wounded.



- Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible, so officers will proceed directly to the area of last known gunfire.
- Officers may arrive in teams and will likely be in tactical gear (bulletproof vests, helmets) and armed with rifles or shotguns in addition to handguns.
- Officers may use tools like pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation. They may also shout commands and push people to the ground for their safety.

## How to React When Law Enforcement Arrives (Your Role)

- Remain calm, and follow all instructions given by law enforcement officer immediately
- Keep your hands raised and clearly visible at all times. Ensure your hands are empty (do not hold any items such as bag or jackets).
- Avoid making any quick movements toward officers, such as trying to hold onto them for safety.
- Do not point, scream, or yell. (Avoid doing anything that could be misinterpreted as a threat or distraction.)
- Once you have reached a safe location or assembly point, stay there until law enforcement gives you permission to leave. All witnesses will likely be held for identification and questioning.
- Do not leave until authorities have released you.

### Information to provide to law enforcement or 911 operator:

- If safe to do, call 911 (emergency services) as soon as possible. If your location has a silent duress alarm and you can activate it without exposing yourself to danger, do so.
- When contacting authorities, be prepared to provide critical information about the situation, including:
  - **Location of the active shooter** (be as specific as possible—building, floor, room).
  - **Number of shooters(s)**, if more than one.
  - **Physical description of the shooters(s)** (appearance, clothing, etc.).
  - **Identity of the shooter**, if you know who it is.
  - **Number and type of weapons** held by the shooter (e.g., handgun, rifle).
  - **Number of potential victims** at the location.

## Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) and Notifications

Every NARA facility has an OEP. An OEP establishes basic procedures for addressing emergency situations in an effective and methodical manner by establishing a command structure and an action plan for various disasters or emergencies that may occur. The plan applies to all occupants of that facility.

Below are some points to familiarize you with guidance for active shooters or hostile person(s):



- Upon confirmation of an active shooter (or hostile person) incident, the **OEP will be activated**. Designated officials (or security personnel) will initiate emergency procedures and make the appropriate notifications.
- **On-site security guards (if present) will not pursue or engage the shooter** directly. Their role is to contain the situation as best as possible until first responders arrive, and assist law enforcement when they do arrive.
- **Notification of an active shooter may come in different forms**—you might hear gunfire or commotion, or you might receive a PA system announcement or an emergency alert. *Do not wait for an official notification if you suspect a shooter; act immediately (Run, Hide, Fight).*
- After the incident, security and management will secure any relevant security camera footage (for evidence) and will complete an incident report as part of the post-incident procedures.

## Training Resources and Contact Information

A graphic for NARA Active Shooter Annual Training. It features the NARA seal on the left, the title "NARA ACTIVE SHOOTER ANNUAL TRAINING" in large white and yellow letters, and a background image of people in a meeting room. One person is using a laptop displaying "ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE TRAINING".

**Annual Training:** All staff must complete annual **Active Shooter** response training (e.g., the Safety and Security Awareness Training in the Learning Management System) and each facility's OEP must include an **active shooter plan** that is **exercised yearly**.

### **NARA Active Shooter Annual Training**

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## Training Resources and Contact Information (Continued)

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

NARA's **NARA@work** page **General Security Information** for **All NARA Facilities** has active shooter preparedness content.

**FEMA** Offers Helpful Independent Study Courses such as:

- IS-906: Workplace Security Awareness
- IS-907: Active Shooter – What You Can Do

Security Information

**ACTIVE SHOOTER PREPAREDNESS**

SECURITY INFORMATION

- **Additional Resources:** General Security Information for All NARA Facilities has active shooter preparedness content available on [NARA@work](#).
- **FEMA offers helpful independent study courses such as:**
  - IS-906: Workplace Security Awareness
  - IS-907: Active Shooter - What You Can Do
  - NARA Active Shooter Training (1-hour video from Archives II)

## Questions and Support



### Need Help?

- Email: [Physical.Security@NARA.Gov](mailto:Physical.Security@NARA.Gov)
- Call: **301-837-0400** (duty hours)
- For emergencies: **Contact your Site Security Command Center** (if applicable) or **Call 911**
- 24/7 NARA Security Control: **301-837-2900**

## Emergency Numbers

- Emergency Services (911): \_\_\_\_\_
- Local Emergency Information Line: \_\_\_\_\_
- Local Police Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- Local Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nearest Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_
- Local FBI Field Office: \_\_\_\_\_
- Facility Security: \_\_\_\_\_
- Facility Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Floor: \_\_\_\_\_ Suite/Room: \_\_\_\_\_
- Office Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Ext.: \_\_\_\_\_

