

Security SpotLight

**An Informational
Guide for
Security Clients**

Who is an active shooter?

According to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) an active shooter uses firearms to kill or attempt to kill people in crowded or confined areas. There may or may not be a logical pattern in which an active shooter finds his victim, and the incident evolves very quickly. Such incidents are unpredictable and can happen anywhere, at any time. The triggers for such incidents could be personal anger, ideology, revenge, mental illness or many other reasons.



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Active shooter: Survival tips

It was just another day at the office for Alex. It was noon as he stepped out of a meeting with his manager. It was time for lunch, and he walked towards the cafeteria. Suddenly, he heard a loud sound. Before he could think clearly, he heard two similar sounds followed by painful cries of people whose voices he couldn't recognize. Then he realized what has happening. He was too shocked to move. Could he be the next target? What should he do now?

Active shooting has become a common cause of occupational fatalities in recent times, with instances occurring in schools, offices, shopping malls and other public places. It is essential to know how to react when you face such an incident. Being aware of safety strategies can help you not just stay safe, but also help save the lives of many. An untrained person is likely to react with fear, helplessness and panic. A trained person on the other hand, can make a big difference to himself or herself, to the people around, and to the situation.

How to respond to an active shooting incident

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recommends that when an active shooter is nearby, the best course of action would be to RUN, HIDE or FIGHT.



1. Run

- Be aware of your environment.
- Know the nearest exits and leave the building if possible. Take others along while you exit. If others disagree, evacuate alone and run/walk to a safe location.
- Leave your bag and other belongings behind.
- Prevent people from entering the premise.
- Call 911 as soon as you think it is safe.

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What to say when you call 911

Dial 911 as soon as you think it is safe. Remain calm and give the following information:

- Location of the active shooting incident.
- Number of active shooters.
- Shooter's physical description.
- Type of arms used in the incident.
- Number of victims or potential victims present.

What to do when law enforcement arrives

- Stay calm and follow the instructions given.
- Put down items that you are carrying.
- Raise your hands and spread your fingers.
- Keep your hands visible always.
- Do not make any quick movement towards officer for safety or other reasons.
- Do not shout or yell.



2. Hide

- If the shooter is nearby, or if exiting is not an option, hide in a place where you are not visible. If you are in a hallway or lobby, run to a room.
- Secure your hiding place. If you are in a room, lock it from inside, switch off the lights and block the entrance with heavy furniture.
- Be Silent! Put your cell phone on silent mode immediately. A ring or a vibration will give away your location.



3. Fight

- This should only be done as the last resort. If running or hiding is not possible or if your life is in imminent danger and you have no other option, you can use physical force to try to take down the shooter.
- Try to incapacitate the active shooter.
- Yell at the attacker and throw things. Use any physical force available/possible to stop the shooter and defend yourself or others.

Additional Resources

There are a number of e-learning courses available for Securitas employees on workplace safety. These courses help employees understand how to detect, deter and report violent people and incidents. Topics include how-tos on recognizing potentially violent individuals and situations; preventing incidents from escalating; and properly responding to and following up on incidents. Real-life scenarios test learners' ability to spot "red flags" and potential triggers.

Titles in the LMS include:

- Workplace Violence
- Shots Fired - When Lightning Strikes
- NSI Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR): Private Sector Security Training

The SCIS Library offers courses including:

- Workplace Violence: Recognizing the Warning Signs
- Make it Safe: Your Workplace, Your Job
- Shots Fired On Campus - When Lightning Strikes
- RUN. HIDE. FIGHT. Surviving an Active Shooter Event

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This guide is for informational purposes only and does not contain SCIS's complete policy and procedures. For more information, contact your SCIS supervisor or account manager.