

Active Shooter

Your best defense: BE AWARE

People typically do not just “snap”, but often display changes in behavior over time. It’s helpful to know the indicators and behaviors that might signal an increased risk for violence.

Particularly take note if there is a drastic change in behavior, the frequency and intensity of behavior becomes disruptive, or the person is exhibiting many of the warning signs, such as:

- depression, withdrawal or suicidal comments
- overreaction to, and/or persistent complaining about library policies
- repeated violations of library policies
- paranoia, increased severe mood swings, or erratic emotional responses
- noticeably unstable, emotional responses
- explosive outbursts of rage
- increased talk about domestic or severe financial problems
- talk of previous incidents of violence and/or empathy with individuals committing violence
- obsession with firearms, dangerous weapons and violent crimes

In the event of an active shooter do the following:

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. Remember that customers and clients are likely to follow the lead of employees and managers during an active shooter situation.

Call 911 if you are able. If you cannot talk, keep the phone hidden and the call live.

The Department of Homeland Security advises all workers to remember this phrase: ***RUN, HIDE, FIGHT***

Run:

- Flee the scene if it safe to do so
- Leave behind personal belongings
- Encourage others to follow you to an evacuation route

Hide:

- If leaving is not possible or safe, hide in a secure location
- Block doors and create barricades
- Silence phones and other devices

Fight:

- As an absolute last resort, fight back using nearby objects as makeshift weapons
- Work together and use surprise to your advantage

- Commit

Listen to Law Enforcement:

- Call law enforcement when you are safe (as/where able)
- Remain calm
- Follow instructions
- Keep your hands visible and don't make sudden moves

Run:

If you are able to safely evacuate the area and escape to safety, do so immediately. Getting away from the active shooter(s) should be your top priority. Prepare ahead of time. Have an escape route in mind. If you feel that you can safely evacuate, make the decision for yourself and run to safety, regardless of whether others agree to follow at that moment. Leave everything behind. Do not go back for any of your personal items, it isn't worth it. Call 911 when you are safe and provide as much information as you can.

Hide:

If you cannot safely evacuate, quickly find a place to hide. If you are in a room, lock the door and block it with anything available that is heavy. Close blinds and turn off the lights. Silence your cell phone and remain quiet. You can attempt to communicate with police silently via text messaging. Stay in place until law enforcement arrives to let you know it is safe to leave.

Fight (last Resort):

As a last resort, and only if your life is in immediate danger, attempt to take action against the active shooter and defend yourself. Commit to your actions and act aggressively to stop the shooter. Attempt to incapacitate the shooter by throwing items, improvising weapons and yelling.

Listen to Law Enforcement:

When law enforcement arrives, they will typically proceed directly to the area where the last shots were heard in an effort to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers may shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

Understand that the first priority of law enforcement is to end the active shooting incident and when they arrive, they may have to pass injured personnel along the way. Remain calm, and follow any instructions given by the officers. If you have any items in your hands, put them down and raise your hands in the air, keeping your hands visible at all times.

Avoid making quick movements towards the officers, like attempting to grab onto police officers for safety. Once you have arrived at a safe location or assembly point, do not leave until law enforcement have instructed you to do so. They may want to identify and question witnesses.