

WHITE PAPER

Workplace Violence & Active Shooter Guidelines

AUTHORED BY:

Bruce Dortort
Managing Director, Risk Control

Jim Zoda
Senior Vice President Risk Control





Active Shooter Events

Since 2000, over 333 active shooter events have occurred in the U.S. Although a slight decrease in active shooter events was recorded in 2022, the number of people shot (killed/wounded) continues to trend upward.

Active Shooter Incidents 2018-2022 Casualties

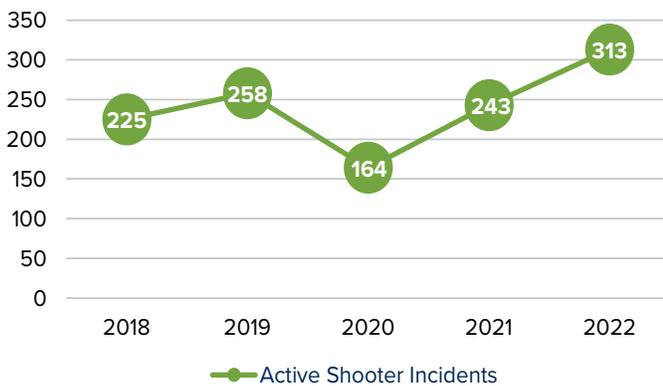


Exhibit 1 – Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2022

Immediate deployment of law enforcement is essential to interrupting the shooter and mitigating harm to victims. Developing and practicing an active shooter emergency plan can further lessen the probability of harm until law enforcement arrives. Average police response time to an active shooter event is approximately fifteen minutes (according to the National Sheriffs’ Association). Police response time includes:

- First sign of danger to 9-1-1 call: 2 – 3 minutes
- Time for 9-1-1 dispatcher to confirm information from caller: 1 – 2 minutes

- Officer response time to scene: 10 minutes
- Officer in door: 1 – 2 minutes

If a shot is fired every 4-15 seconds with a 50-70% hit rate, the assailant can achieve a high number of casualties before law enforcement arrives. Employers must prepare workers to react and respond to the event with strategies to help protect themselves and others for those minutes until law enforcement can enter the scene.

Active Shooter Incidents by Location

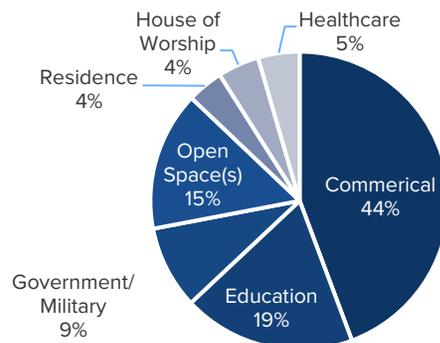


Exhibit 2 – Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2022

Employers should develop and encourage communication channels for employees to report potential aggressive domestic situations that could involve the workplace. Employers should also consider implementing a high-risk termination process and plan to anticipate and mitigate violent outbursts and attacks related to involuntary termination of employment.

Pre-Emptive Plan

Pre-Emptive Identification Techniques

Individuals may display indicators of potentially violent behavior over time. If these behaviors are recognized, they can often be managed and treated. Potentially violent behaviors by an employee may include one or more of the following:

- Increased and/or severe mood swings
- Uncharacteristically emotional responses (crying, sulking or temper outbursts)
- Increasingly talks of personal stress (marriage, child custody, financial problems, etc.)
- Social isolation
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism or tardiness
- Increasing or escalating work performance issues
- Noticeable decrease in attention to personal appearance and hygiene
- Becoming argumentative or unreasonable
- Exhibits paranoia concerning co-workers and others
- Increased distraction or nervousness
- Increased complaints of unfair treatment at work and/or complaints about boss/company
- Increased addiction behaviors – alcohol/drugs/obsessive romance
- Verbal or written threats (direct or veiled)

Recognition of one or more of these indicators should trigger referral to your organization's Human Resource department or other professionals for action to help avert a potentially hazardous situation.

While most active shooter events involve a perpetrator with a professional or domestic relationship to one or more of the victims, active shooter risk is not limited to current or former employees. Analysis of active shooter data published by the New York City Police Department (NYPD) Counterterrorism Bureau shows that approximately 1 of 4 active shooter events is attributed to a shooter with no prior relationship to any of the victims, indicating that attacks can occur without prior altercation or grievance.

Organizations should perform a realistic and comprehensive risk assessment to help determine and identify vulnerabilities of the organization and individual facilities to an active shooter event.

Attributes to Consider Include:



Nature of business operations/public notoriety of the business



Public venues/assembly of large groups (stadium, arena, convention/conference center, theaters, etc.)

Likelihood of disgruntled customers, vendors or visitors

Access to offices or facilities to authorized or unauthorized persons

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Expanding your organization's Emergency Action Plan to include active shooter response measures is a vital step in preparing for a workplace violence event. The Emergency Action Plan should reflect the nature of your organization, the design of your facility and the level of threat from an active shooter event.

Development of the plan should combine input from across the organization for a comprehensive response to an active shooter scenario. Plans should address individual responsibilities at all levels of the organization and should be updated regularly.



Response Plan

Key Components of an active shooter response/action plan include:

Individuals may display indicators of potentially violent behavior over time. If these behaviors are recognized, they can often be managed and treated. Potentially violent behaviors by an employee may include one or more of the following:

- Notification Processes – How employees and guests will be alerted to an active shooter situation
- Contact Information – For local law enforcement, fire and rescue, local hospitals and others
- Responsibility for Contacting First Responders – Designated individuals to report emergency conditions
- Evacuation Procedures and Routes
- Floor Plans – To help employees and guests understand best escape routes and rally points
- Periodic Verification of Clear Exit Access
- Safe Areas – Areas that can be used to safely hide during an active shooter event
- Post-Crisis Procedures
 - » Accounting of all individuals at a designated assembly point to determine who – if anyone – is missing and potentially injured
 - » Determining a method for notifying families of individuals affected by the active shooter; including notification of any casualties
 - » Assessing the psychological state of individuals at the scene and referring them to healthcare specialists accordingly
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – [Disaster Distress Helpline](#)
 - » Identifying and filling any critical personnel or operational gaps left in the organization as a result of the active shooter situation; including alternative worksite(s) resulting from a restricted crime scene and/or repair and cleanup of the affected areas
 - » Analysis of the effectiveness of the existing EAP and plan for making improvements (if needed)

Additional consideration within the Emergency Action Plan should be given to accommodate employees or guests with disabilities or other special needs.



Workplace Training

Employee Training

Employee training is an essential step to assuring the effectiveness of the active shooter response plan. Periodic active shooter drills are suggested for employees to act out their roles and embed response procedures to support appropriate action in the event of a real-life active shooter event. The level of detail and frequency of recurring training will vary based on the nature of the organization and likelihood of an active shooter threat.

General Guidelines for Active Shooter Training Include:

How to respond to an active shooter or sounds of an active shooter:

- **Run** (evacuate to safety)
- **Hide** (avoid detection by the active shooter)
 - » Concealment versus cover
 - Concealment – Prevents the shooter from seeing you with minimal protection from gunfire.
 - Cover – Offers protection from gunfire. Any material that can reasonably be expected to stop gunfire is considered cover.
- **Fight** (last resort)

- » Contact law enforcement (911) as soon as it is safely possible to do so.
- » Recognize and cooperate with emergency responders.
- Continually re-assess the situation and your proximity to the shooter. Adapt and adjust your **Run-Hide-Fight** response based on the movement and actions of the shooter.



Coordination with local law enforcement agencies in the development of active shooter response plans and conducting drills will help ensure effectiveness. Local emergency responders may be open to partnering with your organization for joint active shooter training exercises.



For additional information or for assistance improving your workplace violence plans or procedures, contact a member of your Brown & Brown service team.



Resources for Preparing EAP & Active Shooter Response

Department of Homeland Security

www.dhs.gov

[Active Shooter](#) – How To Respond

[Active Shooter Event](#) – Quick Reference Guide

Federal Bureau of Investigation

www.fbi.gov

[Active Shooter Event Quick Reference Guide](#)

[Active Shooter Planning and Response in a Healthcare Setting](#)

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

www.osha.gov

[Emergency Action Plan Checklist](#)

California Hospital Association

[Planning for Active Shooter Incidents](#)

Civilian Response Training Videos

[U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#) – Options for Consideration Training

[Ready Houston/City of Houston Mayor's Office](#)

[Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department](#)

[Texas State University Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training \(ALERT™\) Program](#)

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

[How to Prepare Your Workplace for Emergencies](#)

Contact the Brown & Brown Risk Solutions team for assistance in better understanding active shooter risks and best practice measures to respond to and help mitigate active shooter incidents.



About the Authors

Bruce Dorort, *Managing Director Risk Control*

With more than 35 years of experience, Bruce works with customers in a wide range of businesses. Bruce has extensive knowledge in regulatory safety compliance and claims loss frequency/severity reduction strategies through safety program development, training, loss trend analysis, ergonomics, life safety, emergency planning and evacuations, management and employee accountability systems, safety incentive programs and accident investigation procedures.

Jim Zoda, *Senior Vice President Risk Control*

With more than 35 years of insurance industry experience, Jim coordinates and provides accident prevention and regulatory compliance services for Brown & Brown customers. He provides operational risk assessments, aids in developing and implementing strategic risk mitigation plans, manages long-term projects with multiple entities, coordinates the safety-related services provided by insurance carrier loss control personnel and serves as a customer advocate.



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