

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

*CIVILIAN RESPONSE TO
ACTIVE
SHOOTERS/HOSTAGE
SITUATIONS*

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE SPECIAL
OPERATIONS DIVISION



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AGENDA

- Purpose
- Definition
- Background
- Vulnerabilities
- Protective Measures
- Police Response
- Summary
- Questions



PURPOSE

To increase workforce awareness and prescribe actions to take in the event of an Active Shooter incident within Harford County Government Facilities and Businesses. Any public or private entity in Harford County can request this training, and it is FREE!



ACTIVE SHOOTER DEFINITION

- Is an individual **actively engaged in killing** or attempting to kill people confined in a populated area; in most cases they use firearms and have intended victims.
- Active Shooters have caused a **paradigm shift in law enforcement** training and tactics, especially as these persons do not necessarily expect to escape or even survive these situations

SHOCKING STATISTICS:

- Reviews of 100 active shooter incidents revealed:
 - 98% act alone
 - 90% commit suicide, usually on site
 - 80% use long guns (rifle, shotgun or carbine)
 - 75% bring multiple weapons with a lot of ammo
 - Offenders are preoccupied with obtaining a high body count before police intervention
 - Increasingly they are wearing body armor
 - They almost never take hostages and do not negotiate
 - They are dynamic and quick finishing their slaughter in an average of 8 minutes

TYPES OF SHOOTERS

- ▣ **The “Disgruntled Individual”**
 - Employer/Employee Disputes
 - San Bernardino husband & wife duo
- ▣ **The Revenge Seeker**
 - Columbine
 - Columbia Mall
 - Perry Hall High School
- ▣ **The Self Motivated Terrorist**
 - Fort Hood
 - Mumbai
 - San Bernardino
- ▣ **The Planned Assault**
 - Columbine



MOTIVATORS AND TACTICS

- ▣ Shooter usually acts out of frustration and rage
- ▣ Shooter is attempting to correct a perceived wrong (religion)
- ▣ Desire to kill without concern for their safety or threat of capture (that why they're so dangerous)
- ▣ Can have intended victims and will search them out (Columbia Mall shooting)
- ▣ Accepts targets of opportunity while searching for or after finding intended victim
- ▣ **Will continue to move throughout building or area until stopped by law enforcement, suicide or other intervention**
- ▣ *Pay attention to your family, friends, coworkers etc.!!!*

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism
- Depression/ Withdraw
- Increased severe mood swings& noticeably unstable or emotional responses
- Temper, rage or anger management problems
- Increased talk of problems at home
- Increase in unsolicited comments about violence, firearms and other dangerous weapons or violent crimes

EMPLOYEE VULNERABILITIES

So, how vulnerable are you?

- In your work place
- At your place of worship
- Out with family at night?
- At public places (concerts, gatherings etc.)
- Exists, closets, lights etc.



How you respond to an active shooter will be dictated by the certain circumstances of the encounter. If you find yourself involved in an active shooter situation, try to remain calm and use these guidelines to help you plan a strategy for survival.

Have a Plan in place

This starts NOW !!

RUN !!!



If there is an accessible escape path attempt to evacuate the premises:

- Have a route or plan in mind
- Leave your belongings
- Help others if possible
- Prevent individuals from entering where the shooter may be
- Keep your hands visible
- Follow the instructions of any police
- Do not attempt to move wounded (discuss)
- Call 911 when you are safe

HIDE !!!!!

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the shooter is less likely to find you

- The hiding place should be out of the shooter's view
 - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction
 - Not trap or restrict your options for movement
- Lock the door to the room
- Barricade the door?



IF THE SHOOTER IS NEARBY

- Lock the door
- Silence your cell phone
- Turn off any source of noise
- Hide behind large items
- Remain as quiet as possible

FIGHT !!!

As a last resort and only **when your life is in imminent danger** should you take any action against the shooter!

- ▣ Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- ▣ Throwing items and improvising weapons
- ▣ Yelling
- ▣ Committing to your actions
- ▣ SWARMING (when feasible)

LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

- ▣ [Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the loss of life.](#)
- ▣ Deputies will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard
- ▣ Deputies may arrive in various types of uniforms from patrol to tactical but will have identification on them
- ▣ Deputies may be armed with pistols, rifles or shotguns
- ▣ Deputies may shout commands and even push you to the ground

HOW SHOULD YOU REACT

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Put down any items in your hands
- Immediately raise your hands and show them to the police
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Do not make any quick movements or attempt to grab Deputies
- Attempt to give as much information about the shooter as possible to dispatch and Deputies on scene



REMEMBER

- The first deputies on scene will not stop to help injured persons. Don't ask them to.
- Additional rescue teams will come at a later time.
- Once you are in a safe place outside you will be



HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

- If you are taken hostage be as compliant as possible
- Remain calm/neutral
- Speak only when spoken to
- Prepare mentally for a long ordeal
- Remain alert observe the actions of the hostage taker
- If you hear gunshots lay on the floor with your hands out
- Follow the directions of the Police
- You may be treated as a suspect until the situation is under control
- Do not run to the police and attempt to grab them.

CALLING 911

- ▣ ~~Be prepared to answer multiple questions about the incident~~
- ▣ You may or may not have answers to these questions
- ▣ Some examples are:
 - ❖ What type of weapons are involved?
 - ❖ How many shots have been fired?
 - ❖ When was the last time you heard shots?
 - ❖ How many suspects are involved?
 - ❖ Where is the suspect now?
 - ❖ Where are you?
 - ❖ Does the suspect appear to be wearing body armor?

SUMMARY

- Active Shooters/Assailants are subjects who are “*actively engaged in killing*” (Police will respond accordingly)
- 98% act alone and almost never take hostages
- Police are not there to negotiate with the shooter
- Shooter acts out of frustration or rage (most are planned)
- Do not disregard the indicators (see something, say something)
- Have a Plan !!!!!
- Run, Hide, Fight !!!!
- Remember SWARMING saves lives !!!

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