

ACTIVE SHOOTER/ARMED INTRUDER

Background

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined or other populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

The following guidelines describe the recommended actions for staff members of the Vandalia Parks and Recreation Department who encounter an active shooter/armed intruder situation. These are *guidelines* since every incident cannot be predicted.

How to Respond when an Active Shooter is in your Vicinity

See your Supervisor for video.

1. FLEEING THE AREA (Run)

Run = Movement and Distance

- Listen for direction of gunshots and have an escape plan in mind.
- Leaving your belongings behind, evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- If possible, help others escape.
- Keep your hands visible and do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Follow the instructions of any law enforcement.

2. LOCK DOWN (Hide)

- Find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. Your hiding place should:
 - Be out of the shooter's view.
 - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e. an area with a closed and locked door).
 - Not trap or restrict your options for movement (i.e. a cabinet or closet).
 - Allow you to spread out in the room or secured area – do not huddle with others.
- To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:
 - Lock the door.
 - Blockade the door with heavy furniture.
 - Call 9-1-1 and give the operator your location, the number of occupants in your location and description of suspect(s). DO NOT hang up before the dispatcher answers.

- If the active shooter is nearby:
 - Silence any cell phones.
 - Turn off any sort of noise (radios, televisions, etc.).
 - Turn off lights.
 - Hide behind large items (cabinets, desks, etc.).
 - Remain quiet.
 - Remain in lock down procedure until authorized to evacuate by law enforcement personnel.

3. TAKE ACTION (Fight)

If fleeing and locking down are not possible:

- Remain calm.
- Dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter's location. DO NOT hang up before the dispatcher answers.
- If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.
- Throwing items and improvising weapons.
- Committing to your actions.
- Yelling.

How to Respond when Law Enforcement Arrives

Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area where the shots were last heard.

- Officers will establish safety corridors. This may be time consuming.
- Officers may wear regular patrol uniforms or external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets and other tactical equipment.
- Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns and handguns.
- Officers may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.
- Officers may shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

How to react when law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm and follow officers' instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e. bags, jackets, phone, etc.).
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times to minimize presenting yourself as a threat.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers.
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling.
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or directions when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which the officers are entering the premises.

The first officers to arrive to the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals in removing wounded from the premise.

Once you have reached a safe location or the position of safety, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.