

# Safety Spotlight

## Active Shooter: How to Train Your Staff

To best prepare your staff for an active shooter situation, your organization should create an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and conduct training exercises. When used together, the EAP and training exercises will help prepare your staff to effectively respond and help minimize loss of life.<sup>1</sup>

### Components of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP)<sup>1</sup>

The EAP should be created with input from several stakeholders including your human resources department, your training department (if applicable), facility owners/operators, your property manager, and local law enforcement and/or emergency responders. An effective EAP includes:

- A preferred method for reporting fires and other emergencies.
- An evacuation policy and procedure.
- Emergency escape procedures and route assignments (i.e., floor plans, safe areas).
- Contact information and responsibilities of individuals to be contacted under the EAP.
- Information concerning local area hospitals (i.e., name, telephone number, and distance from your location).
- An emergency notification system to alert various parties of an emergency including individuals at remote locations within premises, local law enforcement, and local area hospitals.

### Components of Training Exercises<sup>1</sup>

The most effective way to train your staff to respond to an active shooter situation is to conduct mock active shooter training exercises. Local law enforcement is an excellent resource in designing training exercises that include:

- Recognizing the sound of gunshots.
- Reacting quickly when gunshots are heard and/or when a shooting is witnessed by choosing to either **RUN, HIDE**, or **FIGHT** the shooter as a last resort.
- Calling 911.
- Reacting when law enforcement arrives.
- Adopting the survival mind set during times of crisis.



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<sup>1</sup> "Active Shooter: How to Respond." U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 5 May 2017.

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### Additional Ways to Prepare for and Prevent an Active Shooter Situation<sup>1</sup>

- ◆ Human Resources' Responsibilities
  - » Foster a respectful workplace.
  - » Conduct effective employee screening and background checks.
  - » Create a system for reporting signs of potentially violent behavior.
  - » Make counseling services available to employees.
  - » Develop an EAP which includes policies and procedures for dealing with an active shooter situation, as well as after action planning.
- ◆ Facility Manager Responsibilities
  - » Ensure that your facility has at least two evacuation routes.
  - » Post evacuation routes in conspicuous locations throughout your facility.
  - » Encourage law enforcement, emergency responders, SWAT teams, K-9 teams, and bomb squads to train for an active shooter scenario at your location.
  - » Institute access controls (i.e., keys, security system pass codes).
  - » Distribute critical items (such as floor plans, keys, and facility personnel lists and telephone numbers) to appropriate managers/employees.
  - » Coordinate with the facility's security department to ensure the physical security of the location.
  - » Assemble crisis kits containing radios, floor plans, staff roster and staff emergency contact numbers, first aid kits, and flashlights.
  - » Place removable floor plans near entrances and exits for emergency responders.



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