

## **Active Shooter / Armed Assailant Response: Training for the DHS Run-Hide-Fight Protocol**

Presented for Heffernan Insurance  
by  
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### **10 Beliefs People Have About Active Shooters**

1. They think these perpetrators are invincible or unstoppable because they may be armed with semi-automatics, multiple magazines, or long guns.
2. Many do not understand that the shooter knows he only has about 5 to 10 minutes to kill as many people as possible before the police engage with him.
3. They believe the police will be able to recognize the shooter based only on his holding a gun.
4. Many don't realize these shooters have a target list.
5. An alarming number of people believe that lying on the floor and pretending to be dead will save them from being killed.

## 10 Beliefs People Have About Active Shooters

6. Many may believe the shooter will not fire through a wooden door or tinted glass.
7. Many believe that while engaging the shooter and clearing the building the police will have the time or the capability to provide them with first-aid.
8. Many may still think that the sound of gunshots is either firecrackers or a car backfiring.
9. People may not recognize responding police officers, especially if they are in plainclothes or tactical gear.
10. Many will not understand the value of post-traumatic stress debriefings after the incident is over.
- \* 11. They need to give the first-responders their key cards.

## The Value of Staff Training

You attend trainings like this one to **change your behavior under stress.**

During life-threatening stress, we revert back to what we recall from our patterns and/or our training.

For example; do you dial 9-1-1 or 9-9-1-1 to get emergency help from your facility's phone system?

Who answers the 9-1-1 call from your cell phone? Highway Patrol? Fire Department, Sheriff, Local Police?

How would you leave your facility if your usual entry/exit point was blocked?

If an armed attacker is on the second floor and you're on the third, should you go up or down?

## Some Themes . . .

These attackers are there to kill, not talk. **You cannot negotiate your freedom from them.**

They have a short window of time – 5 to 10 minutes – to do what they planned to do, before the police arrive.

The police response will involve lots of different armed people, wearing different uniforms. Tell staff to be ready for that.

Provide staff with basic first-aid training (especially tourniquets).

Train staff to give the 911 dispatchers and arriving police as much information as they can – direction, description, clothing, type of weapon, number of people shot.

Be prepared to fight. **They are not Navy SEALs.** You can win.

Tell yourself you and your colleagues will survive.

## Important Questions . . .

How do we manage staff concerns and fears about this issue?

How will we evacuate or shelter the elderly, disabled, small children, or those with special needs?

Have we discussed the intensity of the police response and its likely variations?

Will we have the ability or desire to schedule a yearly Run-Hide drill with our staff?

What mental health resources can we provide immediately after an event and going forward for staff and clients, customers, or taxpayers?

## Perpetrators of Workplace Violence Per OSHA

**Type 1:** Criminals or strangers. (Robbery)

**Type 2:** Taxpayers, customers, students, patients, passengers, vendors, etc. (Revenge, anger, mental illness, desire for self-protection)

**Type 3:** Current or former employees. (Revenge)

**Type 4:** Current or former spouse/partner of an employee. ("If I can't have you...")





**Disconnected, disaffected, depressed, driven to act, desire for revenge, desperate, dangerous**

**Early Psychopathy, Narcissistic Entitlement, Depression, No Empathy or Regard for Self or Others**

"I want to outdo my idols. I want international attention. I want to be infamous. You can only kill me once. My actions will live on."

"I have lived a depressed, disconnected, disaffected life, with no real job, girlfriend, supportive family structure, or goals. Because of this, I hate people and they seem to dislike me. I've collected the many injustices directed at me my whole life. Now, I'll kill as many people as I can for my revenge. I'll dress like a commando and I'll mimic my 'idols' who have killed before me – so that people will remember me and talk about my actions for decades. I'll post my words, photos, or videos of my discontent online, to provide proof of either my irrational life views, religious zealotry, racial hatred, my active and untreated mental illness, and my rage against the world. I know the US and international press and instant social media will expose me around the globe minutes after I am dead or in jail because that is what they do."

## Not Profiles or Labels: Behaviors

Troubled or troubling?

Angry? Depressed?

Religious zealotry; connection to terror groups?

"Injustice Collector"? Hypersensitive? Brittle personality?

Substance abuser?

Bully or bullied?

Significant life or off-the-job problems with no support?

Acquired or practiced with a firearm?

Talks of using violence or workplace or school violence cases?

Other people are concerned? Third-party threats?

Hunter or Howler?

"On the path" and moving from ideas to actions?

Filmed July 2012,  
just two weeks  
before the Aurora,  
CO movie theater  
shootings that left  
12 dead.



A joint  
project with  
DHS and the  
City of  
Houston, TX.



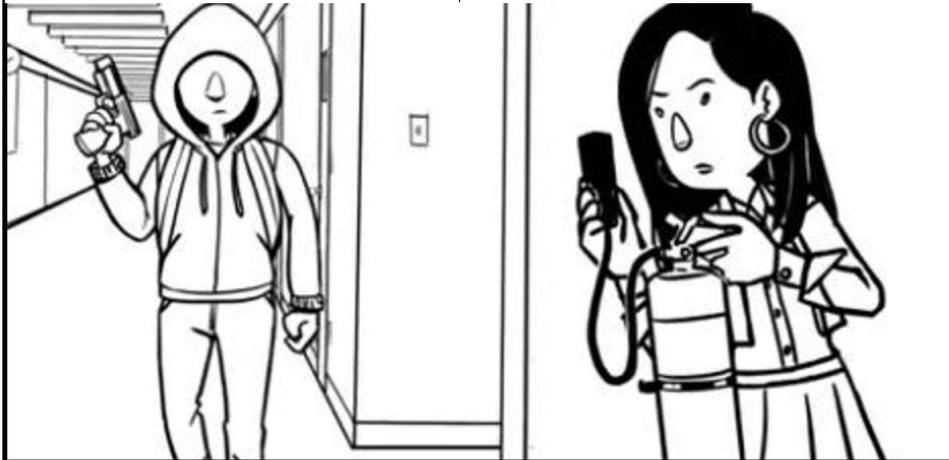
Nearly 50 million views  
on YouTube.



RUN. HIDE. FIGHT.

**CSU**

The California  
State University



## The "Active Shooter or Armed Attacker" Response



Knowing the Outs:  
Where?

**Run** (Get Out, **Evacuate**)

**Hide** (Lock Out, **Barricade**)

Keep Out

Spread Out

**Fight** (Take Out, **Protect**)

Cover vs. Concealment?

A 15-minute Drill

## Run–Hide–Fight Training Points

**Training Purpose:** To educate, remind, and empower all employees on this critical emergency concept.

**Discussion Points:** Workplace shootings or mass attacks are impossible to predict, and will require urgent thinking and an outside-the-box response from you.

**Need to Know Issues:** If you can't evacuate safely, where would you go to lock down? Where is the next best place to go if that room is unavailable? What would you use to defend yourself and others from an attacker?

**Don't freeze or panic; think and act.**

**Facility Policy:** Review your Workplace Violence, Emergency Evacuation, or "Active Shooter" policies.

## Run–Hide–Fight Training Points

**Restrictions:** Safe rooms are not perfect or the only solution to an active shooter situation. You may need to evacuate or barricade for a few minutes to hours.

**Code Words and Paging Notifications:** Look, listen, and react to what is happening. Fire alarm response?

**Law Enforcement Arrival:** The police response to an active shooter will be immediate and aggressive. They will not always know who is who; **they usually won't stop to provide first-aid or help you evacuate.** Get out of their way as you avoid the attacker.

## Run–Hide–Fight Training Points

If evacuation is not possible, safe rooms offer the best chance to survive an active shooter event. We've seen no cases where the shooter shot through a locked door to get inside and kill. (It's actually not easy to do that, like in the movies.)

Law enforcement agencies are fully armed and trained in the **Run-Hide-Fight** response, which can increase survival rates when they arrive quickly and isolate and stop the shooter.

Fighting back, especially as a group, can keep you alive.  
**One attacker cannot stop a committed group with a plan and the will to survive.**

## Run–Hide–Fight Training Points

If the shooter is a current or former employee, taxpayer, vendor, or frequent visitor, he or she may know the locations of any "designated safe rooms," which is why we don't assign specific rooms or set up outside "staging areas."

Some attackers engage in "targeted violence," aiming for specific employees, bosses, or former domestic partners. You will not have time to "**reason**" with these people.

Know the difference between **Cover and Concealment** and try to get behind something that gives you both.

## Best and Not-the-Best Safe Rooms

Lockable door	Unlockable door
Windowless	Windows with no blinds
One entry/exit door	No door, half door, glass door
Sturdy door frame	Too many entry/exit points
Accessible light switch	Uncovered natural light
Off the main hallway	On the main traffic path
Barricade objects inside	Nothing to hide behind
Phone line installed	No phone, flashlight, supplies
Defense items available	Nothing to use in defense
Perfect world: first-aid supplies, blankets, water	Imperfect world: lights out, get on the floor, be quiet

## Final Reality Check

These events are both catastrophic and rare.

These incidents are mostly committed by male Lone Wolf Actors. They may use guns, edged weapons, or vehicles.

No shooter has breached a secured door and killed employees or students. No shooter has ever pretended to be the police

We can't "predict violence," but we can assess dangerous, threatening, or pre-attack behaviors. We can listen for third-party threats and "leakage."

**Our greatest strengths are: employee and management vigilance; rapid but measured responses; partnerships with our security stakeholders; training, plans, and drills.**

## Post-Training Checklist

Watch (or re-watch) the Run-Hide-Fight video again, especially during an annual staff meeting.

Consider showing it at home (age-appropriate).

Make sure all staff know how to dial 911 and what to say.

Remind all staff to trust their intuition, not to stage post-evacuation, and to train themselves to get good description.

Know your clinical resources (EAP, local providers).

Meet with your LE agencies, to get their perspective.

Consider scheduling an annual “15 minute drill.”

## ANGRY PEOPLE

Develop hand signals and code words to get help.

Stay in control; don't personalize or escalate it. Remember: QTIP.

Slow down your breathing.

Use proxemics, barriers, and repositioning. Off-set your stance.

Use “Secret Service Hands.”

