



THE VOICE OF FOOD RETAIL 

ACTIVE SHOOTER GUIDELINE



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Important Information

Active Shooter incidents often begin and end in such a short period of time, that by the time first responders arrive on the scene, the event is over, and the shooter has either fled or has taken their own life.

Due to this, employees are often in the best position to protect themselves and others in an Active Shooter situation, by taking immediate action. Customers and others are likely following the lead of employees and managers during an Active Shooter incident.

The following information in this document is meant for assisting key personnel to prepare, respond, stabilize, and recover from an event. Although the document goal is to be thorough and detailed, it is meant as a guideline and a supplement to the many resources provided by DHS (see below) and partnerships with your local law enforcement agencies. You will most likely want to customize this document to meet the specific needs of your organization, stores and personnel.

DHS Resources

Private Citizen Resources

- <https://www.dhs.gov/private-citizen>

Human Resources or Security Professionals

- <https://www.dhs.gov/human-resources-or-security-professional>

Active Shooter Workshop Participant

- <https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-workshop-participant>

Prepare

- Work with local authorities to develop your plan.
- Your body cannot go where you mind has never been, frequent training opportunities utilizing your local police or sheriff.
- Ensure you have a first aid kit and it is stocked.
- Identify and inform who the CMT alternates who will support the crisis.
- Develop a plan for associates to check-in they're safe.
- Work with facilities security department to ensure physical security of the building.
- Strategically place removable floors plans near entrances and exits.
- Establish a health care partner in the community.



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Respond

- Call 911
 - Anyone calling the police during an incident should be prepared to share information related to the crisis including, nature of crisis, physical address, location a business or personal, last known location of perpetrator, and any casualties/injuries. Depending on the 911 operator, additional questions may be asked to assist law enforcement arriving on scene.
- Assess the situation – determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life, while not endangering your safety or the safety of others.
- React (run, hide, fight)– evacuate the area if possible, hide if unable to evacuate, lock the area you are in to prevent entry by the perpetrator, act to defend yourself and incapacitate the shooter if your life is in imminent danger.
- Communicate – when it is safe to do so, inform customers, vendors or other employees about what is happening and what to do. Call 911 as soon as it is safe and be prepared to give details.
- Get out as directed by authorities. If you have not already successfully evacuated an area, follow the instruction authorities to get to a safe place.
- Respond properly when law enforcement arrives. Be ready to put your hands up, don't scream or panic, do as you are told. The first responders are there to stop the violence. A second wave of responders will come to help the injured.
- Assemble and report your status as soon as possible.
- When the scene is cleared by authorities, initiate actions necessary for the aid of affected employees. Emergency care will be on its way, if not already on site.

Stabilize

- Activate the Crisis Management Team and alternates immediately.
- Assess the situation and the needs of the moment.
- Contact law enforcement leadership providing informational assistance as needed.
- Identify customers and employees who are hurt or worse to inform local authorities and medical personnel.
- Prepare for media inquiries (refer to crisis communication plan).
- Prepare call center for incoming calls by concerned family. Establish the appropriate channels for information sharing (social, digital).
- Share all information with law enforcement relevant to the immediate incident.
- Provide factual and informational updates to all store directors/manager and district staff members, officers of the company.
- Communicate as needed with other stakeholders.
- Cooperate with law enforcement for any additional needs.



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Recover

- Determine a method for notifying families of individuals affected by the active shooter, including notification of any casualties.
- Designate company spokesperson
 - o Draft press release
- Provide health care specialist to associates and consumers accordingly.
- Analyze the incident and create an after-action report.
- Prepare for alternate facility needs or partner replacements/schedule adjustments.

Indicators of Potential Violence by an Employee

Employees typically do not just “snap,” but 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 (this list of behaviors is not comprehensive, nor is it intended as a mechanism for diagnosing violent tendencies):

- Unexplained increase in absenteeism
- Noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and hygiene
- Depression / withdrawal
- Resistance and overreaction to changes in policy and procedures
- Repeated violations of company policies
- Increased severe mood swings
- Noticeably unstable, emotional responses
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
- Suicidal; comments about “putting things in order”
- Behavior which is suspect of paranoia, (“everybody is against me”)
- Increasingly talks of problems at home
- Escalation of domestic problems into the workplace; talk of severe financial problems
- Talk of previous incidents of violence
- Empathy with individuals committing violence
- Increase in unsolicited comments about firearms, other dangerous weapons and violent crimes



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Reference

Safety Guidelines for Armed Subjects, Active Shooter Situations, Indiana University Police Department, April 2007.

Safety Tips & Guidelines Regarding Potential “Active Shooter” Incidents Occurring on Campus, University of California Police.

Shots Fired, When Lightning Strikes (DVD), Center for Personal Protection and Safety, 2007. Workplace Violence Desk Reference, Security Management Group International, <https://cpps.com/>

How to Plan for Workplace Emergencies and Evacuations, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health and Safety Administration, OSHA 3088, 2001.

Active Shooter How To Respond, U.S. Department of Homeland Security <https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>

***Disclaimer:** This guidance is provided by the Food Marketing Institute as a service to its members and does not constitute legal advice. As legal advice must be tailored to the specific circumstances of each case and laws and regulations are frequently changing, nothing provided herein should be used as a substitute for the advice of competent counsel.*



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2345 Crystal Drive
Suite 800
Arlington, VA 22202
www.fmi.org

