

# CRISIS REALITY TRAINING

## *Planning For and Surviving the Active Lethal Threat Event Purpose & Definitions*



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# **Purpose & Definitions**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of a lockdown is to secure staff, students, and visitors into the nearest secured facility and minimize their exposure to a potential threat and/or to allow them other survivable options such as **duck, cover, assess and move, evacuation, hiding, running, crawling, playing dead, the power of your voice or fighting for their life if necessary**, during a potentially lethal threat situation. The lockdown plan, when implemented, serves to minimize the risk of injury or death to students, staff, faculty and any visitors who are on campus at the time of the threat.

The following events are just some examples of when a lockdown might be activated:

- Active Lethal Threat event
- Police in the area looking for a violent offender
- A violent crime occurs near the school
- Reported presence of a weapon in the school
- Threats to staff or property especially when a weapon is referred to or implied

## **LOCKDOWN DEFINITION**

A Lockdown is a pre-set and rehearsed crisis response plan implemented by a school and is activated once there is an actual or perceived threat of harm to that school's students, staff, faculty and/or visitors. This plan requires the participation of all employees on the school's property to implement the plan and to mitigate the risk of injury or loss of life to those affected by the threat.

## **MODIFIED LOCKDOWN/LOCKOUT**

A modified lockdown or lockout can be utilized when the threat is known to be outside the school building and incorporates the same implementation procedures as a lockdown. The difference is that building occupants may walk around the interior of the building and continue their day to day operations except that no one may enter or exit the affected building.

## **TARGETED LOCKDOWN (For Drill purposes only)**

A targeted lockdown drill is a lockdown drill that allows a designated area, wing or building of a school to practice lockdowns without disrupting the rest of the school's educational process. This type of lockdown drill allows an administrator to enhance lockdown procedures in targeted areas of the school while still allowing staff to continue classroom time for most of the other students in the school thereby causing minimal disruption to the educational process.

## **EVACUATION**

Evacuation plans are very important to have as part of the lockdown plan as extreme acts of violence in buildings leads potential victims to either lockdown or evacuate depending on how close they are to the threat at the time. Most school's evacuation plans are not necessarily going to be followed by employees or students during an Active Lethal Threat event as, if they are running to survive, they are not going to stop at a pre-determined location but rather they will typically continue running until such time they believe they are no longer threatened by the suspect who initiated the act of violence. They may however choose to evacuate an office via a window if they feel like the threat is getting closer to their location and evacuating through the window provides them with a more survivable option.

## **P.A. SYSTEM**

This school's Public-Address system requires that a person be present to announce implementation of the lockdown plan. If a lockdown is implemented at this school, you will hear the following announcement:

**"Staff, this is a lockdown. Initiate your lockdown procedures immediately. Be advised that law enforcement has been notified and will be here shortly. If you are a visitor outside the building, please leave the property immediately, and call 911."**

An update announcement may sound as follows for any **non-lethal threat event**:

**"Staff, this lockdown incident is now secure. The buildings are now secure but please stay in your rooms pending an all-clear notification."**

An all clear announcement may sound as follows for any **non-lethal threat event**:

**"Staff, this lockdown is now all-clear. I repeat, this lockdown is all-clear. Please take a roll call of all students in your custody and route that information to the main office via set protocols. An announcement will be made shortly to provide staff and students with an update on this incident. Thank you and congratulations to everyone for doing such a great job on implementing our lock down plan."**

# **Lockdown, Evacuation And Survival Tactics**

## **L.E.A.S.T.**

In the event a lockdown is announced at this school, students and staff will attempt to safely complete the following procedures:

- Step out of your work area and gather any non-threatening students, staff and visitors into a room that can be locked. (If safe to do so)
- Once inside the room, lock it.
- If there are windows on the door, cover them so an intruder may not see inside your room.
- Cover wall windows if able to do so safely.
- Lights can be on or off, your choice.
- Squat, kneel or lie down on the door wall side of the room especially if you believe the attacker will breach your door and enter your room!
- Keep very quiet. (Active killers are stimulated by sight and sound)
- Turn cell phones off or place on vibrate.
- If possible to do so safely, only have one person call 911 on a cell phone or land line. (It is important to keep others off their cell phones during the incident as the local cell towers can be overloaded due to the volume of cell phone usage and could interfere with the ability for First Responders to communicate with each other).
- If law enforcement advises you they are coming into your room keep your hands visible always and follow their instructions.
- Provide suspect information if able to do so when contacted by law enforcement.

**Should you find yourself in a situation where you are near the Active Lethal Threat you should examine implementing one of the following survival tactics:**

## **Duck & Cover Assess & Move!**

The Duck & Cover technique was originally taught to staff and students many decades ago to be utilized during an Atomic Bomb attack or during an Earthquake. This tactic can be extremely dangerous to implement especially if you are near the lethal threat as it restricts your ability to move thereby making you an immobile target to the suspect. This tactic can be better utilized if you are further away from the suspect and he is not mobile enough to get to your location. If you initially react to the threat with duck and cover, you should then assess the proximity of the threat and if safely able to do so, move to another location. Once you are clear of the threat you should continue to distance yourself from it, notify others of the danger and attempt to call 911 if able to do so.

## **Running**

Running away from the suspect as quickly as possible, trying not to run in a straight line and using whatever obstacles you can to avoid being hit by any gunfire. This is the number one life saving tactic in these events if you are near the killer!

## **Evacuation**

Evacuation can be different than running as an evacuation infers that the threat may not be as immediate but close enough that you have time to develop a plan to exit your current location in a controlled manner.

## **The Power of Your Voice!**

Warn others of impending danger as you run so that others may also start taking evasive and survival actions. Yell out what has happened and where the danger is. If trapped by the suspect and the threat is **NOT lethal**, attempt to speak to him if safe to do so.

## **Crawling**

This option should be used to stay out of the line of fire if obstacles are available that might conceal you while you are crawling. If this option is used, crawl as quickly as possible to an area of safety and then get up and run away from the suspect.

## **Hiding**

Remember that hiding from the suspect will only work if he doesn't see where you choose to hide. Hiding requires that the area you have chosen to hide into completely conceals your body. Remember that hiding does not mean that the area you have chosen to hide in is bulletproof, so you must remain quiet while hiding.

## **Playing Dead**

This option is not guaranteed to work and can be difficult to implement as it can be difficult to look like you are not breathing during an actual crisis event. Some survivors of these type events have used this tactic successfully and some have not. Think carefully before choosing this tactic.

## **Fighting**

If you are trapped with an Active Lethal Threat and have none of the above listed options, you may choose to fight for your life. If possible, you, and others in the room, must decide to aggressively and in unison attack and tackle the suspect. If possible, you should attempt to control the Active Killer's hand as that is what controls the weapon they are using. Remember that in a lethal situation like an Active Lethal Threat you can use lethal force by law if necessary to save yours or other people's lives.

Remember that violent acts in and of themselves are typically pre-planned by the offender and catch unsuspecting victims completely by surprise. The very nature of violence makes it a fluid act that is constantly changing during the event and responding proactively to it can be a daunting challenge by any individual. Although this plan will provide an outline of what students and staff should consider during such an extreme act of violence, it is by no means the “perfect response or survival plan” and the plan cannot guarantee that injuries or loss of life will not occur. Student and staff should utilize the guidelines presented in this plan as a recommendation and not necessarily as a mandate depending on the level of threat they are exposed to and other contributing circumstances leading up to their decision.

## **DO WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO DO TO SURVIVE!**

## Sample Crisis Response Letter for Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We want you to be aware that (School Name) has made many preparations to deal effectively and realistically with emergency situations that could occur in or around the school while your child is arriving to school, in class, or leaving school. While we hope that a natural disaster or other serious incident never occurs, our goal is to be prepared for any potential emergency. It will always be our priority to protect all students, staff, and visitors from harm and we pledge ourselves to that cause.

For our crisis response plan to be effective we depend on the cooperation and assistance of many people, such as the police and the fire departments. We also depend on you, as parents, to support our crisis response efforts. Your cooperation is vital to helping us protect the safety and welfare of all our students and school employees. Therefore, we ask parents to observe the following procedures related to school crises:

1. Talk to your children and emphasize how important it is for them to follow instructions from their teachers, school officials, and emergency responders during any school emergency.
2. Carefully read all printed information you receive from the school. You may receive updates about our safety procedures from time to time.
3. During an emergency, please do not telephone the school. We understand and respect your concern for your child, yet it is essential that the telephone system be available for emergency communications. Additionally, if our school is in lockdown then no staff members will be available to answer the phone as they will be working hard to protect your children and themselves from the active threat.
4. Tune your radio or T.V. to (Station Name/#) for emergency announcements and status reports. Instructions on where you should go for more information and where and when you may be able to pick up your child will also be posted on the school website under the Lockdown tab.
5. If you have registered on our school web site ([www.AddressHere.edu](http://www.AddressHere.edu)) for a message forwarding option as part of our Parent Notification System, then you will receive information—notification of the incident and instructions about where to go to meet your child—via one of the options you selected when you registered. These options include:
  - Cellular or home phone voice mail message
  - Cellular phone/PDA text message
  - Alpha numeric pager
  - E-mail notification
  - Streaming video on our school's web site
  - Our school's social media page
6. Do not come to the school unless instructed to do so. We realize how difficult it will be for you to keep your distance from the school, but this will be crucial to keep the surrounding streets and parking lot clear for emergency vehicles. Parents' vehicles at or near the school could impede medical aid responders from arriving to or departing from the school with your children or other victims. Emergency responders might also be forced to divert their attention from the critical crisis response to address or protect parents. A parent's presence at the scene of the crisis could endanger not only themselves, but students and staff members as well. In the event of a severe school crisis, you must report to a designated off-campus location where you will be met by a school representative to provide you with up-to-date crisis information, and where you may also be reunited with your child if the school is evacuated. You will be notified of this location via media bulletins and/or one of the other message options listed above.

We are proud that (School Name) is a safe school, and we are doing everything possible to keep it that way. We appreciate your cooperation and support. If you have any questions about this letter or any other aspect of our school safety procedures, please contact (School Administrator/Crisis Response Team Leader) at ###-###-####.

Sincerely,

Superintendent/Principal