



Risk & Compliance Solutions | Impact 2024

# Active Assailant

Prepare for the unthinkable

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# Risk & Compliance Solutions



## **Michael A. Petrone, CFE, CFSA, CUSFE, & CERTIFIED ALICE INSTRUCTOR**

Risk Consultant

38+ years of risk management experience with TruStage™. Mike consults with credit unions throughout the country and specializes in the areas of workplace operations, physical security, internal controls, and employee safety.

He has multiple designations – CFE, CFSA, and CUSFE – in addition to being an ALICE certified training instructor for active assailant incidents. Mike resides in Maine.

**ALICE** (Alert • Lockdown • Inform • Counter • Evacuate) is based on the premise that information, authorization, and proactive training are the key to surviving the active shooter.

- Proactive approach
- Assumes not every incident is the same
- Techniques are not in any sequential order
- Focuses on increasing the odds of survival

**O:** 800.637.2676, ext. 665.5187  
**M:** 603.770.7510  
**F:** 608.218.2231  
michael.petrone@trustage.com

# Goals

- Understanding trends
- Ensuring policies, procedures, and guidelines are in place
- Introducing technology and resources to consider
- Making commitment to training



Build situational awareness that will help you make more confident decisions when they arise and give you options on how to react.

**Incidents of violence in the workplace leave an indelible mark on organizations.**

And it happens all too frequently.



# Very different reactions

Preparing is like trying to teach instinct

## Robbery

Remain calm  
Follow instructions exactly  
Don't overreact

## Hostage situation

Remain calm  
Be polite and cooperate with captor  
Do not attempt to escape  
unless there is an extremely good  
chance of survival

## Active assailant

Accurately & quickly  
assess your situation  
Avoid denial or overreaction  
Take sound seriously  
Continually react  
as the incident develops  
**Run • Hide • Fight**

# Duty of care

## OSHA General Duty Clause Section 5(a)(1)

- “employers must provide employees with a workplace that is free from recognizable hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious harm to employees.”
- Premises Liability – Employees and Public/Members
- Section 344 Restatement (Second) of Torts



**Definition:** individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area

United States Department of Homeland Security

# The where and why

Active assailant incidents occur unexpectedly at:

- Work – factories, office spaces, functions
- Retail establishments – malls, theatres, restaurants
- Schools & campuses
- Gathering spots – church, events, concerts, sports



Typical motivation:

- Revenge
- Anger
- Ideology
- Untreated mental illness

**An active assailant wants to be recognized, to create fear and panic, and inflict as much damage as possible**



# Types of offenders

- Disgruntled spouse, partner, or family member
- Strangers
- Members or potential members
- Troubled or violence-prone coworkers
- Former employees
- Any age group



# Warning signs

Employees potentially becoming violent

- Depression and/or withdrawal
- Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs
- Increased severe mood swings
- Suicidal indications, comments about “putting things in order”
- Increased, unsolicited comments about firearms
- Empathy with individuals who commit violent acts
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage with out provocation
- Blatant insubordination

**Alert your human resources department if you believe someone exhibits potentially violent behavior**



# Train employees

- Recognize an active assailant and the sounds of an active shooter
- Know the steps to protect yourself
- Be aware of procedures to contact emergency personnel
- Know how to respond to law enforcement and first responders
- Understand your facility's emergency action plan & maps
- Practice evacuation drills at each location
- Consider escape routes and potential secure areas to hide





# Shots fired.

Unpredictable and evolves quickly.

Preparing for these unfortunate and traumatic events is like trying to teach instinct.

# The best message is often the simplest

## Run



Your first priority should be to get away from the assailant / shooter.

## Hide



If unable to safely evacuate the path of an assailant... fortify position, avoid detection, and wait for law enforcement.

## Fight



As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to incapacitate the shooter with physical aggression.

# Initial awareness

Accurately and quickly assess your situation

- Avoid denial or overreaction
- Take sound seriously...gunfire has many sounds
- Continually react to and assess the situation as it develops

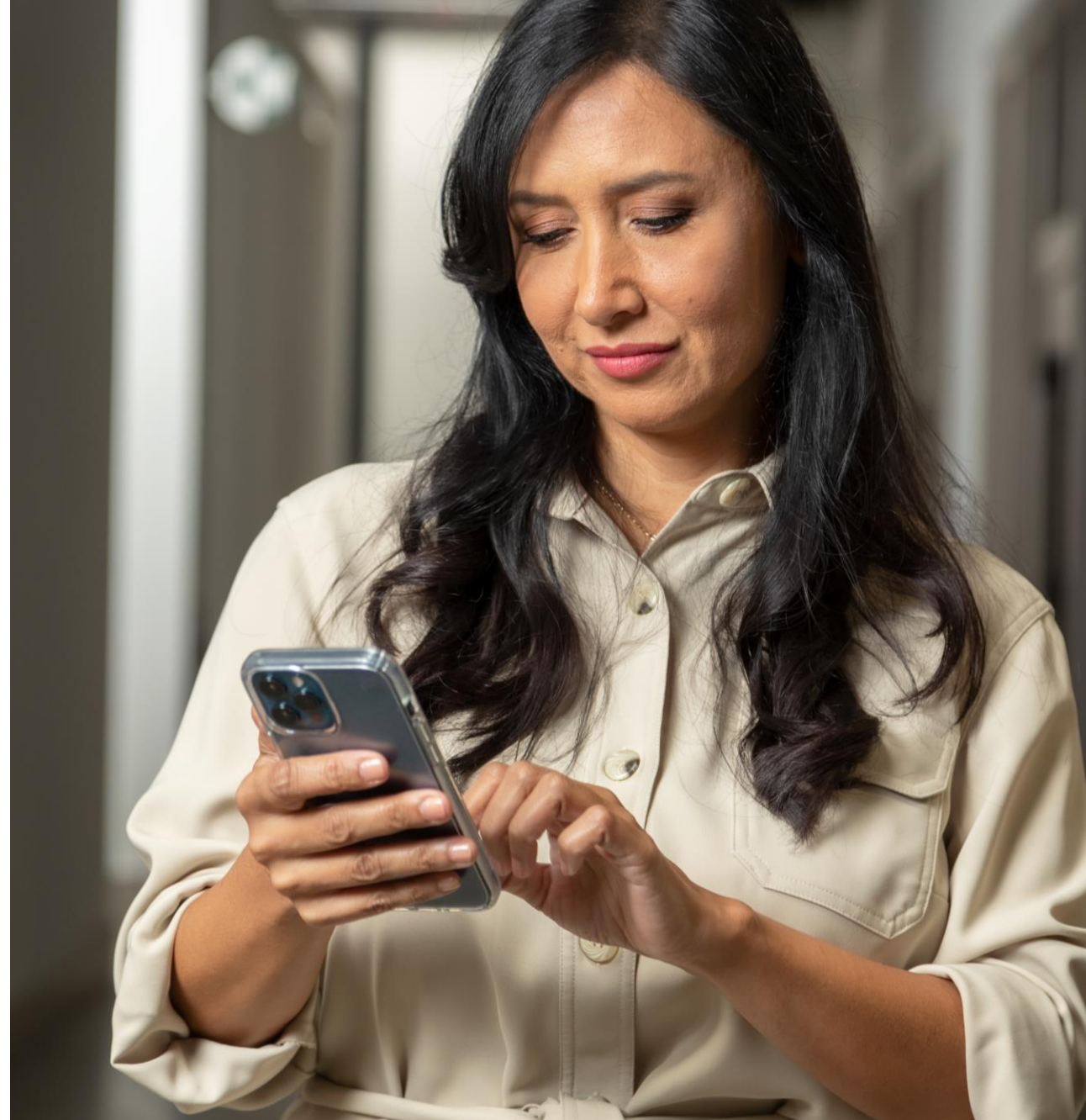
**Get the word out immediately that there is an active assailant**



# Pass along real-time information

Know that coworkers, members, and visitors are likely to follow the lead of employees during an active assailant incident.

- Provide a continuous alert that answers the: what, where, when, who, and how
- Use plain language when informing others
- Code words or specialized jargon can cause confusion and leave people wondering
- Typical communication methods include PA system, phones, two-way radios, and mobile technology





# Info to provide 911 or law enforcement

- Location
- # of assailants
- Physical description of assailant(s)
- Type of weapons / # of weapons
- Direction of movement
- Number of potential victims

**Silence your phone and leave the line open**



# Plan in advance



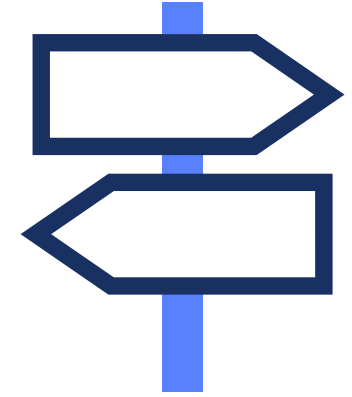
Be prepared to think on your toes

- Which doors will you use?
- Are there connecting rooms?
- Is exiting through windows an option?
- Do other alternate escape routes exist?
- Do not pull the fire alarm



# Evacuation tips

- Call 911 only when it is safe
- Look for alternate escape routes such as another door or window
- Move away from gunfire
- Run in zig-zag patterns
- Do not attempt to move wounded people
- Help others escape, only if possible and safe
- Avoid elevators
- Leave personal belongs behind and keep your hands visible
- Proceed to the designated rally point if safe



**Follow the instructions of law enforcement and first responders**

# Should we designate a rally point?



- Choosing rally points – consider building exits, out of site lines of windows/doors, and away from hazards such as traffic, busy roads, and out of the way of first responders
- Consider a different rally point than those that are known and typically used for other disasters
- Gathering in large groups at a known location can potentially increase risk if the assailant is trying to maximize casualties or sabotage a crowd
- Consider a dynamic rally point. Change designated rally points when an employee leaves or is terminated
- Implement an alternate rally point such as using a designated phone number to call or text. There is also mobile technology that can communicate out of building and safe status

**Each organization should discuss the pros/cons and decide what is best**

# Fortify your position

- Hide in an area out of the assailant's view
- Secure and barricade the door
- Turn off lights and avoid casting shadows
- Remain quiet and still
- Silence your phone
- Spread out within the room...do not huddle
- Stay low to the floor
- Do not open the door for anyone
- Look for potential weapons
- Dial 911 when safe to do so...if you cannot speak, leave the phone line open to allow the 911 dispatcher to listen



# Know when to fight

The decision to fight is yours and yours alone to make

- Act immediately as timing is critical
- Do not go looking for danger
- Act with physical aggression and try to disarm the assailant
- Yell, jump, and move your arms to confuse or disrupt the assailant
- Overpower the armed aggressor by using strength in numbers
- Throw items and improvise by using objects as weapons

**Remember, all actions are justified in stopping the active assailant**



# If you decide to fight

**Take action to fight/counter immediately.**

- Interrupt their thought process - all humans respond automatically to an unpredicted stimulus
- Confuse and disorient them
- Force different decisions
- Prevent or delay actions
- Interrupt target accuracy

You may cause pain which may work to your advantage.

# Reacting to law enforcement: things to know

- Remain calm and follow officers' instructions immediately
- Put down any items in your hands like bags, jackets or purses
- Raise your hands and spread your fingers. Always keep your hands visible
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
- Avoid quick movements toward officers, such as holding on to them for safety
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating
- Proceed in the direction that law enforcement is entering from or where they direct you

**Law enforcement is there to neutralize or eliminate the immediate threat;  
not to provide medical care**

# All clear signals: things to know

- Law enforcement will determine when the active threat situation is cleared to be safe
- All clear signals may include:
  - Overhead PA announcements
  - Certain verbiage and cadence from law enforcement
  - Law enforcement may sweep location unlocking doors and identifying themselves
  - Notification by text or phone call

**Continue to follow law enforcement instruction immediately after an incident, including when law enforcement clears the room**





Preparing for the unthinkable

**Unfortunately, preparing is  
like trying to teach instinct**

# Office prep & awareness considerations

- Establish policy, procedures, and guidelines
- Continuously review, update, and drill procedures
- Inform employees of courses of action. Make sure that they have a clear understanding that they have the authority to take immediate action to protect yourself
- Set realistic emergency plans for all locations
- Identify strategies to safely exit or hide within the building
- Have employees consider objects that might aid in an employee's defense
- Know what information to provide 911
- Know how to recognize the sound of weapons. This can help employees respond quickly and move away from an unsafe location
- Identify who needs to share incident details and when, such as with the media
- Address how to share info with employees and their families
- Buffer employees affected from post-event stress
- Bring in crisis response professionals to assist



# Tips to help individuals prepare

- Create mental action scripts  
“If [blank] happens, then I will do [blank]”
- Prepare to act not react
- Take sound seriously
- Practice lockdown
- Know how to barricade
- Make it appear that no one is there

# Training exercises to consider

- The monkey business Illusion (counter)
- Ball toss (counter)
- Evacuation from the room (evacuation)
- Small vs. strong (fighting)
- Traditional lockdown vs. barricade (lockdown; barricade)
- Evacuation from building (evacuation)
- Fleeing the building (evacuation)

Tabletop training provides you with hypothetical and safe situations that helps everyone understand roles and responsibilities, to see how you would respond, and encourages learners to speak freely and openly exchange ideas.



# Technology and safety considerations

## Technology considerations:

- Secure entry – bullet-resistive vestibule that scans you for metal weapons
- Bullet-resistive doors, decorative tiles, or whiteboards
- Shooter detection alarm system
- E-alerts software

If you decide to have an **automated external defibrillator (AED)** onsite, be sure to check with your state rules and regulations.

## Safety items:

- Rope ladder
- Wasp spray (ability to spray up to 40')
- Cable ties
- Rubber door stop
- Binders
- Hammer
- Lockable doors

A **first aid kit** with a tourniquet, emergency trauma dressing, compressed gauze, gloves, trauma shears, and instruction cards are good to have at all locations.



Preparing for the unthinkable

**When the incident ends,  
recovery begins**



# Communicate with people

- Account for all at designated rally point
- Assist with everyone's wellbeing and victim identification
- Have a crisis communications plan in place for relevant crisis management personnel
- Notify the family members
- Procure counselors for employees and families
- Develop an action plan to handle concerns about returning to work

# Return to facilities

- Prepare and enact business continuity plans to keep operations going, if necessary
- Consider provisions for conducting operations at an off-site location, hiring temporary staff, and/or engaging remote or hybrid work locations
- Prepare in advance to provide mental health assistance for affected employees
- Ensure employees (and others affected by the incident) are aware of the need to pace themselves
- Encourage staff to use breaks and rest periods when possible





**When it comes to active assailant incidents, you're either prepared or unprepared, and that's something that needs to be prioritized.**

Additional resources at [www.trustage.com/active-shooter-incident](http://www.trustage.com/active-shooter-incident)



# Thank you.

**Contact**

**[riskconsultant@trustage.com](mailto:riskconsultant@trustage.com)**

**800.637.2676**

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