

## ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE

### How to Respond to an Active Shooter Event

In the horrible event that an active shooter makes his or her way into a school, hospital, church, or business, there are steps that can be taken as an effort to survive an attack. With workplace violence as a rising trend across the United States, the ALICE method is not limited to preventing a school shooting. The ALICE Training Program provides examples for real, effective ways to thwart an active shooter. The breakdown below covers how to respond to violent intruder attacks. ALICE strategies are *not* chronological in order, but provide options for individuals to utilize in attempts to survive an emergency situation. ALICE Training can be catered to your specific needs: **K-12, Businesses, Universities, Hospitals, Places of Worship, Government, and Law Enforcement.**

#### **A** **ALERT. Use Plain and Specific Language. Avoid Code Words**

The purpose of the ALERT is to inform as many people as possible within the danger zone that a potentially life-threatening situation exists. This can be facilitated via many different methods (PA, text, email, personal senses). No matter the method of delivery, the objective should be a conveyance of information, not an issuance of a command. The use of plain language, sent through as many delivery channels as possible, is the best way to ensure awareness within the danger zone. The goal is to empower as many individuals as possible with the ability to make an informed decision as to their best option to maximize chances of survival. ALICE, along with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), recommends plain and specific language. ALICE Training discusses methods for clearly conveying warnings and the ways various communication technologies can facilitate those messages.

#### **L** **LOCKDOWN. Barricade the Room. Silence Mobile Devices. Prepare to EVACUATE or COUNTER if Needed**

Lockdown is an important response in the event of an active shooter or violent intruder, but there has to be a semi-secure starting point from which survival decisions should be made. The ALICE training program explains scenarios where lockdown is the preferable option and dispels myths about traditional lockdown procedures. Relying on lockdown alone will significantly endanger occupants in a violent intruder situation. Traditional lockdown creates readily identifiable targets and makes a shooter's mission easier; whether the event occurs in a hospital, a school, a church, or a business. ALICE trainers provide instruction on practical techniques for how to better barricade a room, what to do with mobile and electronic devices, how and when to communicate with police, and how to use your time in lockdown to prepare to use other strategies (i.e. Counter or Evacuate) that might come into play should the active shooter gain entrance.

#### **I** **INFORM. Communicate the Shooter's Location in Real Time**

Inform is a continuation of Alert and uses any means necessary to pass on real-time information. Video surveillance, 911 calls and PA announcements are just a few of the channels that may be used by employees, safety officers, and other personnel. An emergency response plan should have clear methods outlined for informing employees about the whereabouts of a violent intruder. No one wants to have to deploy such methods, but in the horrible event that an armed intruder enters a facility, emergency preparedness training should take over. Information should always be clear, direct and, as much as possible, should communicate the whereabouts of the intruder. Effective information can keep the shooter off balance, giving people in the facility more time to further lockdown, or evacuate to safety. Active shooters work alone 98% of the time. If the shooter is known to be in an isolated section of a building, occupants in other wards can safely evacuate while those in direct danger can lockdown and prepare to counter. Knowledge is the key to survival.

#### **C** **COUNTER. Create Noise, Movement, Distance, and Distraction with the Intent of Reducing the Shooter's Ability to Shoot Accurately**

ALICE Training does not believe that actively confronting a violent intruder is the best method for ensuring the safety of all involved, whether in a school, a hospital, a business, or a church. Counter focuses on disruptive actions that create noise, movement, distance and distraction with the intent of reducing the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. Creating a dynamic environment decreases the shooter's chances of hitting a target and can provide the precious seconds needed in order to evacuate. ALICE does not endorse civilians fighting an active shooter, but when confronted directly in a life-and-death situation, individuals should use any actions necessary to defend themselves. Counter is a last-ditch and worst-case scenario option. Counter is about survival. It is about the last moments between a shooter and a potential victim; anything a person can do to gain control is acceptable. It is the opposite of passive response because every action taken is a proactive step towards survival.

#### **E** **EVACUATE. When Safe to Do So, Remove Yourself from the Danger Zone**

In the face of danger, our human instinct is to remove ourselves from that threat. ALICE training provides techniques for safer and more strategic evacuations. An active shooter in a building presents a situation like no other. Evacuating to a safe area takes people out of harm's way and hopefully prevents civilians from having to come into any contact with the shooter. The ALICE Training course covers multiple techniques that are not always known by civilians, which can be used to save lives. For example, windows should be broken from the top corner rather than the center. ALICE trainers teach strategies for evacuating through windows, from higher floors and under extreme duress. ALICE trainers also give instructions on what to do at rally points, including communicating with law enforcement and administering first aid. Evacuation is the number one goal. Hopefully, evacuating a school, workplace, or church is always an option in the event of an active shooter. The ALICE Training Program provides lessons and information for all facets of a violent intruder gaining access to a building. Safety is our primary focus for this program, and we do not endorse risking lives of students or employees.