



## Ten (10) Recommendations To Help Protect Your Employees from Workplace Violence

– By Matthew Martie, Managing Director, MADI

### 1. **Awareness**

Build ongoing awareness with group members that although threats may not be in the building today, a shooter is often someone who is close to a member of the community – business, hospital, school, etc.

### 2. **Instant Communications**

Develop now an immediate Emergency Alert Notification capability leveraging Intercom, fire alarm speakers or similar system along with a simple directive like "Code Red" if Hospital, "Code Blue" if Business or "Emergency Evacuation" for all others. *Remember that phone trees are too slow and cumbersome for immediate crisis management.*

### 3. **Training**

Training is essential and should be announced for the first few sessions with unannounced drills to follow. Training normally should be conducted during the morning hours and must be done in moderation as not to develop complacency within the group.

### 4. **Urgency**

Ensure that everyone understands that normal fire drill-type evacuations do not apply to active shooter environments and everyone must escape with urgency.

### 5. **Locks and Barricades**

If it is impossible to safely escape, group members must learn how to lock themselves in an appropriate room with no corridor windows and a solid door with a lock as well as place effective barricades to provide both cover and concealment.

### 6. **Police Instructions**

Don't leave secured areas unless police instruct you to do so and always comply with all police instructions.

### 7. **Work Together**

Group members will most likely need to assist each other in escaping and providing immediate first aid once in a safe environment, as most often Police and EMS responders maybe overwhelmed with the threat.

### 8. **Safe Areas**

Make sure to establish safe marshaling areas at a much greater distance from the normal fire alarm evacuation.

### 9. **Management Team**

Designate a small management group to be the liaison with police and coordinate and practice with police when and where possible.

### 10. **Security Barriers**

Evaluate and upgrade physical security barriers where practical.

Other simple and effective measures that can be taken include:

- Apply vinyl window covering to ingress/egress glass doors to strengthen and impede visibility
- Check all door locks and push bars to ensure mechanisms are operating properly
- Install intercom system if facility does not have one
- Install wall or ceiling mounted flashing blue lights in the work space that can alert employees of emergency
- Encourage all employees to use Employee Assistance Programs (if available), especially if a family member is suffering with mental illness
  - Be prepared to provide avenues of immediate support for these individuals
- Ask a police representative to give home gun safety and security classes for group members

It is important to remember that active shooter attacks normally happen once at a location and are quite rare.

To ensure your facility is properly protected for this outcome, however unlikely, it is critical to:

- Keep group members engaged
- Provide regular but moderate emergency training
- Develop a crisis emergency plan and make sure all stakeholders know and understand their roles and what to do protect themselves and others in the event of an emergency

With all group members working together, simple efforts in advance coupled with repetitive training can go a long way to mitigate this type of threat and minimize its impact, in business and non-business environments alike.

Matthew Martie is a veteran Global Corporate Security Director of a Fortune 500 Company. He has directed Security and Investigations in 47 countries and has specialized in the prevention and investigation of workplace violence through prudent physical security measures for over 25 years. He is certified by the Department of Defense as a Physical Security Inspector/Designer and has completed the FBI's Active Shooter Countermeasures (Train the Trainer) Course. Mr. Martie has conducted training for civilian law enforcement, military police, corporate executives and private security guards, and has designed physical security plans for hundreds of facilities through out the globe.