

<b>Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures Policy 08.02.08</b>	
Section: Health, Safety, and Security Policies	Responsible Vice President: Chief of Police
Subject: Security Policies	Responsible Entity: UTMB Police Department

**I. Title**

*Active Shooter Response*

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and protocols for members of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) campus community to effectively identify and respond to active shooter situations in order to limit serious injury or loss of life. While the term “active shooter” is used throughout, this policy applies to all situations where an active assailant or assailants is posing an ongoing deadly threat, including, but not limited to, those from firearms, vehicles, explosives, and edged weapons.

**III. Policy**

All UTMB employees, students, patients, visitors, family members, and volunteers should be prepared to reach to an active shooter incidents. Active shooter situations can happen anywhere, are unpredictable, and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

Anyone with knowledge of an active shooter situation, suspicious individuals or activities, and without putting himself/herself in harm’s way, is expected to immediately notify the UTMB Police Department (UTMD PD) at 911. If able, it is preferred that reporting persons dial 911 from a campus phone as calls will be routed directly to the campus police emergency call center. 911 calls made from a cell phone will be routed to the emergency call center for the nearest municipal police department, which may cause a delay as calls are transferred to the campus police.

**IV. Definitions**

**Active Shooter:** An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated areas; in most cases, there is no pattern or method to the selection of victims.

**Concerning Behavior:** For the purposes of this Policy, Concerning Behavior is defined as words or actions engaged in by an individual that may indicate a potential for escalation and violence.

**V. Preparedness**

Preparedness is maintained through continued planning, training, exercises and drills. All employees are expected to be familiar with the institutional policies pertaining to security, including:

1. [IHOP - 08.02.01 - Threatening Situations](#)
2. [IHOP - 08.02.02 - Campus Security Reporting](#)
3. [IHOP - 08.02.04 - Possession of Weapons](#)
4. [IHOP - 08.02.05 - Security Management](#)
5. [IHOP - 08.02.06 - Hostage Policy Involving Offender/Correctional Patients](#)

6. [IHOP - 08.02.07 - Security Associated with Offender/Correctional Patients](#)

Additionally, there are several online courses that employee are required to complete, including:

1. Annual Employee Compliance Training
2. Annual Student Required Training
3. Environmental Health & Safety – Security and Safety Training
4. General Fire Safety Training
5. Infant Abduction for CMC at TDCJ Hospital
6. Security Awareness in Offender Patient Care
7. Patient Safety Training
8. Security and Safety Training
9. Threatening Situations Training
10. UT System Child Protection Training
11. De-escalation Training

The UTMB PD is a valuable resource. Its [website](#) provides a link to the [Emergency Management Institute's](#) interactive web-based course, [Active Shooter, What You Can Do](#), and three videos [Shots Fired on Campus](#), [Violence in the Workplace](#) and [Violence on Campus](#).

Additional safety resources may also be accessed via the UTMB Safe App, which all students and employees are encouraged to download to their mobile device. The Safe App will also be used as an additional method to distribute emergency safety notices to employees and students.

Departments are also encouraged to contact UTMB PD for an individualized security assessment by trained crime prevention specialists. This assessment can help identify vulnerabilities, escape routes and discuss options for staff during an active shooter situation.

## VI. Procedures

Active shooter events at an academic health center present unique challenges; healthcare professionals are presented with the decision to leave patients and visitors who may not be able to evacuate due to age, injury, illness or a current procedure in progress. The best method to reduce loss of life in an active shooter event is to evacuate the area where the active shooter is located.

Individuals must decide what actions are appropriate based on their location and position during an incident. The goal is to survive and protect, but an individual's options may be limited if the shooter is nearby. The safety of oneself, patients, visitors and coworkers is the most important factor to consider when making decisions on how to respond to an active shooter situation.

## VII. How to Respond to an Active Shooter (Non-Clinical Setting)

If applicable, this section provides the UTMB community with a sequential, step-by-step guide of all actions required to comply with the policy. The procedures should be clear and concise.

### **RUN (Evacuate)**

If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Be sure to:

1. Have an escape plan and route. Proceed to a predetermined safe location or rally point
2. Evacuate even if others do not agree to follow
3. Leave your belongings behind
4. Help others evacuate, if possible
5. Prevent individuals from entering an area where active shooter may be
6. Keep your hands visible
7. Follow the instruction of police officers

8. Call 911 when you are safe. Provide law enforcement or police dispatchers with:
  - a. Location of the active shooter and direction of movement
  - b. Number of shooters, if more than one
  - c. Physical description of shooter(s)
  - d. Number and type of weapons displayed by the shooters
  - e. Number of victims at specific locations

### **HIDE**

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. That hiding place should:

1. Be out of the active shooter's view.
2. Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e. an office with a closed and locked door).

To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

1. Lock the door, if possible.
2. Barricade the door with heavy furniture, cabinets, or equipment.

If the active shooter is nearby:

1. Lock the door, if possible.
2. Silence your cell phone.
3. Turn off any source of noise (i.e. radios, medical equipment, or televisions).
4. Hide behind large items (i.e. cabinets, desks, large equipment).
5. Remain quiet.
6. Texting 911 is possible in many municipalities, but such texts will be routed to the local 911 center, which will relay the information to the UTMB PD with some delay.

### **FIGHT**

If evacuation and hiding out are not possible:

1. Remain calm.
2. Dial 911, if possible, to alert the police to the active shooter's location.
3. If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the police dispatcher to listen
4. Take aggressive action against the active shooter. As a last resort, and if your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by
  - a. Acting as aggressively as possible
  - b. Yelling and throwing items
  - c. Acting in a coordinated manner if others are present
  - d. Taking deliberate actions and committing to them
  - e. Improvising weapons and using the weapons against the active shooter (such as fire extinguishers or heavy blunt objects)

## **VIII. How to Respond to an Active Shooter (Clinical Setting)**

The steps in section IV may not always be appropriate in a setting where patient care is ongoing, especially when patients are present who are incapacitated or cannot be evacuated without significant delay, or areas where patients are undergoing lifesaving, immediate treatment. Under these circumstances, staff members may choose to use the following steps to guide their response to an active shooter situation:

### **SECURE**

1. Lock all access points and doors from the inside.
2. Stay away from windows or other vulnerable points.

3. Move patients and staff into most secure areas possible.
4. Silence device alarms or equipment that may draw attention.
5. Barricade access points with furniture or other objects if possible.

### **PRESERVE**

1. Abbreviate patient procedures whenever possible.
2. Stop non-invasive diagnostic procedures.
3. Use damage control principles and wean anesthetics.
4. Terminate non-emergency infusions or extracorporeal circuits and securing vascular access.
5. Prepare for possible extended wait for 'all-clear' signal, as medical facilities are exceptionally complex areas to secure during and after an active shooter event.

### **FIGHT**

If circumstances necessitate:

1. Use coordinated methods to maximize chances of success.
2. Take aggressive and decisive action, using whatever tools or means may be available.
3. Loud and aggressive action may open window of opportunity for additional means to disable the shooter.

## **IX. How to Respond When Law Enforcement Arrives**

Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard. Until the officers have located and neutralized the active shooter, ending the potential for the aggressor to continue harming people, the officers will not be able to stop in order to provide first aid to injured persons they encounter. Rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel will follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises.

Until rescue teams arrive, wounded persons and/or others confined in specific areas may have to administer first aid to themselves or others. The most important form of first aid will be efforts to stop bleeding. For this reason, bleeding control supply stations have been strategically placed within many campus facilities. Employees and staff should note the bleeding control supply stations that are located in areas they commonly do business or attend classes.

Important things to remember:

1. Officers may arrive one at a time or in teams.
2. Officers may wear regular patrol uniforms or external body armor and helmets.
3. Officers may be armed with pistols, shotguns, and rifles.
4. Officers may shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.
5. Officers must consider everyone encountered as a potential threat until they are able to confirm otherwise.
6. Officers from agencies other than UTMB PD may be part of the response team.

When law enforcement arrives:

1. Remain calm and follow the instructions given.
2. Put down any items in your hands (i.e. bags, jackets).
3. Immediately raise your hands and spread your fingers.
4. Keep hands visible at all times.
5. Avoid making quick movements toward the officers.
6. Avoid pointing, yelling, or screaming.

7. Do not stop officers to ask for help or directions.
8. Officers possibly do not know who the threat is and must consider everyone's safety.

Once evacuees have reached a safe location or an assembly point, they will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. **Do not attempt to leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.** It is not uncommon for active shooters to attempt to blend in with the evacuating crowd in order to escape the area.

## **X. Notification**

An important part of responding to an active shooter event is an emergency notification system. The emergency notification system can alert various parties of an emergency, including:

1. Individuals at remote locations within premises or other campus buildings
2. Individuals in other area hospitals.

In general, alerts must be bilingual for staff or visitors who do not understand English. Research shows that people want accurate information and clear instructions to protect themselves in an emergency and are less likely to panic when given clear and informative warnings.

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your life. Remember that patients and visitors are likely to follow the lead of healthcare providers during an active shooter situation.

## **XI. Prevention and Mitigation**

Concerning Behavior involving employees or students should be immediately reported to Human Resources or the UTMB Police Department. Examples of concerning behavior may include, but are not limited to:

1. Recurrent racist or otherwise fixated thoughts or expressions.
2. Bullying behavior focused on other employees or students.
3. Direct communicated threats to a faculty member, staff member, or student.
4. Prolonged non-verbal passive aggression (i.e., sitting with arms crossed, glaring or staring, refusing to speak or responding to questions/directives).
5. Use of alcohol or other substances at work or in class or attending work or class while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
6. Self-injurious behavior (i.e., cutting, burning)
7. Harassing or stalking behaviors
8. Physical assault such as pushing, shoving or punching
9. Throwing objects or slamming doors
10. Storming out of the room when upset
11. Conversations that are designed to upset other students such as descriptions of weapons, killing or death
12. A sudden and dramatic change in personality or lifestyle
13. Psychotic, delusional, rambling speech, or screaming
14. Objectifying language that depersonalizes others

Concerning Behavior brought to the attention of the UTMB Police Department will be investigated by the Department's Threat Management Unit. Additionally, the UTMB Police Department is available to provide training and consultations regarding active shooter response and workplace violence; and can conduct a security survey for individual facilities upon request.

**XII. University Police Responsibility and Authority**

**On Campus:** UTMB PD personnel who are on duty will respond to on campus active shooter situations. The ranking, on-duty UTMB PD supervisor, is the response’s incident commander, unless relieved by a superior officer.

1. The ranking UTMB PD supervisor is responsible for activating the institutional Emergency Operations Plan.
2. The UTMB PD is responsible for contacting outside public safety agencies for assistance as needed.
3. Except when an emergency notification is required by federal law, the UTMB PD will coordinate through the Office of Marketing and Communications the timely release of information concerning serious crimes considered a threat to students and employees.

**Off Campus:** Active shooter situations or any suspicious individuals or activities observed in UTMB buildings and facilities located off campus must be reported immediately to the local law enforcement agency (e.g., city police department or sheriff’s department) responsible for the location. Only after the immediate request for help is completed should the UTMB PD be contacted, if possible.

**XIII. Media**

News releases to the public are made only by the [Office of Marketing and Communications](#).

**XIV. Managing the Consequences of an Active Shooter**

After the active shooter has been incapacitated and is no longer a threat, human resources and/or management should engage in post-event assessments and activities, including:

1. An accounting of all individuals at a designated assembly point to determine who, if anyone, is missing and potentially injured.
2. Determining a method for notifying families of individuals affected by the active shooter, including notification of any casualties
3. Assessing the psychological state of individuals at the scene, and referring them to health care specialists accordingly
4. Identify and fill any critical personnel or operational gaps left in the organization as a result of the active shooter
5. UTMB Police will manage the crime scene and will restrict access

**XV. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures**

1. [IHOP - 08.02.01 - Threatening Situations](#)
2. [IHOP - 08.02.02 - Campus Security Reporting](#)
3. [IHOP - 08.02.04 - Possession of Weapons](#)
4. [IHOP - 08.02.05 - Security Management](#)
5. [IHOP - 08.02.06 - Hostage Policy Involving Offender or Correctional Patients](#)
6. [IHOP - 08.02.07 - Security Associated with Offender Correctional Patients](#)

**XVI. Dates Approved or Amended**

<i>Originated: 10/15/2013</i>	
<i>Reviewed with Changes</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>
10/28/2016	
06/07/2019	
12/14/2020	

**XVII. Contact Information**

UTMB Police Department  
(409) 772-1111