



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
OFFICE OF COURT MANAGEMENT
Suffolk Superior Courthouse
Security Department, 15th Floor
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To: All Security Department Personnel

From: Jeffrey P. Morrow, Director of Security

Date: March 12, 2014

Re: Active Shooter Protocol

Current events have demonstrated that armed attacks in public venues are a rare but unfortunate reality. The Massachusetts Trial Court Security Department has adopted the Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (A.L.I.C.E.) training program and protocols in order to manage an active shooter incident. In the unlikely event of an active shooter situation, A.L.I.C.E. principles and the procedures are followed to avoid or minimize serious injury to court staff, the public, inmates in custody, and Security Department officers. Chief Court Officers responsible for security at each courthouse will ensure the completion of required training, implementation of A.L.I.C.E. protocols, and conduct necessary liaison with representatives of law enforcement agencies to coordinate procedures in the event of a critical incident. The following policy, definitions, background, and procedures apply in the event of an active shooter situation:

Policy: In order to minimize casualties to Trial Court staff, the public, and inmates, the Massachusetts Trial Court Security Department plans, trains and educates personnel in the response to an active shooter incident that may occur in court facilities. Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (A.L.I.C.E.) protocols and options for managing an active shooter incident have been adopted by the Trial Court. All Court Officers and Associate Court Officers receive training in A.L.I.C.E. procedures and concepts. The Security Department also familiarizes court staff in the principles of A.L.I.C.E. and their options for reacting to an active shooter. Only Security Department instructors certified in the principles of A.L.I.C.E. instruction will train Security Department officers and court staff in these principles.

Definitions:

Active Shooter - An individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearm[s] and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims

A.L.I.C.E. - Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate

Court Officer – Includes Court Officers and Associate Court Officers

Summary:

1. The Massachusetts Trial Court Security Department has adopted the A.L.I.C.E. training program in order to respond to an active shooter incident.
2. There are certified A.L.I.C.E. instructors in each geographic security region throughout the Commonwealth to train and educate staff in the A.L.I.C.E. program. Only certified A.L.I.C.E. instructors will perform these duties.
3. The acronym A.L.I.C.E. does not suggest a linear response to an active shooter. The dynamic nature of an active shooter incident may require the non-linear implementation of multiple options to increase the likelihood of safety and survival.
4. Emergency evacuation routes and areas will be posted in every courthouse.
5. Regional Assistant Directors are responsible for reviewing evacuation plans and conducting emergency evacuation drills in courthouses assigned to them, annually.
6. Anyone involved in an active shooter incident has options to keep themselves safe depending upon where the shooter is, the physical plant, and what is available to them. These options are:
 - a. Evacuate
 - b. Counter
 - c. Barricade (Lockdown)
7. Any person who becomes aware of an active shooter event is authorized to alert all court personnel via public address system and call 911.
8. Responding law enforcement agency(s) and other emergency first responders will take actions to manage the incident in accordance with their policies, procedures, and tactics.
9. In the event of an active shooter incident, sheriff's departments and/or police will be notified to respond to the courthouse to take custody of and transport inmates back to the prisons or jails when safe to do so. Sheriff's departments' transportation vans or law enforcement vans are not permitted in court garages or vehicle sally-ports until safety conditions permit.
10. Personnel should avoid handling any weapons from the active shooter in order not to be mistaken as a shooter themselves.
11. Anyone in the courthouse equipped with a police scanner should tune it to the frequency utilized by Court Officers to monitor the incident as it occurs.
12. Court Officer duties associated with an active shooter incident are limited to the execution of this policy and procedures. Court Officers and other employees who are

legally authorized to carry personal firearms via a License To Carry and who may have these weapons (secured) at a courthouse have no authority under the scope of their employment to use those weapons to neutralize the shooter.

Details:

Procedure A: Alert/Inform of an Active Shooter via Public Address (P.A.) System

1. Anyone aware of an active shooter is permitted to call 911, and should do so immediately if safe.
2. Anyone in the courthouse aware of an active shooter incident shall notify a Court Officer by the quickest way possible, if able to do so safely.
3. A Court Officer becoming aware of an active shooter will notify a supervisor by the quickest and safest way possible.
4. If safe to do so, the Chief Court Officer, Assistant Chief Court Officer or Court Officer closest to the P.A. system will announce that there is an active shooter in the courthouse and where his location is, if known.
5. If there is not a P.A. system available in the courthouse, the court staff will follow Procedure B.
6. The Chief Court Officer, Assistant Chief Court Officer or Court Officer, if able to do so, will monitor the shooter's position in the courthouse and inform staff where he/she is located at all times.
7. The Chief Court Officer or Assistant Chief Court Officer will activate the emergency chain of command for mutual aid and response as soon as possible.

Procedure B: Alert/Inform of an Active Shooter without a P.A. System

1. In the event that a courthouse does not have a public address system, any witness to an active shooter will immediately call 911 to alert law enforcement authorities, if/when safe to do so.
2. After calling 911, employees and/or Security Department Officers will alert others in the courthouse and implement A.L.I.C.E. protocols the safest and quickest way to do so.
3. The Chief Court Officer or Assistant Chief Court Officer will activate the emergency chain of command for mutual aid and response.
4. Security Department Officers will inform other officers, court staff, and the public of the location of the active shooter, via radio and other means.

Procedure C: Evacuation – Employees & Public

1. Circumstances permitting, the safe and immediate evacuation from the building is the preferred response to an active shooter incident. When/if safe to do so court staff and members of the public will evacuate the building by any means they can, as soon as they can, to a designated area. Court Offices will facilitate this evacuation.

2. If any person who cannot evacuate or escape is confronted by an active shooter, and in their opinion is in jeopardy of death or serious bodily injury, he or she is advised to counter the shooter by any means possible. Suggested options for countering the shooter are contained in Procedure E.
3. When evacuating, people will exit the building with their hands up in the air, empty; visible to any law enforcement personnel they may come into contact with.
4. Evacuated personnel from the courthouse will wait in designated areas in order to be debriefed or released by law enforcement personnel or to be treated by EMS, if necessary.
5. Security employees will refer to Procedure F to evacuate inmates from lockups.

Procedure D: Lockdown

1. If unable to evacuate the building, and unable to identify where the active shooter is located, personnel shall barricade themselves in a location safe to do so.
2. To the best of their ability personnel should use objects in order to block entrances to rooms or barricade themselves in safe places, and to stop the shooter from entering the area they are located.
3. When in hiding personnel are encouraged to do the following if time permits:
 - a. Silence all cellular devices,
 - b. Unplug anything that may make noise,
 - c. Remain as quiet as possible, and
 - d. Any other actions believed needed to remain undetected and safe during the incident.
4. Personnel should be prepared to evacuate the area in the event they learn of the shooter's position, and determine it is safe to do so.
5. Personnel should prepare themselves to distract and counter the shooter if no other option is available. Options included in Procedure E pertain.

Procedure E: Counter

1. If unable to escape, or barricade entrances successfully, and it is thought the active shooter may enter the room where personnel are located, personnel should prepare to the best of their ability to counter the attacker.
2. Personnel should take any and every action, using whatever is at their disposal, to stop the shooter if he/she enters their location.
3. If the shooter is stopped, personnel should kick the weapon away from him/her and secure it without handling it by:
 - a. Placing a trash barrel over it and sitting on top of the barrel,
 - b. Kicking the weapon into a closet or a space not accessible to the shooter or to anyone else,
 - c. Any other way to secure it safely without picking it up.
4. If possible, personnel will evacuate the area when safe to do so and alert law enforcement personnel to the shooter's location.

Procedure F: Active Shooter; Lockup / Emergency Evacuation

1. When alerted to an active shooter, Court Officers assigned to the Lock-Up will immediately ensure the security of all entrances and implement Lockdown procedures contain in Procedure D, provided the shooter does not present an immediate threat.
2. When in Lockdown officers assigned to the Lock-Up will monitor radio communications and closed circuit surveillance systems for information pertaining to the shooter's location and activities.
3. Should the shooter present an immediate or increasing danger to the Lock-Up area, Court Officers will execute inmate evacuation procedures.
4. If possible, Lock-Up officers will communicate with a supervisor for the designation of an evacuation site.
5. A supervisory officer will request law enforcement assistance for the evacuation of inmates, as soon as possible.
6. If circumstances permit, Court Officers will apply restraints (leg shackles excluded), and escort inmates in a direction away from the active shooter to the evacuation site.
7. Presented with an immediate threat, Court Officers may unlock all occupied cell doors to facilitate emergency evacuation.
8. Once evacuated, Court Officers will confirm their location with a supervisory officer.
9. Court Officers will remain with evacuated inmates in the safe area until custody of the inmates is transferred or they are returned to the court.

Procedure G: Inmate Escape during an Emergency Evacuation of Lockup

1. If an inmate attempts to flee during an emergency evacuation, Court Officers must make every effort to stop the inmate from escaping, if safe to do so.
2. Court Officers do not chase a fleeing inmate if it is not safe to do so or if other inmates are to be left unsupervised.
3. Court Officers may choose to pursue an escaping inmate but will discontinue a chase as soon as he/she loses sight of the inmate.
4. Pursuit of an escaping inmate off court property is authorized but will be discontinued when sufficient law enforcement officers assume the search.
5. If an inmate successfully escapes, a pursuing Court Officer will immediately report the escape to a supervisory officer.
6. A supervisor will immediately report an escape to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
7. The Department of Corrections or appropriate county sheriff's department will be notified of an escape as soon as possible.
8. If a Court Officer apprehends the escaping inmate(s), he/she will remain with them and wait for additional Officers to arrive. If available, the inmate(s) will be placed in handcuffs and shackles.
9. When safe to do so, Court Officers may assist in the transportation of the captured inmate(s) to another location. This may include return of the inmate to the court or their transfer to another law enforcement or corrections agency.

10. Within 24-hours an Incident Report is produced by all Officers involved. These reports may be released to law enforcement and corrections agencies for official purposes upon approval by a Regional Assistant Director.

Procedure H: Inmates in Lockup

1. Once the threat has been stopped and Sheriff's Departments' transportation teams or law enforcement personnel have arrived to accomplish the transfer of inmates, Court Officers will evacuate inmates at the discretion of the Chief Court Officer or his designee.
2. Court Officers will follow Security Department policy and procedure on the evacuation of inmates.

Procedure I: Internal Incident Debrief

1. The Director of Security, Deputy Director of Security, Regional Assistant Directors of Security, Chief Court Officer, Assistant Chief Court Officer, those involved in the incident, and those directed to attend, will meet at a time and location designated by the Director of Security to debrief the active shooter incident.
2. Based on the outcome of the debriefing, the Director of Security will review and revise the related policy and procedures, if necessary.
3. The Director of Security will implement new operational procedures, as needed.

Procedure J: Media Relations and Outside Law Enforcement Agencies

1. The Director of Security and those directed to attend, meet with outside law enforcement agencies involved in the active shooter incident to debrief operations at a time and location to be agreed upon.
2. Based on the outcome of the debriefing, the Director of Security will review and revise the related policy and procedures, if necessary.
3. The Director of Security will implement new operational procedures, as needed.
4. The Director of Security will also engage the Public Information Officer and will follow Trial Court policies and procedures for the communication of information relayed to the media.