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## State of Ohio Administrative Policy

No: Human Resources  
HR-42

Effective:  
February 21, 2017

Response to an Active Aggressor

Issued By:

Robert Blair, Director

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### 1.0 Purpose

To provide a standardized policy regarding training and other procedures for responding to potentially violent or threatening situations so that State of Ohio employees will be as prepared as possible. This policy applies only to agencies, boards and commissions under the purview of the Governor and does not apply to separately elected officials.

A glossary of terms in this policy is located in Appendix A – Definitions. The first occurrence of a defined term is in ***bold italics*** and linked to Appendix A. To go directly to a term's definition, click on the bold and italicized term. To return to the body of the policy, click on the defined term.

### 2.0 Policy

Situations involving an ***active aggressor*** or ***active threat*** can occur in any environment. They may involve different ***threat types***, including physical, verbal or virtual threats. In order to preserve life and address the reality of an active threat event, it is important for all state employees to apply adaptive principles that can aid in quickly determining the most reasonable way to protect life during such an event. To this end, the following requirements shall be followed.

- A. **Required Training:** Following issuance of their agency policy (see B. below), all new employees are required to complete the online ***Active Aggressor Response Training*** within thirty (30) days of their hire date. For all current employees, this training must be completed within thirty (30) days of the effective date of their agency policy. Agencies, boards and commissions may request exceptions to the requirement of using the online ***Active Aggressor Response Training*** if the agency, board or commission uses a different version of training on an active aggressor situation. The agency, board or commission should contact the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Labor Relations and Human Resources Policy Section at 614.752.5393 or [DASHRD.HRPolicy@das.ohio.gov](mailto:DASHRD.HRPolicy@das.ohio.gov)

STATE OF OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE AGGRESSOR

who will coordinate with the Ohio Department of Public Safety to review the training and exception request.

1. The training, developed by the Ohio Department of Public Safety, is available online via the Learning Management module in myOhio.gov. Agencies may require employees to complete additional training to address agency specific situations.
  2. Agencies are also encouraged to conduct refresher training, such as tabletop exercises, in coordination with their business continuity programs once per calendar year. The Department of Administrative Services will conduct an annual survey to gather information on what types of additional training or exercises agencies are conducting, what law enforcement resources have been consulted in the development of an agency plan, and, in conjunction with the Department of Public Safety, will share best practices with agencies.
  3. As worksite locations are unique, agencies should develop worksite specific procedures and training as needed using the “Run—Hide—Fight” model for employee response. The Ohio State Highway Patrol, Office of Field Operations (614.466.2137) is available to assist agencies with developing procedures and training. If your agency has additional considerations, such as residents or individuals entrusted in your care, it is recommended that you contact the Office of Field Operations for guidance.
- B. **Required Policy:** Each agency, board or commission must develop an agency policy and/or procedure to determine what actions employees should take upon the discovery of an active aggressor. A sample agency policy with sample procedures can be found in Appendix B, Attachment 1.
1. Each agency policy shall be submitted for approval by the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Public Safety within 60 days of the effective date of this policy. Policies shall be submitted to [DASHRD.HRPolicy@das.ohio.gov](mailto:DASHRD.HRPolicy@das.ohio.gov).
  2. Agencies shall include information in their policies/procedures regarding methods for notifying employees of an active aggressor situation, including the name of the notification system in use by the agency. If an agency does not have a current electronic notification system (including text messages/phone calls/email alerts) that agency shall utilize the statewide eNotify system (maintained by the Department of Public Safety) to alert employees to an active aggressor situation. The notification system shall be tested at least annually. Agencies shall also include information in their policies/procedures regarding the use of facility specific resources (e.g. a building public announcement system), including who is responsible for making an announcement in the event of an active aggressor situation. These policies/procedures shall address situations where employees may not be in possession of cell phones or other equipment to receive a message from the notification system while in the workplace. Agencies

STATE OF OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE AGGRESSOR

shall require additional training for Human Resources Managers, Section/Floor Wardens and any other employees with direct responsibilities under this policy.

3. The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, Department of Youth Services, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Veterans Services, and other Departments as identified, shall include guidance in their policies/procedures for how staff responsible for the supervision of the individuals entrusted in their care can best ensure their safety and account for their location during and after the active aggressor situation (e.g. directing individuals in their care to the appropriate assembly area, taking attendance when necessary relocations take place, and executing assignments as directed by law enforcement).

### 3.0 Authority

ORC 124.09; OAC 123:1-45-01

### 4.0 Revision History

Date	Description of Change
02/21/2017	Original policy.

### 5.0 Inquiries

Direct inquiries about this policy to:

Labor Relations and Human Resources Policy Section  
Office of Collective Bargaining  
Ohio Department of Administrative Services  
1602 West Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43223

614.752.5393 | [DASHRD.HRPolicy@das.ohio.gov](mailto:DASHRD.HRPolicy@das.ohio.gov)

State of Ohio Administrative Policies may be found online at  
[www.das.ohio.gov/forStateAgencies/Policies.aspx](http://www.das.ohio.gov/forStateAgencies/Policies.aspx)

## Appendix A – Definitions

- a. **Active Aggressor.** An individual who is actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined or populated area or attempting to cause harm to as many people as possible. In most cases, active aggressors use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. The intent of most active aggressors is to kill individuals as quickly as possible.
- b. **Active Threat.** An active threat is defined as any incident, which by its deliberate nature, creates an immediate threat or presents an imminent danger to human life. Active threats can take many forms and may or may not have the intent of killing targeted people as quickly

STATE OF OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE AGGRESSOR

as possible. Traditional law enforcement responses to active threats will include the concept of “surround and contain” in order to minimize the number of victims. In order to save lives, the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction will initiate an immediate response.

c. **Threat Types.** Threat types include:

- Active shooter
- Hostage/barricaded subject
- Sniper
- Suicide/homicide bomber
- Known or suspected terrorist threat (biological/chemical threat)

**Appendix B – Resources**

Document Name
Attachment 1 – Sample Agency policy
For additional information, see <a href="http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov">www.publicsafety.ohio.gov</a> .

## **RESPONSE TO ACTIVE AGGRESSOR**

### **Sample Agency Policy and Procedures**

*(Note: This is a sample policy for state agencies to use, should they choose to do so, when agencies are developing their own "Active Aggressor" policies at the agency level. It is intended that this will be modified by each agency to meet its specific needs within the context of the statewide policy, HR-42.)*

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#### **Purpose**

To provide (Agency) employees with clear, concise instructions on how to respond to an active aggressor or active threat within the agency or within any of (Agency) facilities.

#### **Policy Statement**

(Agency) recognizes that the safety of its employees, contractors, customers and other visitors in the agency is paramount. (Agency) will provide this policy to all current employees when it is published and when subsequent changes are made to it. New employees will receive this policy during new employee orientation. (Agency) employees will receive training as per State of Ohio Administrative Policy HR-42 "Response to Active Aggressor."

#### **Applicability**

This applies to all (Agency) employees and contractors working in any (Agency) facilities.

#### **Procedures**

In the event of an active aggressor or active threat incident within any (Agency) facility, the primary mission of the agency is to take all necessary steps to immediately contain and stop any ongoing threat to human life. This mission will be accomplished through a specific response by the first law enforcement officer(s) to arrive on the scene but there are additional things that may need to occur before, during and/or after the law enforcement response.

- A. Upon discovery of an active aggressor or active threat situation, when safe to do so, anyone may notify law enforcement (9-1-1) and agency police or security personnel, if possible. In (Agency) facilities where an employee announcement system is available, an "Active Aggressor" broadcast will be made immediately following the discovery of the threat, describing the threat and last known location of the aggressor. The same information will be disseminated through the (Agency)'s employee notification system (eNotify) via calls, emails, and text messages. At facilities where section wardens have been established, the section wardens should assist in directing employees within their section to either evacuate or shelter-in-place. Employees should consider finding and taking with them an object that may be used to defend themselves (i.e., an improvised weapon). Employees should ensure that any member of the public (non-employee) is permitted to accompany the employee(s) to the safe zone.

STATE OF OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE AGGRESSOR

When possible and appropriate, security officers, a (Agency) administrator or other persons-in-charge, or a section warden will meet and guide responding law enforcement officers to the location of the aggressor.

When practical, occupants of surrounding buildings or facilities will also be notified as soon as possible.

During an active aggressor or active threat situation, (Agency) employees must also consider the following actions.

1. **Run** – If there is an acceptable path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Personnel should be instructed to:
  - Call 9-1-1 when safe to do so.
  - Have an escape route and plan in mind that takes them as far away from the attacker(s) as possible.
  - Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow or remain.
  - Leave belongings behind.
  - Help others escape if possible.
  - Alert individuals who are entering an area where the active aggressor may be.
  - Keep hands visible for responding officers.
  - Follow instructions of any law enforcement officer.
  - Do not attempt to move wounded people.

If evacuation is not possible, proceed immediately to the area designated as a “shelter” and contact 9-1-1. Provide the following information to the 9-1-1 operator:

- Location and description of the offender. Provide as detailed information as possible (e.g., race, gender, hair color, build, tattoos, clothing, etc.) and the last known location of the aggressor.
  - Number of attackers and weapons (e.g., rifles, handguns, knives, explosives, etc.).
  - Location and condition of victim(s).
2. **Hide** - Remain in place until contacted by law enforcement or circumstances dictate otherwise.
    - If practical, allow any non-employees access to the safe zone.
    - Your hiding place should be out of the active aggressor’s view. Provide protection if gun shots are fired in your direction (e.g., locating into a restroom or office and locking the door, staying as low as possible and remaining quiet and still) and not trapping or restricting yourself from movement.
    - Lock the door, if possible, and have a person, such as the Section Warden, designated to ensure the door is locked once everyone is in the safe zone.
    - Block the doorway with heavy furniture if available.
    - Silence your cell phone.
    - Turn off any source of noise (e.g., radio, music player, etc.).

STATE OF OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE AGGRESSOR

- Hide behind large items (e.g., cabinets, desks, doors, etc.).
  - Remain quiet.
  - Remain in place and stay hidden until you have determined that it is safe. If someone approaches the door and identifies themselves as a law enforcement officer, do not be tricked into talking back. Remain silent until you are able to confirm the authenticity of the claim.
3. **Fight** – Take action against the aggressor. As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to do the following:
- Disrupt and/or incapacitate the active aggressor by acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.
  - Use improvised weapons.
  - Scream/yell.
  - Commit to your actions and follow through.
4. **When evacuation and hiding are not possible, do the following:**
- Remain calm.
  - If possible, call 9-1-1 and alert law enforcement of the aggressor's location.
  - If you are unable to speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.
  - Mute your phone to prevent alerting the aggressor.
- B. **Law Enforcement Response:** The goal of law enforcement is to locate, isolate and neutralize the aggressor as quickly as possible to prevent additional injuries or fatalities. In doing so, employees should anticipate that officers will arrive in force and will be armed with rifles, shotguns and handguns and could be wearing exterior body armor. Officers should be displaying some portion of the uniform or tactical gear identifying them as law enforcement officers.
- Initially, the site of a violent incident will be secured as a crime scene. The first wave of officers will not stop to assist persons in need. A later group of officers and/or other emergency personnel will provide treatment and assistance.
- C. **Reaction to Law Enforcement:** When law enforcement is present, it is important to:
1. Remain calm and follow instructions from officers.
  2. Put down any items in your hands and raise your arms high.
  3. Keep hands visible at all times and avoid sudden movements toward officers.
  4. Avoid screaming, yelling or shouting.
  5. If asked questions by the officer, provide the information.
  6. Do not stop officers to ask questions; just follow their directions.
  7. Do not leave the scene until instructed to do so except as provided in section A. above.
- D. **"All-Clear" Issued:** The "all clear" announcement will be made when the situation has been contained and the scene is declared safe by law enforcement officials.

STATE OF OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE AGGRESSOR

- E. **Employer Response:** The health and well-being of (Agency) employees, contractors and customers is the priority. As soon as possible after law enforcement has relinquished command and control of the scene, (Agency) senior management, in conjunction with the facility administrator, the agency's human resources office and/or the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS), will develop information strategies to address questions related to the event from employees and their families.
1. Effective coordination with the media and timely dissemination of information can help reduce media pressure on those who are the most vulnerable. Only those (Agency) agency staff authorized to speak on behalf of the agency or facility shall interact with the media. (Agency) Office of Communications will coordinate media responses.
  2. When an incident occurs, it will be important to bring in trained crisis response professionals to provide any necessary physical, emotional and psychological support as soon as possible. (Agency)'s Office of Human Resources will coordinate the identification of and communication with Ohio Employee Assistance Program (OEAP) and other trained crisis response professionals and coordinate follow-up.
- F. Employees with questions about this policy should direct them to (Agency)'s Office of Human Resources.