Active Threat

An active threat is a person or persons who pose a risk of causing imminent harm to others and may be in possession of a weapon.

If there is an active threat in your vicinity:

1. RUN

If you are in an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Be sure to:

• Have an escape route and plan in mind
• Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
• Leave your belongings behind
• Help others escape, if possible
• Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be
• Keep your hands visible
• Follow the instructions of any police officers
• Do not attempt to move wounded people
• Call 911 when you are safe

2. HIDE

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

• Be out of the active threat's view
• Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e. an office with a closed and locked door)
• Not trap you or restrict your options for movement

To prevent an active threat from entering your hiding place:

• Lock the door
• Blockade the door with heavy furniture

If the active threat is nearby:

• Lock the door
• Silence your cell phone and/or pager
• Turn off any source of noise (i.e., radios, televisions)
• Hide behind large items (i.e., cabinets, desks)
• Remain quiet

If evacuation and hiding out are not possible:

• Remain calm

- Dial 911 if possible to alert police to the active threat's location
- If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen

3. FIGHT

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active threat by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Yelling
- Committing to your actions

How to respond when law enforcement arrives:

Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active threat as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last activity was reported.

- Officers usually arrive in teams of four (4)
- Officers may wear regular patrol uniforms or external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets, and other tactical equipment
- Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, handguns
- Officers may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation
- Officers may shout commands, and may push individuals to the ground for their safety

How to react when law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or directions when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises

Information to provide to law enforcement or 911 operator:

- Location of the active threat
- Number of threats, if more than one
- Physical description of threat/s
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
- Number of potential victims at the location

The first officers to arrive at the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to 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.

Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you 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 leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

Visit Safety & Security Page for Training Videos

Visit the **Safety & Security page on emergency preparedness (lowercolumbia.edu /safety/campus-safety/emergency-preparedness)** for more information about active threats on campus, including links to several training videos.