

UMBC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESPONSE GUIDE

ACTIVE ASSAILANT SURVIVOR ACTIONS

Updated: 09/01/2023



AWARENESS

FIREARMS ARE PROHIBITED AT UMBC

- ❑ UMBC prohibits firearms on the University campus and at all University facilities and grounds.
- ❑ Call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555 if you witness a firearm in a prohibited location.
- ❑ DO NOT confront the person. DO act to escape and survive if there is an immediate threat.
- ❑ Be aware of your environment and possible dangers and be ready if you receive an emergency alert.

COMMON TYPES OF ATTACKS

- ❑ Attackers may **PUSH** into your area...commit a blunt-force attack to crash through security.
- ❑ Attackers may **SMUGGLE** a weapon...attempt to get closer to potential victims before attacking.
- ❑ Attackers may gain **ACCESS** through an unlocked exit to avoid detection and set up an ambush.
- ❑ Attackers may **BARRICADE** exits and attempt to prevent people from escaping.
- ❑ **MOST ATTACKS END IN 5 MINUTES OR LESS.** Very few end with attackers stopping on their own. You must be able to survive the first 5 critical minutes.

ESCAPE AND SURVIVE AN ATTACK

- ❑ Condition yourself to be a **SURVIVOR**, not a victim.
- ❑ **SURVIVORS DO THEIR HOMEWORK.** Engage in intentional planning, maintain your situational awareness, and take aggressive action.
- ❑ **SURVIVORS RESIST FREEZING.** You will experience panic and paralysis. Know your environment better than an attacker. Command yourself to "MOVE" and use your environment to your advantage.
- ❑ **SURVIVORS TRUST THEIR INSTINCTS.** At the first sign of an attack, do not ignore what is happening. Act with intention and do not waste time.
- ❑ **RUN - HIDE - FIGHT** to survive if there are signs of an immediate threat: an armed intruder, the sound of gunfire, or people running or screaming.
- ❑ *Running OR hiding OR fighting* could be necessary at any time depending on the situation.

PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

REPORT THREATENING ACTIVITY

- ❑ The best action you can take to help prevent an attack is to report any threatening activity, including online activity, to UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555.
- ❑ **DO NOT IGNORE BEHAVIORS OF CONCERN.** Tell someone when behaviors seem inappropriate, worrisome, disturbing, or make you feel unsafe.
- ❑ Prevent unauthorized entry to buildings through doors that have been propped open or have broken locks.
- ❑ If you find an inoperable or propped open emergency exit, try to secure it and inform UMBC Police.

CALL FOR HELP AFTER YOU ARE SAFE

- ❑ If you are on campus during an attack, call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555.
- ❑ Make a new phone contact for "**EMERGENCYUMBC**" and add this number to your favorites for quick access.
- ❑ Expect extremely high call volume. You may not get through immediately...keep trying.
- ❑ When off campus, ensure you are safe, then dial 911.

WATCH & LISTEN FOR ALERTS OR SIRENS

- ❑ If UMBC Police receive reports of an attack on or near campus, expect to see this alert:

"ACTIVE ASSAILANT ATTACK REPORTED ON CAMPUS. LOCKDOWN YOUR AREA. RUN-HIDE-FIGHT IF YOU ARE IN DANGER."

- ❑ **THIS IS A CONFIRMED THREAT.** You may also hear sirens and loudspeaker messages outdoors.
- ❑ **LOCKDOWN** means take action to prevent intruder access when there are no signs of immediate danger.
- ❑ **RUN - HIDE - FIGHT** instructs you to escape and survive if your life is in immediate danger.
- ❑ **DO NOT EXPECT TO BE TOLD THE LOCATION.** We may not know the exact attack location, attackers will move, and adding a location to the message takes time away from your critical 5 minutes.
- ❑ **EXPECT TO BE ON YOUR OWN** with little or no information for some time. UMBC Police will send follow-up alerts as soon as possible.

LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

- ❑ Police priorities are: 1) stop the attacker; 2) rescue survivors; 3) clear the area of any other threats.
- ❑ Police may shout commands, pull you away from threats, or push you to the ground.
- ❑ Be compliant. Drop everything. Leave belongings behind. Do not have anything in your hands that police may mistake for a weapon.
- ❑ Remain in areas of safety as instructed by police. Expect to be held there until the scene is cleared.

LOCKDOWN

KNOW WHAT A LOCKDOWN MEANS

- ❑ Secure your building, or a specific area within your building, to prevent an intruder from gaining access.
- ❑ If you receive the active assailant alert and there are no signs of immediate danger, lockdown your area.
- ❑ Anyone who recognizes an immediate threat in their building or area can initiate a lockdown. Take initiative and once you are safe, call UMBC Police.

IDENTIFY SAFE-HAVENS

- ❑ A safe-haven is a pre-identified room in your building that provides people with protection from an intruder.
- ❑ A safe-haven must prevent an intruder from gaining access through physical barriers, provide some protection from gunfire, and suppress lights and sounds to conceal you from being seen or heard.
- ❑ A safe-haven cannot have any interior windows, entry door windows, or any insubstantial materials that replace glass in window openings.
- ❑ A safe-haven may have exterior windows to allow you to signal rescuers, but this may impact protection.
- ❑ All entry doors to a safe-haven must have working locks that you can lock from inside. Look for a turn switch on the interior door or toggle switch on the side door latch. You should not need an exterior key.
- ❑ Your floor may not have a room that meets all safe-haven requirements. You may have to relocate to a safe-haven on a lower floor. Avoid going up to a higher floor; this puts you further from escape routes.

LOCKDOWNS WILL VARY BY BUILDING

- ❑ Most campus buildings have exterior glass. Locking exterior doors may not provide protection and the act of locking exterior entries may put people at risk.
- ❑ **COMPARTMENTALIZE**...secure interior access points to lockdown multiple adjoining rooms or suites.
- ❑ Few buildings on campus currently have remote lockdown capability through electronically controlled entry. Most will have to be locked manually.

SAFE-HAVEN ACTIONS

- ❑ Get to a safe-haven ASAP. If you cannot reach one before it is locked, you must find other protection.
- ❑ Lead people in your area to safety. If the threat is not immediate, give people the time needed to reach safety before closing and locking the doors.
- ❑ Secure all entries once people are inside.
- ❑ **DO NOT OPEN FOR ANYONE OR ANY REASON UNTIL AFTER POLICE ISSUE THE ALL-CLEAR.**
- ❑ If Police require entry before the ALL-CLEAR, they can gain access using keys. You can also call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555 to verify their identity.

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RUN TO ESCAPE

RUN IS AN INSTINCT AND A REFLEX

- ❑ **UNDERSTAND THE RISK:** ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE MAY EXPOSE YOU TO THE ATTACKER.
- ❑ "RUN" means you find a way to ESCAPE the attacker. Escape is your primary means of survival.
- ❑ FREEZING in the face of violence is also a reflex...you must fight this. **COMMAND YOURSELF TO "MOVE!"**
- ❑ Run if you have a safe escape path. Be careful around blind corners. Move at right angles from the attacker instead of running away in a straight line.
- ❑ Run even if others don't want to follow. Help others, if possible, but do not compromise your survival to help others. Your own survival is your first priority.
- ❑ Not everyone can run. If you have functional or accessibility needs, have a plan for assistance.
- ❑ Go to areas of safety as police officers and other responders instruct. Do not leave until police allow.
- ❑ **WHERE DO YOU RUN? HOW FAR?** If police don't order you to a safe area, use your own powers of observation to determine when you are out of danger.

AVOID AN ATTACK

- ❑ "AVOID" means you have situational awareness and knowledge of your surroundings.
- ❑ If RUN is an instinct and a reflex, AVOID requires time, physical and mental effort, attention, and an objective.
- ❑ Have an exit plan before entering any building and know multiple ways to escape. Recognize the source of potential danger and stay away.

KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- ❑ **AVOID AUTOPILOT.** This means you only know one way in and one way out of the places you occupy.
- ❑ Do not allow distractions, like your phone, to take your attention away from studying your environment.
- ❑ Use available floorplans to learn about the buildings you occupy. Floorplans illustrating designated emergency exits should be posted at each stairwell.
- ❑ Find an exit other than the one you normally use.
- ❑ Find a different route from each entrance and exit to and from your parking, office, classrooms, dorm, etc.
- ❑ If you always use the same elevator, find a stairway and learn how it leads to an exit. If you always use the same stairs, find an alternate stairway if available.
- ❑ If you can access exterior windows on the ground floor, can you open or break them to escape?
- ❑ **WARNING: Avoid escaping through windows higher than the ground floor. This is extremely dangerous!**
- ❑ Below ground levels can be confusing. Know the layout of these areas to avoid getting lost or trapped.

HIDE FOR PROTECTION

HIDE REQUIRES PLANNING & AWARENESS

- ❑ **UNDERSTAND THE RISK:** HIDING MAY PUT YOU IN DANGER AND DOES NOT GUARANTEE SURVIVAL.
- ❑ "HIDE" means find **PROTECTION & CONCEALMENT** to prevent the attacker from accessing or seeing you.
- ❑ Find a place to HIDE but be ready to RUN or to FIGHT.
- ❑ Attackers understand they have limited time before police arrive...most attacks end in 5 minutes or less.
- ❑ Attackers are unlikely to spend time and effort searching for potential victims. They will concentrate on targets that are easy to find and easy to access.
- ❑ Good hiding places provide **PROTECTION**. If an attacker or their weapons cannot gain physical access to you, you are less likely to be targeted.
- ❑ Good hiding places provide **CONCEALMENT**. If an attacker cannot see you or does not believe you are present, you are less likely to be targeted.
- ❑ **DO NOT HIDE UNDER A DESK OR TABLE** in large open areas like libraries, cafeterias, or large classrooms that are not designated safe-havens. This WILL NOT provide you protection or concealment.
- ❑ **DO NOT TRAP YOURSELF.** If your hiding place fails, you must be ready and able to fight, escape, or move to other nearby places with better protection.
- ❑ If an attack occurs outdoors, get inside and find cover.

DENY ACCESS AND FIND PROTECTION

- ❑ "DENY" means you put distance and obstacles between yourself, the attacker, and their weapons.
- ❑ Physical barriers help, but bullets can still go through windows, doors, and even walls.
- ❑ Find rooms with solid doors that can be locked from inside. Doors that open out vs. in may be less safe.
- ❑ If a door can't be locked, find ways to block entry. Use heavy furniture or large objects as barricades, or use a belt, cable, or other available means to secure doors.
- ❑ Stay low and away from windows and doors. An attacker may shoot the windows, doors, or locks.
- ❑ Avoid rooms with interior windows if possible. Windows DO NOT provide protection. Neither do blinds, shades, glazing, or other window coverings.

CONCEAL YOURSELF

- ❑ If an attacker cannot see you and does not believe you are present, you are less likely to be targeted.
- ❑ Attackers are likely to pass by rooms that appear unoccupied, so make yourself invisible.
- ❑ Silence phones. Turn off lights, computers, radios, and televisions. Stay low, find cover, limit movement.
- ❑ People panic. Try to remain still, calm, and quiet.

FIGHT TO SURVIVE

FIGHT REQUIRES TRAINING/STRENGTH/SKILL

- ❑ **UNDERSTAND THE RISK:** FIGHTING GUARANTEES IMMEDIATE AND LIFE-THREATENING DANGER.
- ❑ "FIGHT" means your life is in immediate danger from an attacker and running or hiding are not an option.
- ❑ Escape is your primary means of survival, but in order to escape, you may have to FIGHT.
- ❑ **REMEMBER: Survivors understand this is not linear.** *Running OR hiding OR fighting* could be the best response depending on the circumstances.
- ❑ Do not assume that the risks associated with fighting an attacker are always higher than the risks from running or hiding. Fight for your life if you must.
- ❑ Deciding to fight takes mental conditioning and physical skills to deal with life-threatening violence. Without these you are especially likely to freeze.

DEFEND YOURSELF

- ❑ "DEFEND" means plan and launch a counter-attack that is unexpected and violent. Improve weapons from anything available in your environment.
- ❑ If you fight, you must commit yourself to aggressive action. Work as a team if you are with others.
- ❑ Use overwhelming force to injure, disarm, and immobilize the attacker. You may still have to escape or find protection even after fighting.

TAKE ACTION NOW

CHANGE YOUR THINKING & BEHAVIOR

- ❑ You CANNOT control if someone brings a weapon to campus and decides to attack. You CAN control how much effort you put into your own preparedness.
- ❑ You CAN know your environment better. Find escape routes, safe-havens, and ways to improve protection.
- ❑ Maintain situational awareness and avoid distractions, like your phone, when occupying public spaces.

EVALUATE RUN-HIDE-FIGHT FOR YOURSELF

- ❑ **THIS IS NOT A LINEAR PROCESS OF ELIMINATION.** Know the risks of each action. Be prepared to decide, act, move, and adjust based on the situation.
- ❑ You may have to defend yourself immediately. You may have to hide, then move, and find protection again before you are able to fully escape an attack.

YOU ARE EMPOWERED

- ❑ Take personal responsibility for your own safety and security through knowledge and preparedness.
- ❑ Visit <https://police.umbc.edu/services/emergency-preparedness/> for more resources.

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