

SAFETY & SECURITY MANUAL

UPDATED: APRIL 2020



Diocese of
Green Bay

1825 RIVERSIDE DRIVE ■ P.O. BOX 23825 ■ GREEN BAY, WI 54305-3825
920-437-7531 ■ WWW.GBDIOC.ORG

We live in an ever-changing world, where safety and security continues to be top of mind. As communities of faith, we may feel concerned for the safety of our parishioners, students, visitors, and staff in the wake of recent gun violence in churches and schools across the U.S.

In answer to these concerns, an ad hoc committee prepared the attached Safety and Security Manual for use by the diocesan curia, parishes, and schools. The manual provides a framework of practical ways we can prepare ourselves for an act of violence, in this case, an active shooter.

Purpose of Accompanying Manual

Encourages each parish and school to establish a Safety and Security Team and produce a Parish Emergency Operation Plan (PEOP)

Action Steps Needed and Guidance Outlined in Manual

1. Selecting specific staff, volunteers and parishioners to create your Safety and Security Team
2. Contacting and establishing a relationship with local law enforcement
3. Creating a parish plan
4. Coordinating your plan with your school (if applicable)
5. Sharing specifics of your plan with law enforcement and other responders

Blessings upon you and those you serve,



Fr. Dan Felton
Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia
Diocese of Green Bay

SUMMARY OF RECENT UPDATES

April 2020

- Page 2 – Section 3 of “How to Respond When an Active Shooter Is in Your Vicinity,” was updated to include bullet point #4 about using pepper spray.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Profile of an Active Shooter.....	1
How to Respond When an Active Shooter Is in Your Vicinity.....	1-2
How to Respond When Law Enforcement Arrives	3
Training Your Staff for an Active Shooter Situation.....	3-4
Preparing for an Active Shooter.....	5
Things to Consider After Incident	5
Additional Resources.....	6

INTRODUCTION

Church Security

Following all of the steps in this manual does not guarantee a safe church, but this manual should help parishes think about preventing and responding to events that should be unthinkable, but are all too real. While it is hoped that such an event will never occur at a church, or school, or indeed anywhere, hope is not a strategy; preparation and risk mitigation are.

In the wake of many recent tragedies, mass shootings and other violent acts have become all too familiar. Our churches are not immune from shootings and other violent attacks. These acts of violence should not cause us to be fearful of gathering with our parish communities. In light of these realities, it is imperative that your Parish develop and implement plans to keep your property and, more importantly, all of God’s people safe from harm.

Following are a few strategies you should implement to lessen the potential for an incident and make your parish environment more secure. Keeping in mind that seconds save lives, any action you can plan and prepare for will be helpful.

To have an effective safety/security team and an overall presence of safety in the church, you should first develop a sense of “situational awareness.” Become aware of your surroundings and do not let complacency rule. People often believe “it will never happen” to them. It is time to change that mindset and develop new procedures to prepare for a situation “when” it happens and not “if” it happens. In the event of a threat, having no safety/security plan in place creates chaos and fear. With a plan in place, together with training and practice, there is structure, organized actions, and a much better chance of survival.

Our insurance carrier, Catholic Mutual, and our employee handbook policy DO NOT allow arming employees or volunteers as part of your safety/security plan. If necessary, hire active law enforcement or a professional and qualified security company to provide security and ensure that they are insured for the use of firearms.

As a first step to addressing this national concern in our local parishes, this manual has been created to provide your parish with the tools to prepare the plan to keep your property and people safe from harm. This is not intended to be an exhaustive guide or reference tool. Instead, it is meant to be a “roadmap” for parishes to use to develop their own policies and ACTION steps, in cooperation with local law enforcement.

We are also including a list of sources for additional information.

PROFILE OF AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

An active shooter may or may not be known to you. It is advised that the parish create a confidential method for reporting to their pastor, who will consult the Director of Catholic Charities (920-272-8226), about potentially violent behavior and concerns for their parishioners. The following are some characteristics of someone who could engage in potentially violent behavior:

- Stated threats toward individuals or institutions
- Excessive rants and anger against the Church or Church teachings
- Noticeably unstable, inappropriate emotional responses
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
- Talk and justification of previous incidents of committed violence
- Excessive or irrational empathy with individuals committing violence
- Increase in unsolicited comments and fascination about firearms, other dangerous weapons and violent crimes

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. Remember that parishioners and visitors are likely to follow the lead of parish staff or lead volunteer during an active shooter situation. Please keep in mind the following:

- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit
- **CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO!**

There are three ways to respond to an active shooter given your immediate situation:

1. RUN

If there is 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; this may sound selfish, but TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF FIRST.
- Leave your belongings behind
- Help others escape, if possible—but again, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF FIRST
- 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
- Again, call 911 when you are safe

2. HIDE

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

Your hiding place should:

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

To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

- Lock the door
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture
- As a precautionary measure, considering obtaining good quality door stops and put one in every room likely to be used as a hiding space.

If the active shooter is nearby:

- Lock or barricade the door (if possible)
- 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, pews, Altar, baptismal font)
- Remain quiet

If evacuation or hiding out are not possible:

- Remain calm
- Dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter'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 shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her (i.e., yelling, running at the perpetrator with something, pushing the individual down, causing disorientation, etc.)
- Throwing items and improvising weapons (i.e., bags, jackets, hymnals, baskets, anything freestanding in your environment, etc.)
- Committing to your actions (i.e., by whatever means possible, use a scissors, letter opener, paperweight; anything to cause violence back at the perpetrator)
- Using pepper spray is permissible to defend yourself against someone who is attacking or about to attack you. Please follow Wisconsin state law and regulations regarding the ownership and use of pepper spray.

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. It is recommended that you consult with your area law enforcement to confirm their department procedures.

How to react when law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm and follow officers' instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., cell phone, bags, jackets, hymnals, baskets, etc.)
- 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 direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises
- Please note: ALL present will be treated as suspects until the onsite investigation of the incident is completed

Information to provide to law enforcement or 911 operators:

- Parish/school physical address
- The phone number you are calling from in the event you are disconnected
- Location of the active shooter (consider labeling doors A, B, C or 1, 2, 3...)
- Number of shooters, if more than one
- Physical description of shooter(s)
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter(s)
- Number of potential victims at the location

The first officers to arrive to 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, as predetermined by your parish emergency operation plan (refer to Components of a Parish Emergency Operation Plan), 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.

TRAINING YOUR STAFF FOR AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

To best prepare your staff, ushers and/or other volunteer for an active shooter situation, follow your Parish Emergency Operation Plan (PEOP) and conduct training exercises. Together, the PEOP and annual training exercises will prepare your staff, ushers and/or other volunteers to effectively respond and help minimize loss of life.

Components of a Parish Emergency Operation Plan (PEOP)

With input from your local law enforcement, create an action plan which includes:

- A preferred method for reporting fires and other emergencies
- An evacuation plan
- An emergency escape plan and route assignments (i.e., floor plans, safe areas)
- *(Continued on next page.)*

- Contact information for, and responsibilities of individuals to be contacted under the PEOP. Law enforcement agencies will expect there to be one main parish contact to provide them pertinent information.
- Information concerning local and regional hospitals (i.e., name, telephone number, and distance from your location)
- An emergency notification system to alert various parties of an emergency including:
 - Individuals at remote locations within premises
 - Local law enforcement
 - Local area hospitals
 - Your action plan should include how long it will take these individuals to reach your site

Components of Training Exercises

The most effective way to train your staff, ushers and/or other volunteers to respond to an active shooter situation is to conduct mock active shooter training exercises. Practice for different types of events and locations (i.e., Sunday Mass, weddings, funerals, children’s ministry, special events, parking lot). Practice should include parish members. Be prepared for the type of event and number of people that will attend and talk about people’s reaction before, during, and after the training exercise. It is recommended that local law enforcement be engaged as a resource in designing parish training exercises.

- Respond to any suspected gunshot, as a gunshot (i.e., car backfiring, fireworks)
- Reacting quickly when suspicious sounds are heard and/or when a shooting is witnessed
- Practicing running, hiding, and fighting
- Calling 911
- Reacting when law enforcement arrives
- Adopting the survival mindset during times of crisis

Additional Ways to Prepare for and Prevent an Active Shooter Situation

Preparedness

- Ensure that your facility has at least two evacuation routes
- Post evacuation routes in conspicuous locations throughout your facility
- Include local law enforcement and first responders during training exercises
- Encourage law enforcement, emergency responders, SWAT teams, K-9 teams, and bomb squads to train for an active shooter scenario at your location
- Ensure your plan includes addressing and assisting individuals with special needs and/or disabilities.

Prevention

- Locking Doors
 - Recommend locking all doors except main entrance five minutes after Mass has started. Ushers will assist any late arrivals
 - If there is a late arrival to Mass, the usher can manually allow entrance
- Ensure ushers are easily identifiable, wearing some sort of visible insignia
 - It may benefit to have ushers carry a loud horn that could be sounded if a threat turns real. Not only will this alert everyone in the congregation, it may also distract the intruder.
 - Ensure presence of ushers around perimeter of church before, during, and after Mass
- Cell Phones
 - Every usher and church staff should have a cell phone in their possession.
 - No one person should be assigned to call 911
 - These phones should be programmed such that one single button dials 911
- All exits should be clearly marked

PREPARING FOR AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

The following are some items to consider in preparing for an emergency situation:

- Create your Parish Emergency Operation Plan (PEOP)
- Create a confidential method for reporting potentially violent behavior
- If there is someone you feel is in need of counseling services please contact the Director of Catholic Charities at (920) 272-8226
- Institute access controls (i.e., keys, security system passcodes)
- Distribute critical items to appropriate employees/volunteers, including: floor plans, keys, facility personnel lists, and telephone numbers
- Coordinate with your maintenance personnel to ensure the physical security of the location
- Assemble crisis kits containing the following and place at each entrance/exit:
 - Radios (radio walkie-talkie)
 - Floor plans
 - Identified emergency preparedness personnel contact numbers
 - First-aid kits
 - AED machine near by
 - Flashlights
- Activate the emergency notification system (Ex: Use your overhead Public Address System, your church audio system, or pull the fire alarm based on the given situation and what system is available to you.)

THINGS TO CONSIDER AFTER INCIDENT

Reunification Plan

- Identify safe location (at least one mile away) separate from distraction for families to reunite
- Communication method to provide timely, accurate, and relevant info to families
- Ensure effective communication with those who have language barriers

Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP)

- Consider temporary location for worship and business needs

Considerations of Personnel for Your Safety/Security Team

- Public Safety - Law enforcement, public administration, fire – active/retired
- Medical Field – Doctors, nurses, EMS, first responders, etc.
- Experienced counseling representative
- Military – active/retired
- Industrial safety background
- Parish personnel who deals with relational ministry
- Current volunteer experienced with your location

It is important to understand there is no simple formula for survival in a threatening situation. However, a survival mindset will give you a much stronger foundation upon which you can base your decisions and actions.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

First and foremost, contact your local law enforcement agencies to determine whether they offer active shooter training or have active shooter response training resources. For example, the Green Bay and De Pere Police Departments offer training. From time to time, local Chambers of Commerce and technical colleges also offer active shooter response training. Please check with those organizations for details.

For additional resources on creating a PEOP contact the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health and Safety Administration, www.osha.gov.

Catholic Mutual Group offers an excellent active shooter training scenario and training geared for our schools. This information could also be useful for you to construct your plan for the church and other parish buildings. You may access this training on our CMG Connect platform at www.CMGconnect.org.

We also have a CARES document labeled "Active Shooter Emergency Response." This can be found at www.catholicmutual.org. Click Member Login, enter your Username and Password, Select the Risk Management Info icon, Property, and then Emergency Preparedness.

Another helpful tool to utilize is Catholic Mutual's Emergency Response Procedures App for cell phones and tablets. The instructions to download this app can be obtained from previous correspondence with your Arch/Diocese and/or by contacting your Claims/Risk Manager or Loss Control Representative.

The 2013 National School Shield Task Force contains detailed suggestions regarding how to make your building more secure. See www.nationalschoolshield.org/media/1844/summary-report-of-the-national-school-shield-task-force.pdf

Door stops as an effective barricade are mentioned above. There are an infinite number of door stops on the market. The Diocese's law firm and the City of De Pere conducted an informal search and adopted the "Wedge-It" doorstop. See www.techtoolsupply.com/Wedge-It-Ultimate-Door-Stop-Black-p/wedge-it-bk.htm

The links below to the Department of Homeland Security could also be utilized for your training purposes:

- www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/33007
- www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Developing_EOPs_for_Houses_of_Worship_FINAL.PDF
- www.dhs.gov/publication/active-shooter-emergency-action-plan-guide#

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact your Risk Management Representative at Catholic Mutual Group - Ryan Dallan, Risk Control Specialist (402) 514-2383.