



NEW YORK STATE  
Unified Court System

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

LAWRENCE K. MARKS  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

RONALD P. YOUNKINS, ESQ.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

June 1, 2016

To: NYC Chief Clerks  
District Executives  
OCA Directors  
NYC County Clerks

From: Ronald Younkings *RY*

Re: Active Shooter Protocols

Over the past years, there have been an increasing number of what are known as “active shooter” events around the nation, many in schools or other government settings. This memorandum, which we ask that you share with all Judges and court personnel, explains the protocols to be followed by civilians facing an active shooter event.

The United States Department of Homeland Security describes active shooters as follows:

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 and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

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.

In a number of important respects courthouses differ from other public venues in which active shooter incidents may occur. First, our courthouses are staffed by court officers (or in some locations by police officers or deputy county sheriffs) who have been trained to respond to emergencies such as active shooter events. Second, there is a thorough magnetometer screening at each courthouse in the state. These factors should minimize the possibility of an active shooter event in a courthouse and facilitate a rapid response if an event

nonetheless occurs.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, as well as other law enforcement agencies, have developed recommended protocols to be followed by civilians who are suddenly confronted with an active shooter. The key is being prepared both mentally and physically to deal with the situation. The standard protocols include the following three steps, depending on the situation confronted:

#### RUN

First, if there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Leave belongings behind. Help others escape, if possible. Call 911 when safe to do so. Keep your hands visible, and follow the instructions of any court officers or other law enforcement personnel when they arrive.

#### 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 view, provide protection if shots are fired in your direction and not trap or restrict your options for movement. Lock the door or block entry to your hiding place. Silence your cell phone and remain quiet.

#### FIGHT

If evacuation or hiding is not possible, take action against the active shooter. Taking action against the active shooter is a last resort and should be done only if your life is in imminent danger. Act as aggressively as possible by improvising weapons, throwing items and yelling. Commit to your actions as your life will depend on it.

The attached poster sets forth these protocols, as well as the protocols to be followed after law enforcement officers have responded to the scene. Please post this poster in appropriate locations in your courthouses. Wallet cards with the same information are also available by request. Please let me know if you need cards for your court. Finally, we ask that you forward this memorandum and attachment to all Judges and court personnel.

Thank you for your assistance, and please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about this issue.

cc: Hon. Fern A. Fisher  
Hon. Michael V. Coccoma  
Administrative Judges  
Barry Clarke, Esq.  
John George, Esq.  
Maria Logus, Esq.  
Maria Barrington

# HOW TO RESPOND TO AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

## RUN

- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Leave your belongings behind
- Keep your hands visible

## HIDE

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors
- Silence your cell phone and/or pager

## FIGHT

- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
- Act with physical aggression towards the shooter

## HOW TO RESPOND WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)
- Raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid quick movements toward or holding on to officers for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating

**CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**