

BAY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Active Shooter Policy and Emergency Action Plan

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined space or other 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. Active shooters usually will continue to move throughout the building or area until stopped by law enforcement, suicide, or other intervention.

It is the policy of the Bay County Library System to provide an Emergency Action Plan (see below), specific to each of its facilities that is intended to limit the exposure of library employees and patrons should an active shooting incident occur in a library facility or on its grounds.

How to Respond When an Active Shooter is in Your Vicinity

In an active shooter situation you must quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. Remember that patrons are likely to follow the lead of managers and staff during an active shooter situation.

1. Evacuate - 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
 - Leave your belongings behind
 - Help others to 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 it is safe to do so

2. Hide out - 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)
 - Not trap you or restrict your options for movement

To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

- Lock the door
- Barricade the door with heavy furniture

If the active shooter is nearby:

- Lock and barricade the door
- Close, cover, and move away from windows
- Turn off lights
- 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

3. Take action against the active shooter - as a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:

- Act as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Throw items and improvise weapons
- Yell
- Commit to your actions

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.

- Officers usually arrive in teams of four
- 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 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

Information to provide to law enforcement or 911 operator:

- Location of the active shooter
- 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 at the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency 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.