



CAHF'S READY, SET, GO!

ARMED ASSAILANT



GET READY! Create A Facility "Action Plan" for Workplace Violence

Incorporate a specific line of authority or "incident command" into all response plans. It is important to have a clear leader to reduce panic. Develop a code to alert staff to the presence of a suspected or known armed assailant on the premises such as "Code Silver" or "Dr. Strong".

Develop a plan:

- Have a "red book" for quick review of this and other urgent response procedures.
- Notify the authorities immediately by dialing 911. If your phone system requires a "dial out number" make sure everyone is trained on how to reach 911 from the system. The staff member responsible for making the 911 call should be able to stay calm under extreme stress. The calling staff person should stay on the line with the dispatcher and provide the following information:
 - ⇒ The location of the incident and entrance to that area
 - ⇒ The number of assailants
 - ⇒ Description of assailant and weapon, if known
 - ⇒ Possible number of hostages or other people in the immediate area of danger
 - ⇒ If the assailant has left, provide direction and means of travel (vehicle description) and time lapse
- Assign an employee with a thorough knowledge of the facility layout to assist the police.
- "Lock down" the facility if the suspected assailant is on the grounds but not in the building. This would include all outside doors and windows.
- "Cover and Hold" for all persons in the building. Staff should remove residents and visitors from threatened areas and assist residents to take cover behind doors, heavy furniture or on the floor if to do so would not cause the resident injury.

GET SET! Are you and your staff really ready?

- Include the "Armed Assailant" plan as a part of your regular drills, exercises and in-services.
- Instruct staff on the importance of being alert to suspicious behavior and the presence of strangers on the grounds or in the facility.
- Instruct staff on how to diffuse angry and agitated people. This means that they should not be aggressive, but should assume a non-threatening posture and voice if they are faced with a situation that they cannot escape.
- Instruct staff that they can come to management if they are experiencing or are threatened with any violence. Offer an employee assistance program with counseling for those who are suffering from domestic or other kinds of abuse.

GO!

- Initiate your action plan with staff and resident safety as the clear goal.
- Assess residents and staff for injury and mental trauma and administer first aid.
- Follow instructions from law enforcement and other emergency response authorities.
- Assign a public relations officer to deal with calls from the media.
- Assign staff to deal with inquiries from families.
- Notify families, staff, and the Department of Public Health Licensing and Certification Program, and the Ombudsman for mandated reporting of the incident.

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Additional Tips & Information:

After Assailants Have Left:

- Describe any weapons seen or used to law enforcement.
- Have fire, EMT and ambulance standby in case of medical evacuation and assistance to residents and staff.
- Announce that the emergency is over with a predetermined code such as “CODE SILVER ALL CLEAR”.
- Utilize your “urgent” evacuation plan if told by emergency authorities to vacate the premises.
- Provide mental health support and stress debriefing services to residents, staff and families.

Additional Resources:

- ⇒ Guidelines for workplace violence prevention programs for health care workers in institutional and community settings:
www.cahfdownload.com/cahf/dpp/osha3148.pdf
- ⇒ American Nurses Association, Workplace Violence:
<http://nursingworld.org/workplaceviolence>
- ⇒ Violence in the healthcare industry:
www.crimewise.com/library/hcv.html

We, at CAHF appreciate your thoughts and would like to ask for any disaster related suggestions or “Positive Practices” that you may have. Our goal is to use “Lessons Learned” and “Successful Applications” to help educate other facilities within our Long-Term Care Community.

Let’s work as a T.E.A.M. - Together Everyone Achieves More!

What disaster or event would you like CAHF’s Disaster Preparedness Program to use for a “Ready, Set, Go” Disaster Planning Topic? Contact us at (916) 441-6400.