



Mass Shooting Preparedness: Checklist

Preparedness saves lives. Use this Checklist to assess your community's readiness, determine training and resources needs, and guide emergency planning. For guidance and resources, consult the Mass Shooting Playbook.¹

1. Crisis communications

- Develop a communication strategy with your PIO and public safety executives to ensure appropriate, unified messaging.²
- Assess your Emergency Notification System. Develop a policy for its use and request regular testing and operation of the system.³

2. First responder preparedness

- Establish personal relationships with leaders of potential responding agencies (e.g., police, fire, sheriff, FBI, and neighboring first responders agencies).⁴
- Ensure adequate mutual aid agreements are in place.⁵
- Ensure your law enforcement agency is properly trained and equipped. Priorities include:
 - Active Violent Incidence (AVI) training for all officers.
 - Training includes tactical emergency casualty care.
 - Rescue task force established between police and fire/EMT agencies.
 - First responder radio systems are inter-operational.
 - Protocol established for self-deploying law enforcement agencies.
 - Police and fire agencies are training together.
- Request and attend a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction active shooter exercise.

¹The Mass Shooting Playbook and other resources are available at www.UnitedOnGuns.org.

²See Mass Shooting Playbook, Chapter 1, Crisis Communications.

³See Playbook, Chapter 2, Emergency Operations.

⁴See Playbook, Chapter 4, Collaborating with First Responders.

⁵See Playbook, Chapter 8, Legal Considerations.

3. Victim services

- Consult with public health agencies, the American Red Cross, FBI Victim Services Division, and community partners to plan how your community will provide victim and family services.^{6, 7, 8}
- Develop a protocol for victim assistance centers, including the Notification Center (where families will be reunified or receive death notices) and the Family Assistance Center (where comprehensive services will be provided).
- Meet with school officials to review security planning and discuss how the city can support the school community following a shooting.⁹
- Develop a victims' fund protocol and a plan to manage volunteers.¹⁰

4. Prevention

- Learn how Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management, Extreme Risk Protection Orders, suicide prevention initiatives, and secure firearm storage strategies may reduce the risk of mass shootings.¹¹
- Familiarize yourself with federal funding available for school safety, mental health services, and community gun violence prevention in your community.

5. Support for first responders and city employees

- Encourage leaders of first responder agencies to establish peer support and mental health programs (including for police, fire, EMT, and dispatchers).
- Schedule regular active shooter drills for city staff, provide medical kits in centralized locations in city buildings, and offer Stop the Bleed[®] training.¹²

6. Best Practice: Schedule & Tabletop Exercise

- Organize a tabletop exercise with your team, first responders, and other stakeholders to discuss roles and plan a unified response.¹³

⁶See Playbook, Chapter 3, Victim and Family Assistance.

⁷See Playbook, Appendix E. National Mass Violence Center is an important resource. <https://nmvvc.org>.

⁸See Playbook, Chapter 7, Community Partnerships.

⁹See Playbook, Chapter 6, School Shootings.

¹⁰See Playbook, Chapter 5, Managing Donations and Volunteers.

¹¹See Playbook, Appendix D.

¹²Stop the Bleed[®] training can save lives. <https://www.stopthebleed.org>

¹³See Playbook, Appendix A, and the Tabletop Exercise Worksheet.

