Emergency Response Procedures to Hostile Intruder Situations at Onondaga Community College

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Over the past several years, there have been a few incidents of extreme violent acts committed on high school and college campuses across the country. While we at Onondaga Community College have been fortunate not to have experienced such an occurrence, it is prudent and responsible to set forth procedures in reference to the response and management of a hostile intruder incident. Although the probability of such an incident occurring on the campus is minimal, it is our intent to make information available to our campus community so that you might increase your chances of survival in a hostile intruder situation.

In the event that a person(s) threatens the personal safety of the members of our College community, the OCC Campus Safety and Security Department would like you to be aware of the following guidelines for hostile intruder situations. These guidelines are divided into two sections: one for a hostile intruder within a building and the other for a hostile intruder on the grounds.

This training guide cannot cover every possible situation that might occur, but it is a tool that can reduce the number of injuries or death if put into action as soon as the situation develops. Time is the most important factor in the optimal management of these types of situations.

Hostile Intruder in an Academic, Administrative or Residence Hall Building.

When a hostile person(s) is actively causing death or serious bodily injury or the threat of imminent death or serious bodily injury to person(s) within a building, and if you cannot escape the threat by getting out of the building without putting yourself in harm’s way, we recommend the following procedures be implemented:

- Faculty and staff should immediately lock themselves, students or any other uninvolved persons in a classroom, office or residence hall room. If possible cover any windows or openings that have a direct line of sight into the hallway.
- If you are not in a room, try to get to one.
- If communication is available, call 911 or x2311 (315-498-2311).
- Do not sound - or respond to - a fire alarm. A fire alarm would signal the occupants to evacuate the building and thus place them in potential harm as they attempt to exit.
- Lock the windows and close blinds or curtains.
- Stay away from the windows and doors.
- Turn off lights and all audio equipment.
- Try to remain as calm as possible.
- Keep everyone together.
- Keep rooms secure until police arrive and give you directions.
- Stay out of open areas and be as quiet as possible.
- If for some reason you are caught in an open area such as a hallway or lounge, you must
decide what you are going to do. This is a very crucial time and it can possibly mean life or death.

1. If you think that you can safely make it out of the building by running, then do so. If you decide to run do not run in a straight line. Attempt to keep objects such as desks, cabinets, fixtures, etc. between you and the hostile person(s) to block your view from the intruder. When away from the immediate area of danger summon help any way you can and warn others.

2. You can try and hide, but make sure it is a well-hidden space or you may be found as the intruder moves through the building looking for victims.

3. If the person(s) are causing death or serious physical injury to others and you are unable to run or hide you may choose to play dead if other victims are around you.

   If you are confronted by the hostile intruder, cannot run away, and feel that your life is in danger you will have to decide if it is necessary to fight back to survive. CLEARLY THIS OPTION IS A LAST RESORT.

   1. Throw things at the intruder’s head to first create a distraction. This may even buy enough time to allow you to run away.

   2. If you are with others, attack as group all at once.

   If you are caught by the intruder and are not going to fight back, obey all commands and do not look the intruder in the eyes.

   Once the police arrive, obey all commands. This may involve your being handcuffed, or keeping your hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons and once circumstances are evaluated by the police, they will give you further directions to follow.

Hostile Intruder(s) on the grounds of the College

When a hostile person(s) is actively causing death or serious physical injury or the threat of imminent death or serious physical injury to person(s) on the Onondaga Community College grounds, we recommend the following procedures be implemented:

   If you are inside a building, follow the instructions above (lock yourself in a classroom, office or residence hall room).

   If you are outside:

   1. Run away from the threat, if you can, as fast as you can

   2. Do not run in a straight line.

   3. Keep vehicles, bushes, trees or anything that could possibly block your view from the hostile person(s) while you are running.

   4. If you can get away from the immediate area of danger, summon help and warn others.

   5. If you decide to hide, take into consideration the area in which you are hiding. Will I be found there? Is this really a good spot to remain hidden?

   6. If the person(s) are causing death or serious physical injury to others and you are unable to run or hide you may choose to play dead if other victims are around you.

   7. The last option you have if caught in an open area outside may be to fight back. This is dangerous, but depending on your situation, this could be your last option.

   8. If the intruder catches you and you are not going to fight back, do not look the intruder in the eyes and obey all commands.
9. Once the police arrive, obey all commands. This may involve being handcuffed or made to put your hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons and once circumstances are evaluated by the police, they will give you further directions to follow.

Notification of Hostile Intruder(s)

You may be the first to encounter the hostile intruder by sight or sound (e.g., gunshots). If so, call 911 or 2311 as soon as you are safe to report the situation.

OCC will use all means available to notify the campus of the presence of a hostile intruder including email, phones, the OCC web site, and the campus TV messaging system. The OCC web site will display an emergency message on the home page of the public, employee and student web sites directing users to a page of emergency instructions.