



ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: ARLINGTON

Program Title: "ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE- RUN, HIDE, FIGHT"

Program Category: CRIMINAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: LAUREN STIENSTRA

Title: DEPUTY COORDINATOR - TRAINING & EXERCISE

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: Mark Schwartz

Title: County Manager

Signature: Mark Schwartz 4/1/16

Application for VACo 2016 Achievement Awards

Arlington County Office of Emergency Management

1. Application Form (Attached)

2. Entry:

Problem/Challenge/Situation:

"Active Shooter" events are an emerging threat in the United States, and the number of incidents increases every year. Many jurisdictions acknowledge this, and a large volume of training and funding resources have been dedicated to developing the capabilities and tactics of law enforcement officers and other allied responders. In Arlington County, we realized that along with public safety agencies, the general public needed training as well. Most "Active Shooter" events conclude within seven minutes (on average), and sometimes before the law enforcement resources even arrive, therefore making it essential that every resident of Arlington know how to respond individually to these dynamic situations. While the average citizen receives training on response techniques for structure fires, earthquakes, and hurricanes, there is little formal training for active shooter response. Our program seeks to fill that gap and make active shooter response training as accessible and available as training for fires. We want to make "Run, Hide, & Fight" as easy as "Stop, Drop, & Roll" (or "Duck, Cover, & Hold On") because the actions our community takes in the first few minutes will have the highest impact on the overall outcome of the event.

Overall, our objectives are to properly train the public on how to recognize an active shooter situation and implement the Department of Homeland Security's "Run, Hide, Fight" model for response. "Active Shooter" response is a difficult subject to broach with many audiences and can be emotionally and psychologically upsetting. We knew that our training could be rejected if

it was “too scary.” Therefore, we developed our program with particular sensitivity to these issues, and our program is, by design, low intensity. Additionally, with much of the funding being devoted to public safety agency training, our program needed to be simple, inexpensive, and easy to implement so that it could be delivered frequently and extensively.

Program Execution, including Financing/Staffing:

Our program involves three steps, and is consistent with the FEMA “Preparedness Cycle” and the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program’s “Building Block” model. Its innovative qualities lie in the fact that it is approachable, scalable, and can accommodate nearly any organization. It was developed completely internally by the expertise of County staff (an Emergency Management Specialist and a Police Department Lieutenant). The steps are as follows:

1) **Risk Assessment & Plan Evaluation:** A qualified professional from our team visits the location and does an assessment of physical and administrative security measures. This allows us to become familiar with the environment and existing security concerns. The professional then makes recommendations about improvements that can be made to the facility.

Concurrently, a plan evaluation is performed. Gaps are identified and systematic improvements are recommended.

2) **Training:** We schedule and deliver a one hour training consistent with the Department of Homeland Security’s “Run, Hide, Fight” recommendations. The training incorporates modules addressing:

- Understanding the Threat: Definition of an Active Shooter,
- The “Run, Hide, Fight” Model: Decision Making and Considerations, and
- Expectations for Law Enforcement Response.

The training is separate and apart from workplace violence training, conflict management, or associated topics. Our program focuses on empowering (rather than frightening) the public and gives them the tools and information to make good decisions both before and during “Active Shooter” events. The attitude of our program is decidedly positive, and this has improved its overall reception.

3) **Drill:** The drill is designed to have about the same intensity as a fire drill, and is relatively innovative in this way (most Active Shooter Drills involve simulated weapons, SWAT tactics, and months of planning.) First, the drill is scheduled and we provide notice. We often pick a one hour window and direct employees to be prepared for a 15 minute drill during this time period. This allows the participants to clear their calendars, ensure they are not on a conference call, etc. This also allows particularly sensitive individuals (those with PTSD or other conditions that may be aggravated by stress) to opt out. Our drill involves a small group of controllers dressed in plain clothes with no special equipment. The exact number of controllers is determined by expert opinion of how many people it will take to ensure the drill lasts between five and seven minutes (reflective of actual active shooter timelines). The drill begins when the lead controller uses an air horn to simulate gun shots. When this is compete, a bullhorn is used to announce the beginning of the drill. At that point, the team of controllers then walks through the office space looking for participants, like an active shooter would. Neon cards are given to those who aren't properly hidden, haven't run far enough, or otherwise would have been injured by a shooter. This gives the participants immediate feedback on the quality of their decision of whether to run, hide, or fight. When the space has been thoroughly searched, the “all clear” is given. The drill is filmed using a GoPro camera.

After the drill, participants are brought back together in a meeting or conference room to debrief and discuss the outcomes. They are shown the footage from the GoPro to give them alternative

perspectives to their own experiences, which broadens their understanding of the event. We also collect their feedback using the following survey:

- List three things you learned from the program
- List two things you'd like to know more about in regard to this type of situation
- List one thing about the drill you would have changed.

This model has been more effective for garnering actionable comments than a traditional Likert 1-5 scale. The feedback helps identify the gaps that have been filled as well as future training opportunities.

Effective training campaigns require partnership and our program is designed to be delivered to various stakeholder groups throughout the County. We market the training program as a four week process that will advance an organization's "Active Shooter" preparedness. Week 1 begins with the Risk Assessment. The training is conducted over Weeks 2 and 3, and the drill concludes the program during Week 4. There is significant interest in the topic due to recent events, and programs have been delivered to a plethora of County departments, federal agencies, local businesses, faith based organizations, and civic associations. We place emphasis that, by design, the process is to be very customer-friendly and requires minimal investment of time and money.

The program requires limited staff time and minimal equipment (like safety vests and bullhorns) to implement. Nothing is specialized; our department already owns much of the equipment. LEMPG and UASI Training and Exercise grants were used to purchase remaining items (like the GoPro Camera). Staff time is also relatively minimal- one person is required to do the risk assessment (usually 2-3 hours), one to two people to conduct the training (one hour), and three to five people to conduct the drill and debriefing (about one hour). Planning and organizing the

entire process constitutes 1-2 hours of overhead time. Starting from scratch, the estimate for equipment is about \$5000, which is mostly spent on reusable equipment.

Outcomes & Results: Overall, our program has been exceedingly popular. We have had requests from almost every County department, as well as business partners, faith based organizations, and other County stakeholders. We have reached well over 1500 participants since implementation in July 2014 and requests for the program are steady. Its popularity lies in its relative simplicity and approachability. The program was selected for the 2015 County Manager's Excellence Award by Arlington County Manager Mark Schwartz. Additionally, the program was selected for presentation at the 2016 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium to be used as a model by other jurisdictions.

3. One Page Short Overview:

“Active Shooter” continues to emerge as a significant and dynamic threat to communities across the United States. While first responders and public safety agencies tend to be well trained and well equipped, the Arlington County Office of Emergency Management saw a gap in the readiness of residents for these types of events and therefore designed a program to better ensure community preparedness. County staff designed a three phase program that makes the Department of Homeland Security’s “Run, Hide, Fight” response model as accessible as the “Stop, Drop, and Roll” response for fire safety. This innovative and non-threatening approach includes a focused risk assessment, an informative training session, and an experiential drill. This allows participants to make security improvements, learn about proper response, and evaluate their training. This low cost/high value solution has been well received in the County and requests for the program are continuous due to its scalability, approachability, and general ease-of-use. The program roots itself in empowerment and encourages participants to “think like survivors” and the positivity surrounding its messages has promoted its expansion. The Arlington County Office of Emergency Management has been able to deploy the program in almost every other County department and has partnered with local businesses, federal agencies, faith based organizations, and civic associations to ensure “whole community” readiness. The program was selected for the 2015 Arlington County Manager’s Excellence Award and for presentation at the 2016 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium.

4. Brief Summary (3-4 Paragraphs)

“Active Shooter” continues to emerge as a significant and dynamic threat to communities across the United States. The number of incidents continues to increase annually and while first responders and public safety agencies tend to be well trained and well equipped, the Arlington County Office of Emergency Management saw a gap in the readiness of residents for these types of events. Therefore, a program was designed to better ensure community preparedness.

The “Active Shooter Response: Run, Hide, Fight” program is a three phase process that makes the Department of Homeland Security’s “Run, Hide, Fight” response model as accessible as the “Stop, Drop, and Roll” response for fire safety. This innovative and non-threatening approach includes a focused risk assessment, an informative training session, and an experiential drill. This comprehensive approach allows participants to make security improvements, learn about proper response, and evaluate their training.

Overall, this low cost/high value solution has been well received in the County and requests for the program are continuous due to its scalability, approachability, and general ease-of-use. The program roots itself in empowerment and encourages participants to “think like survivors” and the positivity surrounding its messages has been instrumental to its expansion. The Arlington County Office of Emergency Management has been able to deploy the program in almost every other County department and has partnered with local businesses, federal agencies, faith based organizations, and civic associations to ensure “whole community” readiness. The program was selected for the 2015 Arlington County Manager’s Excellence Award and for presentation at the 2016 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium.