



Southern Nevada Health District Emergency Preparedness Plan:  
Active Shooter in Public Schools

Las Vegas, Nevada

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Emergency Preparedness for Healthcare Organizations, Section 001  
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## Preface

The Southern Nevada Health District works to serve communities located in Southern Nevada to protect and promote their health. A large portion of the population the Southern Nevada Health District serves are from Clark County. Clark County's school district is the fifth-largest school district in the country. The school district serves 298,000 students and 4,000 employees at 374 schools every year.<sup>1</sup>

With an increase in active shooter events throughout the United States in the past few years, it is critical to prepare to protect students and employees within Clark County School District for potential active shooter events. Active shooters are individuals who attempt to kill people in a populated area.<sup>2</sup> Often, active shooters use firearms and there is no distinct pattern of who they select as victims. Active shooter situations often occur within a short time period of 10 to 15 minutes, so preparing employees is critical in order to effectively deal with an active shooter situation.<sup>3</sup>

This annex to the Southern Nevada Health District Operations Plan outlines recommended guidelines for responding to active shooter events at elementary schools within the Clark County School District.

# Signature Page

I have read the Emergency Preparedness Plan and agree with its scope. By signing below I approve the adoption of the updated Southern Nevada Health District Emergency Preparedness Plan: Active Shooter in Public Schools, and agree to support its implementation.

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Fermin Leguen M.D., MPH  
District Health Officer  
Southern Nevada Health District

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Date

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Marilyn Kirkpatrick  
Chair; Commissioner, Southern Nevada Health District  
Clark County

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Date

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Brian Knudsen  
Mayor Pro Tempore  
City of Las Vegas

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Date

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Director of Office of Emergency Preparedness  
Southern Nevada Health District

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Date

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Commissioner of Schools  
Clark County School District

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Date

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Chief of Police  
Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD)

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Date

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Chief of Fire & Rescue  
Las Vegas Fire & Rescue

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Date

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Director  
Nevada Department of Public Safety (NDPS)

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Date

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Director  
American Red Cross Southern Nevada Chapter

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Date

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Chief Executive Officer  
University Medical Center of Southern Nevada (UMC)

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Date

## Southern Nevada Health District Mission

The Mission of the Southern Nevada Health District is to protect, gauge and advance the health, environment, and well-being of Southern Nevada's residents and visitors.

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to prepare a response strategy for any active shooter incidents that may occur on school grounds in any public school in Clark County School District in Southern Nevada. The plan will ensure that all agencies respond efficiently and effectively. The plan includes guidelines for evacuations, hiding, and taking action against an active on school ground. Additionally, the plan outlines training programs for school staff to handle active shooter situations and it provides information on how to respond when law enforcement arrives.

## Authorities

### State

- Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS 388)<sup>4</sup>

### Local

- Clark County Code 1966 (Chapter 3.04; Ord. 2762, 2002; Ord 1881 § 1, 1996)<sup>5</sup>

## Definitions

**Active Shooter:** Active shooters are individuals who attempt to kill people in a populated area.<sup>6</sup>

**Low Level Law enforcement:** A threat that has been evaluated as low level poses little threat to public safety and in most cases would not necessitate law enforcement investigation for a possible criminal offense.<sup>7</sup>

**Medium Level Law enforcement:** When a threat is rated as medium level, the response should in most cases include contacting law enforcement agencies, as well as other sources, to obtain additional information.<sup>8</sup>

**High Level law enforcement:** Almost always, if a threat is evaluated as high level, the school should immediately inform the appropriate law enforcement agency. A response plan, which should have been designed ahead of time and rehearsed by both school and law enforcement personnel, should be implemented, and law enforcement should be informed and involved in whatever subsequent actions are taken in response to threat.<sup>9</sup>

**Threat:** A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic -- for example, motioning with one's hands as though shooting at another person.<sup>10</sup>

**Direct Threat:** identifies a specific act against a specific target and is delivered in a straightforward, clear, and explicit manner: "I am going to place a bomb in the school's cafeteria."<sup>11</sup>

**Indirect Threat:** tends to be vague, unclear, and ambiguous. The plan, the intended victim, the motivation, and other aspects of the threat are masked or equivocal: "If I wanted to, I could kill everyone at this school!" While violence is implied, the threat is phrased tentatively -- "If I wanted to I could."<sup>12</sup>

**Veiled Threat:** is one that strongly implies but does not explicitly threaten violence. "We would be better off without you around anymore" clearly hints at a possible violent act, but leaves it to the potential victim to interpret the message and give a definite meaning to the threat.<sup>13</sup>

**Conditional Threat:** is the type of threat often seen in extortion cases. It warns that a violent act will happen unless certain demands or terms are met: "If you don't pay me one million dollars, I will place a bomb in the school."<sup>14</sup>

## Communication Plans

The Southern Nevada Health District communications plan will prioritize efficient and timely internal and external communication to protect the health and safety of all involved. The Southern Nevada Health District will work with all public and private schools in Las Vegas to have annual drills, review sessions, and updates to contact sheets.

**Internal Communications:** Immediate alerts are activated through the school's PA system, text messages, and emails, with a designated staff member promptly calling 911. The school will initiate its emergency call tree with the designated key staff to call. A unified command center will be initiated and established, including school officials, law enforcement, and EMS, with a health liaison appointed to ensure seamless coordination. Key personnel are equipped with emergency radios for updates, and the intercom system is used for ongoing instructions to staff and students. Secure messaging apps and emails maintain confidential communication among staff to keep everyone as calm as possible in this hectic situation.

**External Communications:** A Public Information Officer (PIO) will handle all media questions and public statements, issuing timely press releases with incident updates, safety instructions, and response measures. Public alerts, including health alerts, are disseminated via social media, local news, and the Southern Nevada Health District website to inform the public about potential injuries, mental health support, and emergency services. City-wide alert systems will notify nearby residents and parents. Regular media briefings provide updates, manage public perception, and prevent misinformation, while social media platforms offer real-time updates and safety information.

Post-incident, the plan includes mandatory internal debriefing sessions with all stakeholders to evaluate the response and identify areas for improvements, alongside public follow-up communication on recovery resources, ongoing support services, and mental health assistance. The plan is reviewed and updated regularly based on feedback and best practices. This comprehensive internal and external communications plan aims to ensure a coordinated and effective response to an active shooter incident, prioritizing the safety and well-being of the school community and the broader public.



## Mutual Aid Agreement

The Southern Nevada Health District will provide mutual aid to the following organizations in the event of an active shooter event:

- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD)
- Clark County School District (CCSD)
- Las Vegas Fire & Rescue
- Clark County Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- Nevada Department of Public Safety (NDPS)
- American Red Cross Southern Nevada Chapter
- University Medical Center of Southern Nevada (UMC)

# Concept of Operations (CONOPS)

## **Assessing the Needs of Schools' Emergency Response Protocols in Clark County**

In the immediate aftermath of an active shooter, Southern Nevada Health District will deploy a team to conduct a Rapid Needs Assessment.<sup>15</sup> This assessment will first begin by connecting with local police to ascertain the number of people dead/injured and the type of injuries sustained. The goal of this first assessment will also be to account for all individuals who were present in the school during the time of the shooting.

Second, the Southern Nevada Health District will reach out to school officials to assess their immediate needs and the student's immediate needs. This includes identifying a predetermined safe location for a Family Assistance Center and Personnel Processing Center to help reunify students and employees with their families and to help identify the decedents.<sup>16</sup> This also includes assessing the medical and psychological needs that survivors might be experiencing.

In the days following the event, follow-up assessments will be conducted with school officials and victims' families to identify their unmet needs.

## **Matching Available Resources to the Needs of Schools and Survivors**

Once school leadership is notified of the active shooter event, they will immediately notify local police to initiate the emergency response protocol and activate the predetermined Incident Command Post. They will provide police with the following information about the event:

- The location of the active shooter.
- The number of shooters, if more than one.
- A physical description of the shooter(s).
- The number and type of weapons the shooter(s) have.
- The number of potential victims at the location.

The school will go on lockdown and an indiscrete emergency alarm indicating an active shooter is present will sound. All staff will have been trained to respond to an active shooter lockdown and will take action within their classrooms and use the "run, hide, fight" response. Students will have practiced lockdown before and once the lockdown is activated, they will move to safe locations wherever they are. They will be instructed by their teachers to "run, hide, and fight." Staff will have been trained on how to respond and will instruct students to:

- Remain calm and follow officers' instructions.
- Put down any items in their hands (e.g., bags, jackets).
- Immediately raise their hands and spread their fingers.
- Keep their hands visible at all times.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers, such as attempting to hold onto them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling.

- Do not stop to ask officers for help or directions while evacuating; proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises.

After receiving the call, local law enforcement will match their resources to help provide personnel to respond to the incident and lead the evacuation of students and personnel at the scene of the crime as well as help with the communications by trained professionals. The police department will dispatch a team as soon as feasible after the immediate response to the event in order to help monitor the situation, and local emergency management and Department of Health staff and relief efforts.

When officers arrive on the scene, they will arrive in teams of four. They may wear standard patrol uniforms or tactical gear, including bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets, and other equipment. Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, and handguns. They may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation. Officers might issue loud commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

The first officers to arrive at the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams composed of additional officers and emergency medical personnel will follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and evacuate any injured persons and may call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises. Law enforcement will hold people who have been evacuated in a safe location until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned.<sup>17</sup>

After receiving the call from the school, local law enforcement dispatchers will contact the emergency response team, including the Southern Nevada Health District and other stakeholders. While police are responding to the situation, the Southern Nevada Health District will work with the local hospitals to set up a triage system to quickly designate who needs immediate urgent care to get to the nearest hospital. Those who need other consultations but don't need to be sent to the hospital can be seen by local nurses onsite, EMS staff, or any other organizations that can provide their services, such as the Red Cross or the National Disaster Medical System. They will be able to match resources with any first aid kits, stretchers, or supplies. Depending on the severity of the issue, there may be a need for local transportation companies to help evacuate the scene or transport people to the hospital.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency can help to evaluate the response efforts and help to discuss ways to improve the response efforts by providing their tools and training at no cost to the community to allow everyone in the community to feel more prepared, even if they were not directly involved with the school. They will also be able to provide workshops, courses, and other valuable resources, such as bystander recommendations.

The Family Assistance Center and Personnel Processing Center will collaborate with local mental health organizations to provide immediate counseling services to victims and their families. Local mental health organizations will be able to extend their services and provide

hotlines and one on one sessions with the students, families, and the general community impacted by the incident.

For ongoing management of the situation, insurance companies will be able to assist with any claims and follow-up. Lawyers will be able to investigate the situation to provide legal services to those impacted. Local organizations can support the community through vigils, fundraisers for any families affected, and resilience programs to help struggling families and strengthen security for the community.

### **Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Active Shooter Response**

The Southern Nevada Health District will evaluate the effectiveness of its response to an active shooter event. This includes an evaluation of overall response effectiveness by identifying strengths and weaknesses of the response. An evaluation team will consist of Southern Nevada Health District evaluation staff, school officials from Clark County and Nevada State, police, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and the Mayor's Office. The team will review the timeline of events from the moment of incident to the resolution of the incident and analyze the Southern Nevada Health District's response and communication process throughout the incident. Surveys of personnel will be conducted in order to gather insights on challenges that may have arisen and create future strategy for improvements.

Collaboration with other organizations including police, hospitals, fire departments, and local counseling services will be evaluated as well. Staff will be interviewed and the response will be debriefed in order to assess response strategies and response times. Gathering feedback from each organization to identify strengths and weaknesses of the response will help improve a seamless collaboration between all organizations involved.

The Southern Nevada Health District will follow up with survivors and their families to assess their needs and evaluate their response in a sensitive manner. The district will review medical records and reports from the day of the incident to evaluate how thorough the medical and mental health triage process was. The effectiveness and availability of mental health services and ongoing counseling to students, family members, and school employees will also be measured through surveys and outreach meetings. Medical staff and first responders will receive surveys to provide feedback on the response.

After evaluation, the Southern Nevada Health District will implement new strategies for improving the future response to an active shooter event.

# Annex 1: Threat and Hazards Assessment and Risk Identification Table

## Las Vegas, Nevada - Department of Health, Active Shooter

Natural	Technological	Human-caused
Resulting from acts of nature	Involves accidents or the failures of systems and structures	Caused by the intentional actions of an adversary
<p><b>The Southern Nevada Health District notes that there are five main natural threats that they prepare for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Earthquakes:</b> earthquakes can occur suddenly and cause devastation. It can cause collapsing walls, flying objects, and more which can lead to serious injury and death.</li> <li>• <b>Floods:</b> Flooding can affect water quality in Southern Nevada. The Southern Nevada Health District has found that most wells in their area are 400 feet deep and can be sanitized either by professionals or at home using bleach.</li> <li>• <b>Severe Heat:</b> In Southern Nevada, severe heat, especially during the summer, can cause many negative health outcomes. The extreme heat causes dehydration and the body needs to work harder to maintain normal temperature. There are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Power Outages:</b> Extreme heat and other natural weather incidents can cause power outages throughout the area.</li> <li>• <b>Chemical releases:</b> Industrial accidents might cause a chemical emergency to occur. This is when a hazardous chemical is released and it can harm people, animals, and/or the environment. A chemical release can be in many forms: toxic gas, liquid, solid, and can be odorless or tasteless. It can cause many health effects like watery eyes, itchy throat, choking, breathing issues, nausea, and more. Another sign is if many animals are sick or dying.</li> <li>• <b>Transportation failures:</b> Failures of local transportation systems including buses, trains, and airports can have negative consequences on overall infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Terrorism:</b> bombing is one of the most frequent methods of terrorist attacks. It is possible, especially in large cities like Las Vegas, that terrorist attacks can occur. Biological terrorism also could occur - this is when a biological agent (i.e. anthrax, botulism, plague) could be released intentionally to harm the population.</li> <li>• <b>Active Shooter:</b> Can occur when one or more individuals target people, typically with no specific pattern of victims, in a public or private space.</li> <li>• <b>Wildfires:</b> Can also occur because of human error during camping or being outdoors. If not controlled properly, it can spread and cause devastation to the surrounding area.</li> <li>• <b>Cyber attacks:</b> cyber attacks can disrupt technology systems like public transportation,</li> </ul>

<p>certain people who are at higher risk for extreme heat-related illnesses including older people, infants and children, and people with certain medical conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Wildfire:</b> Because of the extreme heat, wildfires have the potential to strike Southern Nevada. Wildfires can cause</li></ul>		<p>hospital systems, and more.</p>
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## Annex 2: Training Plan

<b>Training Seminar Title:</b> Southern Nevada Health District First Responders: How to Respond to an Active Shooter Event at a Las Vegas Public School	
<b>Objectives of your Training Seminar (What mitigation strategy are you advocating?)</b>	<p>After a 2 hour training simulation exercise, Southern Nevada Health District first responders will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the Health District's role in responding to active shooter events at public schools</li> <li>2. Describe their roles in an active shooter event at a public school</li> <li>3. List steps they would take in an active shooter event.</li> <li>4. List the roles that other responders have (e.g. police, fire department, hospitals) partners they would collaborate with in their response</li> </ol>
<b>Estimate Length of Training</b>	2 hours
<b>Target Audience and max size of audience.</b>	Southern Nevada Health District staff who are activated emergency responders to active shooter events - 40 staff members
<b>Who would be a good candidate (e.g., structural engineer, health dept. official, first responder?) as Facilitator of this session? Why?</b>	Director of Emergency Preparedness at Southern Nevada Health District
<b>What do you want community members to do as a result of their attending this session?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be aware of the roles and responsibilities that Dept. of Health first responders have in responding to active shooter events at schools.</li> <li>2. Understand how to speak to survivors of active shooter events.</li> <li>3. Cooperate with local law enforcement and other partners to respond.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Strategies to increase community uptake of your mitigation</b> (We have lots of useful links for checklists on the Course Home page under the Important Links page.)</p> <p>List the ones you think might be useful (in the appropriate language) or provide a title or two of a list or handout that you think would be good to give out to attendees.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Involve all stakeholders in the planning and preparation of Emergency Response Protocols</li> <li>2. Conduct yearly drills to make sure all contacts are up to date and keep people refreshed on their roles and expectations in the case of an emergency</li> <li>3. Provide online and printed copies of response protocols and plans of actions</li> <li>4. Get feedback from community for any changes to be made so the process is more democratic</li> </ol>

## References

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