



## PRIOR TO THREAT

- Plan and prepare
- Develop a Bomb Threat Response Plan
- Provide Bomb Threat Response Plan training to all personnel

## IF THREAT IS RECEIVED



- Conduct threat assessment
- Execute appropriate actions outlined in Bomb Threat Response Plan

# Planning and Preparation

### Planning Considerations

- Coordinate with local law enforcement and first responders to ensure smooth handling of a bomb threat
- Develop clear-cut primary and alternate levels of authority (referred to in this document as “Site Decision Maker(s)”)
  - Select Evacuation Teams and Search Teams
  - Develop training plan
  - Determine search procedures
  - Designate control center locations
  - Plan for emergency assistance (police, fire, etc.)
  - Establish primary and alternate evacuation routes and assembly areas
- Establish evacuation signal(s)
- Develop a communications plan
- Determine procedures for accessing/shutting off and reactivating utilities

### Preparation Considerations

- Control building access
- Implement strict master key control
- Inspect incoming parcels
- Safeguard confidential material
- Keep exits unobstructed
- Ensure adequate internal/external emergency lighting
- Utilize electronic surveillance

# Emergency Toolkit Contents

*Items you may want to consider including in your Emergency Toolkit, which will be taken to the Incident Command Post, are:*

### Building Facility

- Complete set of master keys: coded to rooms and corresponding with a printed key list
- Blueprints and floor plans or site map of building
- Video, photographs, or CD depicting building interior and exterior

### Emergency Response Plans

- Copies of the Site Crisis Response Plan, Bomb Threat Plan, and Crisis Management Plan
- A list of the following phone numbers:
  - Site Decision Maker(s)
  - Police/Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
  - Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco Firearms and Explosives (ATF)
  - Postal Inspector
  - Nearest hospital
  - Facility emergency names and phone numbers

### Personnel Information

- Building Emergency Response Team member contact information and assignments
- List of personnel trained in CPR and/or first aid
- Updated list, with pictures if possible, of all staff/personnel
- Staff/visitors sign-in/out sheets that include names and dates; Include provision for staff/visitors transported to medical facilities
- List of staff with special needs and description of need
- Contact information for neighboring/contiguous buildings

### Additional Emergency Action Resources

- Reflective vests for Building Emergency Response Team members with identifying marks
- Bullhorn with charged batteries
- AM/FM portable radio
- Flashlights and batteries
- Local street and zone maps
- Clipboards
- Writing materials (legal pads/pens/pencils/markers)
- Plastic red/yellow tape for cordoning off areas

# Receiving a Threat

### Phoned Threat

- **Remain Calm and DO NOT HANG UP**
- If possible, signal other staff members to listen and notify Site Decision Maker(s) and authorities
- If the phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters on the window display
- Write down the exact wording of the threat
- Keep the caller on for as long as possible and use the Bomb Threat Checklist to gather as much information as possible
- Record, if possible
- Fill out the Bomb Threat Checklist immediately
- Be available for interviews with the Building's Emergency Response Team and law enforcement

### Verbal Threat

- If the perpetrator leaves, note which direction they went
- Notify the Site Decision Maker(s) and authorities
- Write down the threat exactly as it was communicated
- Note the description of the person who made the threat:
 

• Name (if known)	• Race
• Gender	• Type/color of clothing
• Body size (height/weight)	• Hair and eye color
• Distinguishing features	• Voice (loud, deep, accent, etc.)

### Written Threat

- Handle the document as little as possible
- Notify the Site Decision Maker(s) and authorities
- Rewrite the threat exactly **as is** on another sheet of paper and note the following:
  - Date/time/location document was found
  - Any situations or conditions surrounding the discovery/delivery
  - Full names of any personnel who saw the threat
  - Secure the original threat; **DO NOT** alter the item in any way
  - If small/removable, place in a bag or envelope
  - If large/stationary, secure the location

### E-mailed Threat

- Leave the message open on the computer
- Notify the Site Decision Maker(s) and authorities
- Print, photograph, or copy the message and subject line; note the date and time

# Threat Assessment

All threats should be carefully evaluated. One must consider the facts and the con-text, and then conclude whether there is a possible threat.

## Low Risk

**Lacks Realism: A threat that poses a minimum risk to the victim and public safety. Probable motive is to cause disruption.**

- Threat is vague and indirect
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible, or lacks detail
- Caller is definitely known and has called numerous times
- The threat was discovered instead of delivered (e.g., a threat written on a wall)

## Medium Risk

**Increased Level of Realism: Threat that could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic.**

- Threat is direct and feasible
- Wording in the threat suggests the perpetrator has given some thought on how the act will be carried out
- May include indications of a possible place and time
- No strong indication the perpetrator has taken preparatory steps, although there may be some indirect reference pointing to that possibility
- Indication the perpetrator has details regarding the availability of components needed to construct a bomb
- Increased specificity to the threat (e.g., “I’m serious!” or “I really mean this!”)

## High Risk

**Specific and Realistic: Threat appears to pose an immediate and serious danger to the safety of others.**

- Threat is direct, specific, and realistic; may include names of possible victims, specific time, and location of device
- Perpetrator provides his/her identity
- Threat suggests concrete steps have been taken toward carrying out the threat
- Perpetrator indicates they have practiced with a weapon or have had the intended victim(s) under surveillance

## Staff Response

### Site Decision Maker(s)

- Immediately contact local law enforcement if not done
- Mobilize the Building Emergency Response Team(s)
- Communicate with personnel about bomb threat condition
- Limit access to building
- Evaluate authenticity of threat
- Decide on appropriate action or combination of actions:
  - Lockdown: partial or full
  - Search: partial or full
  - Evacuation: partial or full

### If Search Is Initiated

- Assemble and deploy Search Teams
- Search the entire building and grounds
- Account for all personnel
- General search guidelines include:
  - Start on the outside of the building and work inward
  - When inside, start at the bottom and work upward
  - Search personnel should always work towards one another
  - Listen for background noises
  - Clear evacuation routes and assembly areas
  - If suspicious item is located, leave indicators for emergency services

### Personnel

- If search is initiated by Site Decision Maker(s), make a quick and complete visual scan of the workplace and any other common areas assigned
  - Divide room into various search levels
  - First sweep all objects resting on the floor or built into walls, up to your waist
  - Scan the room from waist to chin height
  - Scan room from top of head to the ceiling, including air ducts, window tops, and light fixtures
- If anything unusual is noticed, move people away from the potential hazard and immediately report the location of the object to the Site Decision Maker(s)

**Use of radio communications is NOT recommended unless the area has been cleared.**

## Suspicious Item

**A suspicious item** is defined as any item (e.g., package, vehicle) identified as potentially containing explosives, an IED, or other hazardous material that requires bomb technician diagnostic skills and specialized equipment for further evaluate. Suspicious indicators are based upon the prevailing and/or communicated threat, placement, and proximity of the item to people and valuable assets. More tangible aspects include, but are not limited to, unexplainable wires or electronics, other visible bomb-like components, unusual sounds, vapors, mists, or odors.

### If Suspicious Item Is Found

- **DO NOT** touch, tamper with, or move the item
- Immediately report item to Site Decision Maker(s) and local law enforcement/first responders
- Site Decision Maker(s) must:
  - Ensure area is secured and cleared of personnel
  - Notify Search Teams
  - Ensure emergency responders are briefed
  - Evacuation and Search Teams should remain available to assist and inform evacuees, media, staff, and others

**NOTE: The discovery of one device should not automatically mean the conclusion of a search. More devices may be present!**

The Site Decision Maker(s) must take this into consideration during the planning and execution stages of the facility's Bomb Threat Response Plan.

## Lockdown/Evacuation

### Considerations

- Threat Assessment—is the threat credible?
- Search results—were any suspicious items located?
- What type of response is warranted considering the totality of the circumstances?
  - Partial or full lockdown?
  - Partial or full evacuation?
  - No action?

### If Evacuation Is Initiated

- Select evacuation routes and assembly areas that are not in the vicinity of the suspicious item; ensure these routes have been searched and cleared
- Notify police/fire/EMS of evacuation and request assistance
- Account for all personnel
- Evacuation Team confirms the building is empty
- Bring Emergency Kit and Building Trauma Kits, if available
- Advise all evacuees to remove all personal items (i.e., purses, backpacks)

### Continuing Actions After Evacuation

- Debrief emergency services and assist in coordinating further actions
- Take accountability and report
- Open media, medical, and family areas—brief regularly
- As appropriate, determine reoccupy or dismiss action
  - Reoccupy when cleared and deemed appropriate
  - Dismiss in consultation with site administration
  - Notify all personnel of decision and ensure accountability
- Site Decision Maker(s) remain(s) on scene until situation is resolved or until relieved by another administrator

### A Final Note

- Every bomb threat is unique and should be handled in accordance with the needs of the facility. Prior to any threat, Site Decision Maker(s) and administrators should utilize this and other existing federal guidance to work with their local first responders to establish a Bomb Threat Response plan that addresses each risk level appropriately and is optimal for their building(s) and personnel.



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# Bomb Threat Guidance



*These guidelines are designed to help Site Decision Makers of commercial facilities, schools, etc., respond to a bomb threat in an orderly and controlled manner with first responders and other stakeholders.*



This product was jointly developed by the FBI and DHS Office for Bombing Prevention and reviewed by the National Explosives Task Force (NETF)

For more information contact the DHS Office for Bombing Prevention at [OBP@dhs.gov](mailto:OBP@dhs.gov)