Bomb Threat Guide

5. Staff Response

Considerations for Site Decision Maker(s)

- Immediately contact local law enforcement if not done
- Limit access to building
- Review Bomb Threat Response Plan
- Conduct Threat Assessment
- **Determine if search is warranted based on Threat Assessment**

If Search Is Initiated

- Enact Search Plan
- Communicate situation to staff/personnel and request that they make a quick and complete visual scan of their personal workspace for anything unusual
- Account for all personnel
- Assemble Search and Evacuation Team(s) and update about bomb threat condition

General Search Team guidelines:

- Search Teams make a quick and complete visual scan of the search area
- Divide individual rooms/areas into search levels
- Take special note of any object(s) that seem out of place
- Check ledges, balconies, waste baskets, and false ceilings and floors
- Check for unusual odors and listen for any unusual background noises
- If anything unusual is noticed, move people away from the potential hazard and immediately report the location of the object(s) to the Site Decision Maker(s)

NOTE: Use of radio communications is NOT recommended unless the area has been searched and cleared.

For additional information and products on bomb threats and improvised explosive device (IED) search procedures, please visit the DHS Office for Bombing Prevention website at ***www.dhs.gov/what-to-do-bomb-threat***

6. Suspicious Item

A **suspicious item** is anything (e.g., package, vehicle) that is reasonably believed to contain explosives, an IED, or other hazardous material that requires a bomb technician to further evaluate it. Potential indicators are threats, placement, and proximity of the item to people and valuable assets. Examples include unexplainable wires or electronics, other visible bomb-like components, unusual sounds, vapors, mists, or odors. Generally anything that is **H**idden, **O**bviously suspicious, and not **T**ypical (**HOT**) should be deemed suspicious.

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

Considerations for Site Decision Maker(s)

- Not all items are suspicious
- An **unattended item** is anything (e.g., bag, package, vehicle) not in someone's possession and where there are no obvious signs of being suspicious (see above), especially if no threat was received

NOTE: The discovery of one suspicious item should not automatically mean the conclusion of a search. More suspicious items may be present.

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

7. Lockdown/Evacuation

Considerations for Site Decision Maker(s)

- Repeat Threat Assessment:
  - Is the threat still credible?
  - Were any suspicious items located (if search was initiated)?
- Based on Threat Assessment, search (if initiated), and totality of circumstances, determine if addition measures are warranted:
  - Partial or full lockdown?
  - Partial or full evacuation?
  - No further 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 (e.g., 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) should remain on-scene until situation is resolved or until relieved by another administrator

A Final Note

Every bomb threat requires professional judgment and should be handled in accordance with the facility's needs. Site Decision Maker(s) and administrators should periodically review Federal guidance and work with 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.

2016

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 developed jointly 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 or the NETF at NETF@ic.fbi.gov.

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

1. 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

2. Emergency Toolkit Contents

Items you may want to consider including in your Emergency Toolkit that will be taken to the Incident Command Post.

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

3. 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 the line for as long as possible and use the Bomb Threat Checklist to gather as much information as you can
- 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)
  - Gender
  - Body size (height/weight)
  - Distinguishing features
  - Race
  - Type/color of clothing
  - Hair and eye color
  - 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

Emailed 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

4. Threat Assessment

All threats should be carefully evaluated. One must consider the facts and the context, 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.

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