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PHSC ACTIVE ASSAILANT IMMEDIATE ACTION

Pasco-Hernando State College

Immediate Protective Actions and Initial Life-Safety Response

1. Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to establish clear immediate protective actions for active assailant and imminent violent threat incidents occurring on PHSC property or during PHSC-sponsored activities.

The immediate objective is simple: protect life, reduce injury, rapidly notify emergency responders, and move the campus community away from danger when it is safe to do so.

2. Scope

This guide applies to PHSC employees, faculty, students, visitors, contractors, vendors, volunteers, and third-party partners on College property or participating in College-sponsored activities.

This guide applies to immediate response actions for incidents involving active shooters, armed assailants, edged weapons, vehicle attacks, coordinated attacks, domestic violence spillover, or any other imminent violent threat requiring rapid protective action.

3. Immediate Recognition

An active assailant incident may begin with gunfire, screaming, running, visible weapons, direct threats, vehicle impact, physical attack, or emergency notification from PHSC or public safety partners.

Do not wait for confirmation when there is a clear and immediate threat to life. Individuals should act immediately based on what they see, hear, and reasonably know at the time.

4. Immediate Response Priorities

During an active assailant incident, the primary life-safety actions are:

- Avoid the threat when there is a safe path out.
- Deny access when evacuation is not safe or not possible.
- Defend yourself and others only when confronted with imminent deadly force and no safer option exists.
- Call 911 when safe to do so.
- Follow law enforcement commands when responders arrive.

4.1 Run

Run means moving away from the threat as quickly and safely as possible.

- Leave immediately when a safe exit or escape path is available.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Move away from the sound or location of violence.
- Encourage others to leave, but do not remain in danger trying to convince those who refuse.
- Keep hands visible when approaching law enforcement.
- Call 911 once you are in a safe location.

4.2 Hide

Deny means creating time, distance, and barriers between people and the assailant when evacuation is not safe.

- Lock doors if locks are available.
- Barricade doors with furniture or heavy objects.
- Turn off lights when appropriate.
- Silence phones and electronic devices.
- Move out of sight lines from doors and windows.
- Stay low, quiet, and away from obvious targets.
- Do not open the door unless you can verify that it is safe to do so.

4.3 Fight

Fight is a last resort when a person is directly confronted by the assailant and there is no realistic opportunity to avoid or deny access.

- Commit fully to stopping the threat long enough to survive.
- Use available objects as improvised weapons.
- Act with others when possible.
- Target the assailant's ability to see, breathe, move, or use a weapon.
- Do not stop defensive action until the threat is no longer able to continue the attack or law enforcement gives commands.

5. Faculty and Staff Immediate Responsibilities

Faculty and staff are not expected to physically confront an assailant unless it is necessary to protect life. Their immediate responsibility is to make fast, practical decisions that support protective action.

- Take protective action immediately. Do not wait for an official message if the threat is apparent.
- Give clear, direct instructions such as "leave now," "lock the door," "get low," or "move away from the windows."
- Direct students, visitors, and employees to run, hide, or fight actions based on the circumstances.
- Secure classrooms, offices, labs, reception areas, and workspaces when evacuation is not safe.
- Assist persons with access and functional needs when it can be done without creating additional danger.
- Provide accurate information to 911 when it is safe to communicate.
- Do not activate fire alarms unless there is a fire or a clear safety reason to evacuate the building.

6. Student, Visitor, and Contractor Immediate Actions

- Follow emergency instructions from faculty, staff, Campus Safety, security personnel, guardians, or law enforcement.
- Move away from the threat if a safe route exists.
- Secure in place if evacuation is not safe.
- Remain quiet and out of sight when denying access.
- Call 911 when safe and provide specific information.
- Keep hands visible and follow police commands when responders arrive.

7. Access and Functional Needs

Immediate protective actions must account for individuals who may need assistance due to mobility, hearing, visual, medical, cognitive, language, or other access and functional needs.

- Assist individuals with access and functional needs when it can be done safely.
- Help move individuals away from the threat when evacuation is possible.
- If evacuation is not possible, help move individuals behind locked or barricaded doors and out of sight.
- Communicate emergency information in the clearest available method, including verbal direction, written direction, gestures, or assistive communication when available.
- Do not delay immediate protective action in an unsafe area when assistance would create additional victims.

8. Emergency Notification and 911 Information

Emergency notifications should be issued as soon as practical when an active assailant or imminent violent threat is reported or confirmed. Initial messages should be short, direct, and action-oriented.

Example immediate messages include:

- LOCKDOWN IMMEDIATELY.
- AVOID [BUILDING/AREA].
- EVACUATE AWAY FROM [LOCATION] IF SAFE.
- POLICE RESPONDING.
- REMAIN SECURED UNTIL OFFICIAL ALL CLEAR.

8.1 Information to Provide to 911

When safe to call, provide the dispatcher with:

- Your exact location and campus.
- Location of the assailant or last known direction of travel.
- Number of assailants, if known.
- Physical description and clothing.
- Type of weapon or attack method.
- Number and location of injured persons, if known.
- Whether people are secured in rooms or evacuating.
- Your callback number.

9. Campus Safety, Security Personnel, and Guardian Immediate Actions

Campus Safety, security personnel, and authorized guardians shall act within their authority, training, equipment, and assigned responsibilities. The immediate objective is to protect life, communicate accurate information, and support responding law enforcement.

9.1 Campus Safety and Security Personnel

- Call or confirm 911 activation as quickly as possible.
- Initiate or request emergency notification through approved systems.
- Direct people away from the threat when safe.
- Support lockdown, evacuation, or area avoidance as conditions require.
- Provide real-time information to law enforcement, including threat location, direction of travel, suspect description, injuries, and building access information.
- Avoid unnecessary exposure to the threat unless required by role, training, and immediate life-safety need.
- Assist with access control, perimeter awareness, and responder direction when safe.

9.2 Authorized Guardians

- Respond consistent with College policy, Florida law, and guardian training.
- Act to stop or interrupt an active deadly threat when necessary to protect life and when action is consistent with training and authority.
- Identify themselves to responding law enforcement as soon as safely possible.
- Avoid crossfire, mistaken identity, and unnecessary movement with a firearm once law enforcement arrives.
- Follow law enforcement commands immediately.

10. Medical and Life-Saving Aid

Life-saving aid should be provided only when it is safe enough to do so. Individuals should not move into an active danger area to render aid unless required by role, training, and immediate life-safety need.

- Call 911 and report injuries when safe.
- Control severe bleeding using direct pressure, wound packing, or a tourniquet when trained and equipped.
- Move injured persons away from immediate danger only when it can be done safely.
- Use AEDs and first-aid equipment when safe and appropriate.
- Provide responders with the number, location, and condition of injured persons.

11. When Law Enforcement Arrives

The first law enforcement officers on scene may move directly toward the threat and may not stop to assist injured persons immediately. Their priority is to stop the threat.

- Keep hands visible and empty.
- Do not run toward officers unless directed.
- Do not make sudden movements.
- Follow commands immediately.

- Provide concise information if asked: location of assailant, description, weapon, injuries, and direction of travel.
- Do not leave a secure area until directed by law enforcement or official PHSC emergency notification.

12. Transition After the Immediate Threat

Once the immediate threat is stopped, contained, or no longer active, PHSC and responding agencies will transition from immediate protective action into incident command, accountability, medical response, reunification, investigation support, communications, recovery, and continuity operations. Those functions are addressed in separate plans and policies.

No all-clear should be issued until coordinated with law enforcement or the appropriate incident command authority.

13. Mandatory Active Assailant Preparedness Training

Pursuant to section 1006.601(3)(a)1., Florida Statutes, PHSC shall require active assailant preparedness training and shall annually certify that all faculty, staff, and students have completed the required training.

The training requirement is a College-wide preparedness requirement and applies regardless of an individual's campus, work location, academic program, employment classification, or whether the individual has a designated emergency response role.

- Faculty and staff shall complete PHSC-approved active assailant preparedness training during each annual certification cycle.
- Students shall complete PHSC-approved active assailant preparedness training during each annual certification cycle.
- Training may address the immediate protective actions in this guide, including recognizing an imminent violent threat; Run, Hide, Fight decision-making; emergency notifications; calling 911; actions when law enforcement arrives; considerations for persons with access and functional needs or any other topics that are recommended.
- Training completion shall be documented in a manner sufficient for PHSC to verify participation and support the College's required annual certification.
- Supplemental drills, exercises, briefings, or scenario-based instruction may be used to reinforce preparedness but do not replace completion of the College's required active assailant preparedness training unless specifically approved as satisfying the annual requirement.

Authority: Section 1006.601(3)(a)1., Florida Statutes (Active Response and Mitigation of On-Campus Risks (ARMOR) Act; Ch. 2026-80, Laws of Florida).

Appendix A: Immediate Action Quick Reference

This quick reference is intended for training, briefing, and emergency reminder purposes.

RUN	HIDE	FIGHT
Leave immediately if safe.	Lock and barricade doors.	Last resort only.
Leave belongings behind.	Silence phones.	Commit fully.
Move away from danger.	Turn off lights if appropriate.	Use improvised weapons.
Help others if it does not delay escape.	Move out of sight.	Work together if possible.
Call 911 when safe.	Stay quiet and low.	Stop the threat long enough to survive.

Emergency Reporting

- Call 911 when safe.
- Report campus, building, room, threat location, suspect description, weapon, injuries, and direction of travel.
- Notify Campus Safety through available emergency channels when safe.

Do Not

- Do not wait for official confirmation when danger is immediate and obvious.
- Do not activate the fire alarm unless there is a fire or clear safety reason.
- Do not open secured doors until safety is verified.
- Do not interfere with law enforcement response.