

CODE
SILVER
(Person with a Weapon)

Created: April 2019

INTRODUCTION

A **Code Silver** (Person with a Weapon) is initiated to support an immediate response where a Person with a Weapon is present within the hospital.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL STAFF

- **Do not enter area where situation is unfolding.**

DO NOT attempt to engage the assailant. This includes verbal and physical attempts to deescalate the situation.

1. Remain **CALM** and **EVACUATE**.

- Do not confront a person with a weapon
- Do not attempt to remove wounded persons from the scene
- If possible, assist others to leave the area and redirect those trying to enter
- Evacuate if able and safe to proceed
 - Only evacuate if you are close to an exit and can get there safely, without attracting attention
 - While evacuating keep hands visible at all times (not to be mistaken for the shooter)
 - Leave any belongings behind

2. If unable to evacuate, **HIDE**.

- Use rooms with doors that lock
- Barricade the door with heavy furniture
- Silence your cell phone and turn off any sources of noise (e.g. radios, televisions, etc.)
- Hide behind large objects (e.g. cabinets, desks, walls, etc.)
- Remain quiet and low to the ground

3. **SURVIVE**.

- **Fight only as a last resort and only if your life is in imminent danger**
- Attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the assailant by: Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her, throw items and improvising weapons, yelling, commit to your actions
- If others are available, work together to distract and attack the assailant as fiercely as possible

4. CALL hospital switchboard as soon as possible.

- a. Inform switchboard operator to initiate Code Silver
- b. Give the operator as much information as possible including:
 - Location of the assailant(s) (current, last known, and/or direction headed)
 - Type of weapon(s)
 - Description of the assailant(s)
 - Any comments or demands made by the assailant
 - Information on victims and/or hostages
 - Any other information you feel may be relevant
- c. Remain on the line, and follow the instructions of the operator (stay as quiet as possible)

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES:***Switchboard***

When notified of a **CODE SILVER** situation, announce the following over the PA system:

Attention please, attention please
Code Silver – (specify location if known)
Code Silver – (specify location if known)
Code Silver – (specify location if known)

Call 911 and notify police.

- Advise 911 operator of all available information such as:
 - Location of incident, including current location and any affected locations
 - Description of assailant(s)
 - Type & description of weapon(s)
 - Information on hostages / victims (if any)
 - Any comments or demands made by the assailant
 - Any other information you received from the HCW who reported it
- Remain on the line to provide updates

Notify Administrator On Call immediately after placing 911 call

SECURITY**IF SECURITY IS PRESENT IN THE BUILDING, WHEN YOU HEAR “CODE SILVER” OVERHEAD, INITIATE ORGANIZATIONAL LOCK-DOWN**

- Determine if any armed Police or trained law-enforcement personnel are already on-site (e.g. in Emergency Department) to assist with response
- Use CCTV and any other available remote surveillance tools to monitor and record the assailant
- Prepare to meet police at a pre-determined location
- Prepare site plan for police review (For example, Fire Safety Plan or floor plan)

UPON POLICE ARRIVAL:

- Provide a situation update to Police
- Provide Police with proximity reader access cards and master keys
- Assist Police with all requests
- Confirm attendance of persons from affected area, to determine if anyone is unaccounted for
- Delegate someone to take notes and document all activities
- Secure (as safety allows) specific interior and exterior doors as directed by police
- Provide access/egress control as directed.
- Maintain contact with the Police Command Centre, providing regular updates, and information on any situation changes as they occur.

ADMINISTRATOR IN CHARGE

- Remain calm
- Notify the CEO
- When it is safe to do so, initiate hospital IMS protocol and undertake the role of Incident Manager
- Assign roles within the IMS

ALL STAFF IN AREAS NEAR THE CODE SILVER LOCATION**If you can leave safely, EVACUATE:**

- Remain calm and follow Incident Command direction
- Quickly leave the area, evacuating as many patients and other people as possible
- Redirect any people entering the area to evacuate to a safe location
- Move to a safe determined meeting point (if possible)

Supervisors: Once at the meeting point, perform a headcount to determine if your team is accounted for

If you cannot leave safely, HIDE:

- Remain calm
- Protect yourself and individuals in your area by quickly and quietly:
 - Closing doors, locking and barricading yourself and others inside (where possible)
 - Positioning people out of sight and behind large items that offer protection. (e.g. behind desks, cabinets, and away from windows)
 - Silencing personal alarms, mobile phones and other electronic devices (e.g. TVs, Radios, etc.)
 - Instructing others, who are capable of assisting, to do the same with other patient rooms (i.e. visitors may assist with the patient room they are visiting)
- **Do not use the telephone unless directly related to the Code Silver.** Medical Emergency Codes will not be called for victims of the assailant until the incident site is secured by Police¹
- **Hide in place** until “Code Silver, All Clear” is announced overhead
- **If the assailant enters your work area,** contact switchboard or 911 if it is safe to do so

ALL STAFF IN OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN THE HOSPITAL

- **Do not attempt to return to your department**
- Stay where you are, protecting yourself and assisting others in your area, if possible

¹ In all likelihood, it will be unsafe for medical teams to respond to the location of a Code Silver situation until the Police arrive and/or the assailant is incapacitated.

- Advise patients, visitors and others to hide; ask them to remain calm, quiet, and to avoid using their phones, any other electronic device, or posting to social media
- Move away from exposed windows, walls, and doors. Lay on floor, under/behind furniture. If possible hide against the wall that is on the same side as the door into the room. The room must appear empty
- Minimize movement within the area to essential, safety-related matters

Supervisors: Once the area is secured and only if safe to do, perform a headcount.

UPON ARRIVAL OF POLICE:

Once onsite, Police will organize all movement throughout the hospital, until the Code Silver has been cleared.

Hospitals are reminded that law enforcement personnel are the primary responders and will assume control in any Code Silver response.

Do not interfere with the Police Officers by delaying or impeding their movements: The Police are there to stop the threat as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area the assailant was last seen or heard. The first officers at the scene will not stop to assist injured individuals.

Police Officers will be responding with the intent to use a required level of force to diffuse the situation. Ensure you do not present yourself as a threat to them:

- Remain calm and follow Officers' instructions; avoid screaming and/or yelling

Police Officers may:

- Be wearing normal uniforms or tactical gear, helmets, etc.
- Be armed with rifles, shotguns and/or handguns
- Use chemical irritants or incapacitating devices (e.g. pepper spray, stun grenades, tasers, etc.) to control the situation
- Shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety

Rescue teams comprised of additional Officers and emergency medical personnel may follow the initial Officers when it is safe to do so. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the area.

Once you have reached a safe location you will likely be held in that area by Police until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave the safe location until Police have instructed you to do so.

Switchboard

Once the Police have said it is safe to do so, the switchboard operator will announce:

Attention please, attention please
Code Silver all clear
Code Silver all clear
Code Silver all clear

All staff should return to their work area for debriefing. HCWs from the affected area should go to a designated meeting point.

The Organization should consider how to address any operations that may not be immediately available post-incident. This may occur if the affected area is secured for investigation, or if damage to facilities and equipment inhibits their use.

As soon as possible, the IMS team should conduct a debriefing including participation of any responding law enforcement and internal security personnel.

As part of the recovery process, the hospital will consider the physical and mental health needs of all workers and patients. Support will be provided, utilizing existing and additional identified programs (e.g. Employee and Family Assistance Program, individual and group counselling, and workers compensation, as necessary.)

Workers should speak with their supervisor regarding any specific concerns, needs, or considerations.

[Codes Evaluation Form](#)