ODOT ACTIVE AGRESSOR POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT

To provide a standardized policy regarding training and other procedures for responding to potentially violent or threatening situations so that ODOT employees will be as prepared as possible. ODOT recognizes that the safety of its employees, contractors, customers and other visitors in the agency is paramount.

II. AUTHORITY

Ohio Department of Administrative Services Policy: Human Resources, HR-42

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all ODOT employees and contractors working in any ODOT facilities. Each ODOT facility is required to have its own emergency action plan.

IV. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Situations involving an active aggressor or active threat can occur in any environment. They may involve different threat types, including physical, verbal or virtual threats. In order to preserve life and address the reality of an active threat event, it is important for all ODOT employees to apply adaptive principles that can aid in quickly determining the most reasonable way to protect life during such an event. To this end, the following procedures shall be followed.

V. PROCEDURES

In the event of an active aggressor or active threat incident within any ODOT facility, the primary mission of the agency is to take all necessary steps to immediately contain and stop any ongoing threat to human life. This mission will be accomplished through a specific response by the first law enforcement officer(s) to arrive on the scene but there are additional things that may need to occur before, during and/or after the law enforcement response.

A. Upon discovery of an active aggressor or active threat situation, when safe to do so, anyone may notify law enforcement (9-1-1) or security personnel, if possible. In ODOT facilities where an employee announcement system is available, an "Active Aggressor" broadcast will be made immediately following the discovery of the threat,
describing the threat and last known location of the aggressor. This announcement will normally be made by the Safety Consultant (District), Safety Administrator (Central Office) or other safety staff; however, anyone trained & listed as a responsible party in the facility specific action plan can make the announcement. The same information will be disseminated through ODOT’s employee notification system (Gov Delivery) via emails, and text messages. At facilities where floor wardens have been established (as identified by site specific emergency action plan), the floor wardens should assist in directing employees within their areas to either evacuate or shelter-in-place. Employees should consider finding and taking with them an object that may be used to defend themselves (i.e. an improvised weapon). Employees should ensure that any member of the public (non-employee) is permitted to accompany the employee(s) to the safe zone.

When possible and appropriate, security officers, an ODOT administrator, a floor warden or other persons-in-charge will meet and guide responding law enforcement officers to the location of the aggressor.

When practical, occupants of surrounding buildings or facilities will also be notified as soon as possible.

During an active aggressor or active threat situation, ODOT employees must also consider the following actions.

1. **Run** – If there is an acceptable path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Personnel should:
   - Call 9-1-1 when safe to do so.
   - Have an escape route and plan in mind that takes them as far away from the attacker(s) as possible.
   - Evacuate to an area designated in the site specific emergency action plan, regardless of whether others agree to follow or remain.
   - Leave belongings behind.
   - Help others escape if possible.
   - Alert individuals who are entering an area where the active aggressor may be.
   - Keep hands visible for responding officers.
   - Follow instructions of any law enforcement officer.
   - Do not attempt to move wounded people.

2. **Hide/Defend** - Remain in place until contacted by law enforcement or circumstances dictate otherwise.
   - If practical, allow any non-employees access to the safe zone.
   - Your hiding place should be out of the active aggressor's view. Provide protection if gun shots are fired in your direction (e.g., gather into a restroom or office and locking the door, staying as low as possible and
remaining quiet and still) and not trapping or restricting yourself from movement.

- Lock the door, if possible, and have a person, such as the Floor Warden designated to ensure the door is locked once everyone is in the safe zone.
- Block the doorway with heavy furniture if available.
- Use belts or other restraining devices to keep doors closed
- Silence your cell phone.
- Turn off any source of noise (e.g., radio, music player, etc.).
- Hide behind large items (e.g. cabinets, desks, doors, etc.).
  - Remain quiet.
  - Remain in place and stay hidden until you have determined that it is safe. If someone approaches the door and identifies themselves as a law enforcement officer, do not be tricked into talking back. Remain silent until you are able to confirm the authenticity of the claim.

3. **Fight** - Take action against the aggressor. As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to do the following:
   - Disrupt and/or incapacitate the active aggressor by acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.
   - Use improvised weapons.
   - Scream/yell.
   - Commit to your actions and follow through.

4. **When evacuation and hiding are not possible**, do the following:
   - Remain calm.
   - If possible, call 9-1-1 and alert law enforcement of the aggressor's location.
   - If you are unable to speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.
   - Mute your phone to prevent alerting the aggressor.

B. **Law Enforcement Response**: The goal of law enforcement is to locate, isolate and neutralize the aggressor as quickly as possible to prevent additional injuries or fatalities. In doing so, employees should anticipate that officers will arrive in force and will be armed with rifles, shotguns and handguns and could be wearing exterior body armor. Officers should be displaying some portion of the uniform or tactical gear identifying them as law enforcement officers.

Initially, the site of a violent incident will be secured as a crime scene. The first wave of officers will not stop to assist persons in need. A later group of officers and/or other emergency personnel will provide treatment and assistance.
C. **Reaction to Law Enforcement:** When law enforcement is present, it is important to:
   - Remain calm and follow instructions from officers.
   - Put down any items in your hands and raise your arms high.
   - Keep hands visible at all times and avoid sudden movements toward officers.
   - Avoid screaming, yelling or shouting.
   - If asked questions by the officer, provide the information.
   - Do not stop officers to ask questions; just follow their directions.
   - Do not leave the scene until instructed to do so except as provided in section A. above.

D. **“All-Clear” Issued:** The “all clear” announcement will be made when the situation has been contained and the scene is declared safe by law enforcement official.

E. **Employer Response:** The health and well-being of ODOT employees, contractors and customers is the priority. As soon as possible after law enforcement has relinquished command and control of the scene, ODOT senior management, in conjunction with the Facilities Deputy Director, the Human Resources Deputy Director, the Communications Deputy Director and/or the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS), will develop information strategies to address questions related to the event from employees and their families.

   1. Effective coordination with the media and timely dissemination of information can help reduce media pressure on those who are the most vulnerable. Only those ODOT agency staff authorized to speak on behalf of the agency or facility shall interact with the media. The ODOT Office of Communications will coordinate media responses.

   2. When an incident occurs, it will be important to bring in trained crisis response professionals to provide any necessary physical, emotional and psychological support as soon as possible. ODOT’s Office of Human Resources will coordinate the identification of and communication with Ohio Employee Assistance Program (OEAP) and other trained crisis response professionals and coordinate follow-up.

F. Employees with questions about this policy should direct them to ODOT's Office of Human Resources.

VI. **TRAINING**

ODOT will provide active aggressor training (eLearning) to all current employees. New employees will receive active aggressor training (eLearning) within 30 days of hire. Central Office and each District will participate in annual table top exercises and emergency action plan reviews.
VII. FISCAL ANALYSIS

ODOT Central Office will fund the agency’s employee notification system (Gov. Delivery). Each District is responsible for funding the purchase of materials related to Active Aggressor situations & training.
Appendix A - Definitions

a. **Active Aggressor.** An individual who is actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined or populated area or attempting to cause harm to as many people as possible. In most cases, active aggressors use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. The intent of most active aggressors is to kill individuals as quickly as possible.

b. **Active Threat.** An active threat is defined as any incident, which by its deliberate nature, creates an immediate threat or presents an imminent danger to human life. Active threats can take many forms and may or may not have the intent of killing targeted people as quickly as possible. Traditional law enforcement responses to active threats will include the concept of "surround and contain" in order to minimize the number of victims. In order to save lives, the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction will initiate an immediate response.

c. **Threat Types.** Threat types include:

- Active shooter
- Hostage/barricaded subject
- Sniper
- Suicide/homicide bomber
- Known or suspected terrorist threat (biological/chemical threat)