



The Polaris Approach to Active Shooter Incidents & Public Violence

As the COVID-19 pandemic begins to subside – with more Americans returning to offices, schools, places of worship, malls, movie theaters, and other public venues – an unfortunate but familiar threat is resurfacing: **the active shooter**. In an April 16, 2021 report, [The New York Times](#) reported that 2021 has already seen 147 mass shootings – with even more atrocities taking place since, as mass-casualty incidents have affected [Austin](#), [Kenosha](#), [San Diego](#), and more in recent weeks.

While the troubling frequency of shooting incidents may suggest a dramatic rise in gun violence, the threat did not disappear during the pandemic: the [Gun Violence Archive](#) claims that 2020 saw nearly 200 more mass shootings than 2019. This upward trend may well continue into 2021 – and recent reopenings may see this violence spill into public spaces.

These events are always tragic and unexpected – but Polaris can help schools, offices, and other public sites deploy preventative and preparative measures to lessen the risk of such violence, and promote safety and security. Please read on for insights into Polaris' approach, or reach out to info@polarirsk.com for more information.

41%

of surveyed adults reported an “adverse mental or behavioral health condition” during the pandemic. (CDC, National Institutes of Mental Health)

BACK-TO-WORK SCREENINGS

The psychological toll of the pandemic is well-documented in sources like the [CDC](#), [Nature](#), and the [Lancet](#); the virus compounds financial, social, and personal tensions, leading to a stressed, anxious populace. As strained employees return to the office, companies should work to identify those at-risk – before those stressors might lead to incidents. Polaris can screen your employee-base for indicators of financial, personal, or social duress, helping you to intervene before those stresses impact your offices.

HEIGHTENED ACCESS CONTROL & PROTECTIVE SUPPORT

While pandemic stressors alone present added risk, threat vectors heighten when coupled with the rise of domestic terrorism, as reported by the [Center for Strategic & International Studies](#) and the [FBI](#). Potential active shooter situations can escalate swiftly, as perpetrators act with increased precision – demanding equally precise threat mitigation protocols. Polaris' security teams are trained in preventative measures, and work to identify and address vulnerabilities before critical security breaches occur.

49%

of employees are aware of violence prevention & response trainings offered by their employer – though 2M American workers fall victim annually. (OSHA, Society for HR Management)

INTERNAL PREPAREDNESS & INCIDENT TRAINING

Polaris offers training on a range of emergency situations, including active shooter incidents. Our programs emphasize practical measures, with a focus on foundational defensive actions and tactics that can be enacted in a variety of settings, including offices, malls, schools, and other public spaces. These trainings, moreover, provide strategies for mitigating risk before, during and after incidents – rather than simply responding to the needs of the moment.

POLICY REVIEW & EMERGENCY ACTION PLANNING

When preparing Emergency Action Plans or other protective policies, Polaris liaises with expert consultants to craft security directives and procedures catered to your specific region, workspace, and industry risk profile. If you already have plans in place, our stable of experts can help keep your organization up to date by drafting, reviewing, or revising security materials based on shifting risk trends, notable prior incidents, onsite vulnerabilities, or other areas of concern.

71%

of active shooting cases were planned at least one month in advance – with a significant percentage issuing a public threat, often on social media. (RAND Corporation)

INTELLIGENCE & RISK MONITORING

While violent incidents may appear to come without warning, there are often subtle, obscure signs that may signal upcoming threats. Polaris' trained analysts and advanced SaaS tools will assess threats of violence, which – if left unchecked – could escalate into violence or unrest. Through expert real-time reviews and geo-fences of social media postings, deep and dark web content, and opensource chatter in your immediate area, Polaris can identify potential threats before those threats rise to the level of violence.

PROTECTION-FOCUSED INVESTIGATIVE SUPPORT

If you are already concerned about a potentially violent individual – or if you or your workplace have been the subject of targeted threats or adverse attention – Polaris' Investigations Team can help. Our experts leverage sophisticated global risk resources to assess the risks posed by any individual or group, and deliver targeted reports to help your onsite teams identify those bad actors that might pose an imminent threat.