

Threat Classification

Low Risk

Low Risk threats lack realism and are far-fetched. They pose a minimal risk to the intended target or public safety. The probable motive is disruption of services.

- Threat is non-specific.
- Information is inconsistent, implausible, or lacks detail.
- Caller is known and is repeat offender.
- The threat was discovered instead of delivered.

Medium Risk

A medium risk threat has moderate level of realism. The threat could be viable, but not entirely plausible.

- Threat is specific and feasible.
- Detailed wording in the threat.
- May include indications of place & time.
- Wording suggests the perpetrator has given thought to how the act will be carried out.
- No strong indication that the perpetrator has taken preparatory steps.
- Verbal qualifiers: "I'm serious; I really mean it."

High Risk

A high risk threat is specific and realistic. The threat appears to pose an imminent danger to the safety of others.

- Details in threat include specifics such as date, time, location, type of device, method of initiation.
- Perpetrator provides his/her identity.
- Threat suggests concrete steps have been taken to carry out the act.
- Perpetrator indicates they have practiced with a weapon or have had the victim(s)/facility under surveillance.
- Intelligence from reliable sources indicate an attack is pending.

Unattended vs. Suspicious Packages

Unattended

An apparently harmless item that is not accounted for or under direct control of an individual. An unattended item is the same as lost or found property. There are no threats associated with the item and its location does not lead anyone to consider it as suspicious.

Suspicious

Any item potentially containing explosives, an IED, or any other hazardous materials that requires a response from a bomb technician. Suspicious indicators can be:

- The item appears to be hazardous,
- Is associated with a threat.
- Is located adjacent to people or valuable assets.
- Item is not inherent to the environment.
- An explosive K9 provided a positive indication for explosives.

Continuing Actions

- Brief law enforcement and first responders.
- Account for all students and staff.
- If necessary establish an area for media and family.
- Police/Fire/School officials coordinate on what can be released publicly. Often the specifics of a threat may need to remain confidential to aid in the investigation and prevent copycats.
- Maintain communication between school officials and parents.



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NOTE: This document is based on the Bomb Threat Guidance brochure issued by the FBI and DHS Office for Bombing Prevention in 2013.

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The graphic features a yellow school bus with a "PARKING SCHOOL" sign. In the top left corner is the New Jersey State Police logo, and in the top right is the New Jersey Department of Education logo. The main title "Bomb Threat Response Guidance" is written in large, bold, white letters. Below it, the subtitle "For New Jersey First Responders & School Officials" is also in white. A white rounded rectangle contains the text: "Although no bomb has ever been found in a New Jersey School after a threat has been communicated, EVERY threat should be thoroughly assessed." At the bottom, there is a logo of a red bomb with a white outline, flanked by white laurel wreaths. Below the logo, the text reads: "Prepared and Approved by New Jersey State Police Bomb Unit New Jersey Dept. of Education".

Bomb Threat Response Guidance

For New Jersey First Responders & School Officials

Although no bomb has ever been found in a New Jersey School after a threat has been communicated, **EVERY** threat should be thoroughly assessed.

Prepared and Approved by
New Jersey State Police Bomb Unit
New Jersey Dept. of Education

Every school should have a **Bomb Threat Response Plan** as part of an Emergency Response Plan. Mandatory Evacuation is **NOT** a Bomb Threat Response Plan. Use these guidelines to review and revise the bomb threat response section of your All Hazard Plan.

Planning and Preparation

Planning Considerations

- Coordinate with First Responders and OEM to ensure smooth handling of a bomb threat.
- Conduct a vulnerability assessment of the school and then evaluate your existing plan.
- Seek constructive input from all available resources (First Responders, SRO, OEM, Faculty, and students).
- Include clear guidelines for search and evacuation procedures.

Preparation Considerations

- Control building access (physical security).
- Implement a strict visitation policy.
- Utilize electronic surveillance.
- Provide a mechanism for anonymous reporting of potential threats.
- Train with the plan (Discussions, TTX, Drill).

If a Threat is Received:

- Begin a comprehensive threat assessment.
- Notify law enforcement.
- Execute the appropriate response based on the threat classification as outlined in your Bomb Threat Response Plan.
- **DO NOT** engage in mandatory evacuation.

Threat Assessment

Threat Assessment is the most crucial step in a Bomb Threat Response Plan. A threat assessment will determine the credibility of a threat based on the totality of the circumstances. It will determine the appropriate response based on the classification of the threat such as shelter-in-place, partial evacuation, full evacuation, or dismissal.

Each threat is unique and should be evaluated thoroughly in consultation with law enforcement as part of a team approach. Conducting a logical

threat assessment can eliminate the loss of instruction time and avoid wasteful allocation of resources and money.

Building Search Considerations

- Always conduct a search regardless of the threat level.
- Search should include common areas first: hallways, cafeteria, gym, bathrooms, library.
- Search the exterior to include evacuation routes and assembly areas.
- If an item is found during a search:

DO NOT TOUCH!

Evacuation Considerations

- DO NOT use mandatory evacuations as a first response.
- Never pull the fire alarm unless there is a fire.
- It is permissible for backpacks and /or personal belongings to be brought out if they are under immediate control of the individual.
- Create a drop area for backpack/personal belongings separate from assembly areas.
- Evacuation routes and assembly areas must be searched prior to being populated.

Additional Considerations

DO NOT MOVE ANYONE TO OR THROUGH A THREAT.

- Search evacuation routes, assembly areas, and buses if dismissal is decided upon prior to populating.

IF YOU CAN SEE THE BOMB, IT CAN SEE YOU.

- Anyone in the line of sight of a device is exposed to the potential blast hazards.
- If a device is located in a hallway then that hallway cannot be used as an evacuation route. An alternate route or secondary means of egress out of the sightline of the device must be used.

Threat Assessment Logic Tree

- Plans reviewed/revise
- Preparation Completed
- Threat Received
- Information Gathered
- Assess Threat
- Classify Threat
- Determine Response

Response Actions

Site Decision Makers

- Immediately contact law enforcement.
- Mobilize internal search/emergency response teams.
- Limit access to the building (lockout).
- Communicate with school personnel about the threat.
- Decide with the threat assessment team on the appropriate action or combination of actions:
 - » Search
 - » Shelter-in-place
 - » Partial /Full evacuation

School Personnel

- When a search is initiated by the Site Decision Maker, conduct a quick and thorough visual scan of your workspace and any other areas of responsibility.
- Conduct a 360 visual scan of your room.
- If anything suspicious or unusual is noticed move people away from the hazard and immediately report the item/location to the Site Decision Maker.
- **DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS!**

Public Safety Response

- Police and fire must respond to the school as part of the emergency response plan.
- Explosive detecting canines may be used for all threats levels at the discretion of the Incident Commander, threat assessment team and the K-9 handler.
- The State Police Bomb Unit along with County and Local Bomb Squads are always available to provide guidance.
- First Responder staging areas should be swept prior to populating.
- Radio/cell phone communication is permitted during an incident in areas that are not in close proximity to a suspicious item.