

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESPONSE GUIDE 09



Terrorism/Bomb Threat  
or Suspicious Item  
Updated: 08/21/2023

## START HERE: SECTION 1 - PROCEDURES

### HOW TO RESPOND

- This guide can help you respond to a threat in an orderly and controlled manner. Act quickly but remain calm. Obtain information using this checklist.
- Treat terrorism threats, bomb threats, and suspicious items as **SERIOUS** and **REAL** until proven otherwise.
- If a threat is received by handwritten note or E-mail, or you receive or find a suspicious package, call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555.
- Do not delete a threatening E-mail or text message. Leave the message open on the computer or phone. Print, photograph, or copy the message and subject. Note date, time, and the sender's address/number.

### MOST THREATS ARE RECEIVED BY PHONE

- TRY TO REMAIN CALM.** Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible by asking the questions on the checklist (**see Section 2**). Try to keep the caller talking.
- LISTEN CAREFULLY.** Try to be polite, show interest.
- If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters on the display.
- Complete the checklist as soon as possible (**see Section 2**). Record as much detail as you can remember. Try to recall exact words.
- If possible, alert a colleague to call UMBC Police. Or immediately notify UMBC Police yourself as soon as the caller hangs up.
- DO NOT HANG UP THE PHONE** that received the threat, even after the caller does. Keep the line open after the caller hangs up. Use a different phone to contact UMBC Police. Do not use the telephone on which the threat was received.
- Request instructions before searching or evacuating.

### PROHIBITED/UNSAFE ACTIONS

- DO NOT** touch, handle, or move a suspicious item.
- DO NOT** pull the fire alarm to initiate an evacuation.
- DO NOT** use two-way radios or cell phones near a suspicious item. Radio signals have the potential to detonate an explosive.

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## SECTION 2 - THREAT CHECKLIST

### RECORD THE EXACT WORDS OF THE THREAT

- Record as many details as you can remember:


DAY/DATE RECEIVED:	
TIME RECEIVED:	
TIME THE CALL ENDED:	
CALLER'S PHONE NUMBER:	
YOUR PHONE'S NUMBER:	

### STAY CALM - ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- Where is the item located (building, floor, room)?

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- When will it go off?

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- What does it look like?

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- What is it? A bomb? A poison substance or chemical?

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- What will make it explode?

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- Did you place the item? (Yes) (No) - who did?

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- Why are you doing this?

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- What is your name?

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- Are you part of a group?

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## SECTION 3 - OTHER INFORMATION

### TRAITS OF THE CALLER AND THE THREAT

- Background noises on the call?

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- Estimated age? Does the caller sound male, female, or it is difficult to tell?

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- Is the voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like?

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- Other information:

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### OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

CALLER'S VOICE	BACKGROUND	LANGUAGE
<input type="checkbox"/> Accent <input type="checkbox"/> Angry <input type="checkbox"/> Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Clearing throat <input type="checkbox"/> Coughing <input type="checkbox"/> Cracking voice <input type="checkbox"/> Crying <input type="checkbox"/> Deep voice <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised <input type="checkbox"/> Distinct <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional <input type="checkbox"/> Excited <input type="checkbox"/> Fast <input type="checkbox"/> Laughter <input type="checkbox"/> Lisp <input type="checkbox"/> Loud <input type="checkbox"/> Muffled <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal <input type="checkbox"/> Ragged <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid <input type="checkbox"/> Raspy <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred <input type="checkbox"/> Soft <input type="checkbox"/> Stutter	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal noise <input type="checkbox"/> House noise <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen noise <input type="checkbox"/> Street noise <input type="checkbox"/> Train noise <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft noise <input type="checkbox"/> PA system <input type="checkbox"/> Conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Music/radio <input type="checkbox"/> Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, no noise <input type="checkbox"/> Static <input type="checkbox"/> Office machines <input type="checkbox"/> Factory machines	<input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent <input type="checkbox"/> Reading from a script <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded message <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive <input type="checkbox"/> Profanity <input type="checkbox"/> Well-spoken
<b>OTHER INFORMATION</b>		

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## SECTION 4 - VERBAL OR WRITTEN THREATS

### IN-PERSON THREAT

- If the perpetrator leaves, note which direction they went. Follow from a safe distance if possible.
- Call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555. Notify your immediate supervisor.
- Use the Threat Checklist (Section 2) to record the threat exactly as it was communicated.

### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON

Race or Gender?

Body size (approximate height and /weight)?

Distinguishing physical features?

Type and color of clothing or accessories?

Hair and eye color?

Voice (loud, deep, accent, etc. See Section 3)?

### WRITTEN THREAT

- If you are handed a written threat, call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555. Notify your immediate supervisor.
- Handle the document as little as possible. Secure the original note and **DO NOT** alter it in any way.
- Rewrite the threat exactly as is on another sheet of paper or type it on your phone or computer.
- If its is small/removable, place in a bag or envelope. If its is large/stationary, secure the immediate area.
- Date/time/location document was found:

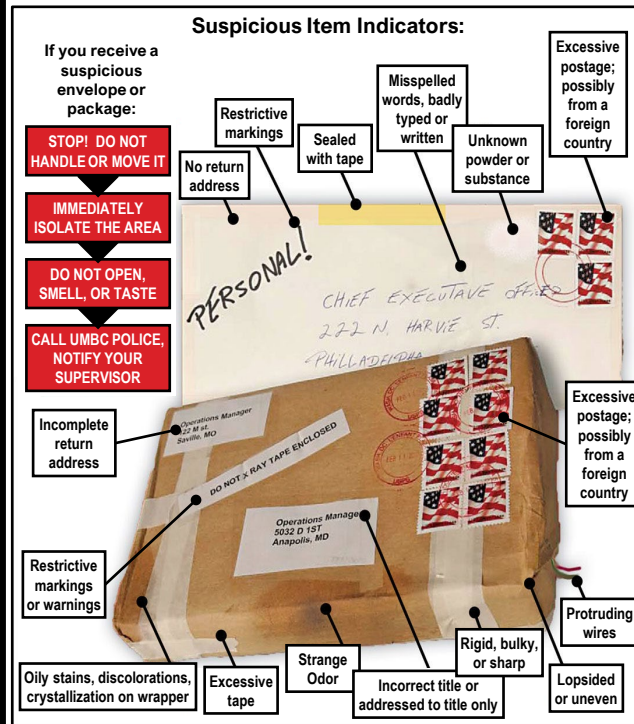
Details surrounding discovery or delivery:

Full names of any personnel who witnessed the threat:

## SECTION 5 - SUSPICIOUS ITEMS

### COMMON INDICATORS

- Not all items are suspicious. An unattended item is anything like a bag or package or vehicle not in someone's possession that has no obvious signs of being suspicious, especially if no threat was received.
- A suspicious item is anything you reasonably believe to contain explosives or other dangerous materials and requires a trained technician to evaluate the item.
- Examples include a letter, package, or vehicle.
- Remember **H.O.T.** Treat anything **H**idden, **O**ut of place, and not **T**ypical as suspicious.
- Potential indicators are threats, placement, and proximity of an item to people and valuable assets.
- Physical indicators include unexplainable wires or electronics, other visible bomb-like components, unusual sounds, vapors, powders, mists, or odors:



### FINDING A SUSPICIOUS ITEM

- DO NOT** touch, tamper with, or move the item.
- Call UMBC Police at (410) 455-5555. Notify your immediate supervisor. **DO NOT** Use two-way radios or cell phones near a suspicious package.
- Ensure the area is secured and cleared of personnel.
- Be aware of secondary devices.
- If the threat assessment warrants, authorities may direct a controlled search and orderly evacuation.

## SECTION 6 - KNOW THE RISK, TAKE ACTION

### LOW RISK THREAT

- Lacks realism, threat is vague/indirect/inconsistent. Poses minimal risk to safety. Seeks disruption.
- Caller is known/has called numerous times. Or the threat was discovered instead of delivered (e.g., written on a wall).

### MEDIUM RISK THREAT

- Increased level of realism. Threat could be carried out but is not entirely realistic. Wording suggests some thought on how the act will be carried out.
- Little indication the perpetrator has taken preparatory steps but may include a possible place and time. Increased specificity to the threat (i.e., "I'm serious!").
- Indication the perpetrator has some knowledge about the availability of bomb making components.

### HIGH RISK THREAT

- Threat is direct, specific, and realistic. Threat poses an immediate and serious danger to safety. May include names of targets, specific time, and location of device.
- Perpetrator provides their identity and suggests steps have been taken toward carrying out the threat.
- Perpetrator indicates they have practiced with a weapon or have intended victims under surveillance.

### IF A SEARCH IS INITIATED

- Determine if a search is warranted based on a threat assessment. **DO NOT** use radios or cell phones unless the area has been searched and cleared.
- Communicate situation to your personnel and request that they make a quick and complete visual scan of their personal workspace for anything unusual.
- Account for all personnel. Take note of anyone missing or any object that seems out of place.
- Check ledges, balconies, and waste bins. Check for unusual odors. Listen for unusual background noises.
- If anything unusual is found, move people away from potential hazards and immediately report the location.
- Finding one suspicious item should not automatically conclude a search. More devices may be present.
- Based on the threat assessment, determine if a partial or full evacuation or a lockdown is warranted.

### IF EVACUATION IS INITIATED

- Select evacuation routes and assembly areas away from the suspicious item; ensure routes have been searched and cleared.
- Account for all personnel. Ensure they take all personal items. Confirm the building is empty.

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