



LOCKDOWN

Locks, Lights, Out of Sight

Lockdown is called when there is a threat or hazard inside the school building. From parental custody disputes to intruders to an active assailant, **Lockdown** uses classroom and school security actions to protect students and staff from the threat.

PUBLIC ADDRESS

The public address for Lockdown is: “**Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of Sight!**” and is repeated twice each time the public address is performed.

“**Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of Sight! Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of Sight!**”

ACTIONS

The **Lockdown** Action demands locking individual classroom doors, offices and other securable areas, moving occupants out of the line of sight of corridor windows, turning off lights to make the room seem unoccupied, and having occupants maintain silence.

There is no call to action to lock the building’s exterior access points. Rather, the protocol advises leaving the perimeter as is. The reasoning is simple. Sending staff to lock outside doors exposes them to unnecessary risk and inhibits first responders’ entry into the building. If the exterior doors are already locked, leave them locked but do have a conversation with your local responders so they understand and can gain access during a **Lockdown**. The best option is to have the ability to lock and unlock doors remotely.

Training reinforces the practice of not opening the classroom door once in **Lockdown**. No indication of occupancy should be revealed until first responders open the door.

If the location of the threat is apparent and people do not have the option to get behind a door, it is appropriate to self-evacuate away from the threat.

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

Activate the Incident Command System.

- Assume the key roles and position functions.
- Establish an Incident Command Post location.
- Establish communications with Command positions.

RESPONSIBILITY

The classroom teacher is responsible for implementing their classroom **Lockdown**. If it is safe to do so, the teacher should gather students into the classroom prior to locking the door. The teacher should lock all classroom access points and facilitate moving occupants out of sight.

REPORTED BY

When there is a life safety threat on campus, a **Lockdown** should be immediately initiated by any student or staff member. Initiating the **Lockdown** may happen through various methods, or a combination of methods, depending on the procedures and alert systems utilized by each school and district. **Lockdown** alerts may be made by word of mouth, phone, radio systems, intercom, panic buttons, or more advanced forms of technology. Plan the communication method in advance to set expectations for students and staff. Regardless of the method(s) of notification, the initiation of a **Lockdown** should be consistent, simple and swift, and include immediate notification of school administration and local law enforcement agencies.



PREPARATION

Identification of classroom access points that must be locked in the event of a **Lockdown** is essential preparation. These may include doorways, windows, loading docks, and fire escape ladder access points.

A “**safe zone**” should also be identified within the classroom that is out of sight of interior windows. Teachers and students should be trained to not open the classroom door, leaving a first responder, school safety team member or school administrator to unlock it.

DRILLS

Lockdown drills should be performed in accordance with district training, or as mandated by state requirements.

CONTINGENCIES

Students and staff who are outside when a **Lockdown** is announced should try to get into the closest available classroom, or room with a door that can be secured. In the event someone cannot get into a room before doors are locked, they should be instructed about other options. In this situation, students and staff should be trained to hide or even evacuate themselves away from the building or area. Students and staff should receive training on where to go if they self-evacuate so they can be safe and accounted for.

If during a **Lockdown** an additional hazard manifests inside the school such as a fire, flood, or hazmat incident, then situational decisions must be made. There should be discussions about reacting to a fire alarm if it is activated during a **Lockdown**. This may require following additional directives found under **Active Attacker** on page #34.

EXAMPLES OF LOCKDOWN CONDITIONS

The following are a few examples of when a school or emergency dispatch might call for a Lockdown.

- Dangerous animal within a school building
- Intruder
- An angry or violent parent or student
- Report of a weapon
- Active assailant

THE DURATION OF A LOCKDOWN

A question that occasionally arises is “How long does it take to release a Lockdown?” The answer is, “That depends, but probably longer than you want to hear.”

Lockdown may last for hours. In one case - a weapon report - the school was in Lockdown for over three hours. In another - an active assailant in the building - it took about an hour after the issue was resolved for law enforcement to clear the classrooms.

RED CARD/GREEN CARD

Red Card/Green Cards should **NOT** be used for a Lockdown. Based on a number of tactical assessments, the overwhelming consensus is that this practice provides information to an intruder that there are potential targets in that room.

CELL PHONES DURING A LOCKDOWN

It is not uncommon for school administrators to ban cell phone use during a Lockdown. Parent instincts may be at odds with that ban. Often, one of the first things a parent will do when there is a crisis in the school is text or call their child.

In evaluating actual Lockdown events, the initial crisis may only take minutes. After the threat is mitigated, Law Enforcement typically clears the school one classroom at a time. This process may take significant time. During this time, both parents and students can reduce stress through text communications. This also provides a classroom management strategy. Selecting three or four students at a time, a teacher may ask students to text their parents with a message like this: “We’re in Lockdown. I’m okay and I’ll update you every 5 minutes.” Certainly, if a threat is imminent, texting would be discouraged.

There is also an opportunity to ask the students to text their parents with crafted messages as an event unfolds. For example, “Pick me up at Lincoln Elementary in one hour. Bring your ID,” might be recommended for student and parent reunification.

It may also be beneficial to have students turn off both Wi-Fi and cellular data services in order to free up bandwidth for first responders, while still allowing SMS text messaging.



EVACUATION

If an actual violent incident occurred, expect that the building will be evacuated by Law Enforcement since it has become a crime scene.

SAMPLE OUTWARD MESSAGING TO PARENTS

This is a guide for outward messaging when a Lockdown Action is used in the school. Because a Lockdown is stressful for everyone, plan to send multiple messages. If a Lockdown will be followed by an off-site evacuation, get that information out as quickly as possible. Include the information here, or in a separate communication thread.

Current Lockdown

Email:

Subject Line: Safety Notification - Lockdown Currently Activated at **[School Name]**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

[School Name] is currently in Lockdown due to **[state the facts you know about the situation]**.

The safety and security of your child is our top priority. We are actively responding to the situation and collaborating with emergency responders.

At this time, we ask that parents stay where they are and remain available to receive updates and instructions as needed.

Watch for updates here **[link to the platform you'll be updating]**

Text Message:

[School Name] is currently in Lockdown. Check your email or voicemail for more information. Please stay where you are and remain available at this time. Look here **[link to social media page/site]** for updates.

Phone Call:

Parents, **[School Name]** is currently in Lockdown due to **[state the facts you know about the situation]**. At this time, we ask that parents stay where they are and remain available to receive updates and instructions as needed. Check our **[social media page/site]** for ongoing updates.

Lifted Lockdown

Email:

Subject Line: Safety Notification - Lockdown Ended at **[School Name]**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

[School Name] was placed in Lockdown from **[start time of Lockdown]** to **[end time of Lockdown]** due to **[state the incident that occurred]**.

Thank you for your patience while we worked with first responders to respond to the situation.

The safety and security of your child is our top priority. What is a **Lockdown**?

Text Message:

The Lockdown at **[School Name]** has been lifted. Please check your email or voicemail for more information.

Phone Call:

Parents, the Lockdown at **[School Name]** has been lifted. The school was in Lockdown from **[state Lockdown start time]** to **[state Lockdown end time]** due to **[state the incident that occurred]**. Thank you for your patience while we worked with first responders to respond to the situation.