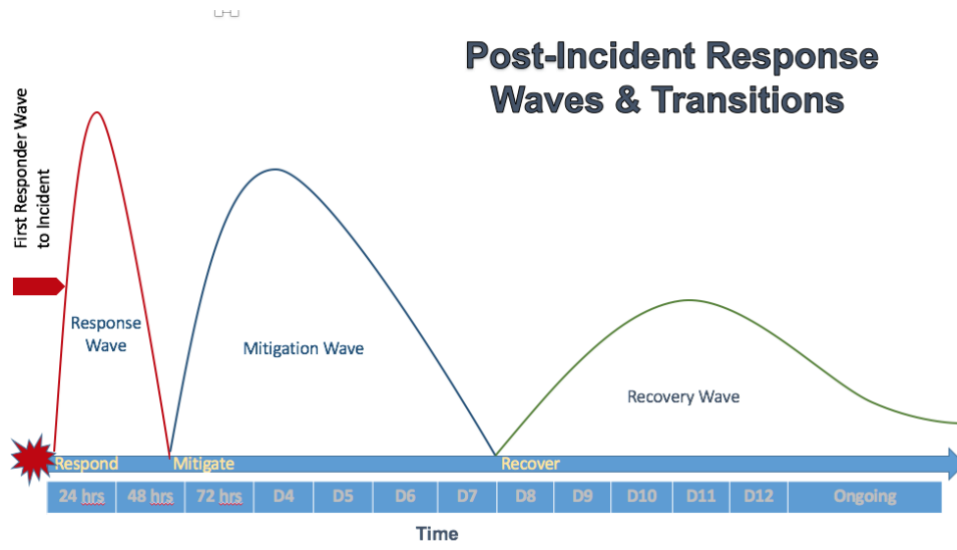


## Building a Resilient Organization: Effective Recovery from an Active Shooter Incident

By Analytic Team, Kiernan Group Holdings

Sometimes, despite an organization’s emergency response plan’s preparatory and preventative security efforts, it will be targeted by an active shooter incident, resulting in loss of life, injuries, and damage to its facility. Staff and employees often are unprepared for the varied stresses and uncertainties that emanate from such critical and traumatic incidents. To achieve post-incident resilience, organizations must be able to adapt to such crisis conditions and withstand and rapidly recover from their disruption, which occurs in many of its operational and functional areas. The tasks associated with such recovery efforts include a spectrum of activities, such as providing psychological first aid to those affected by the incident; managing legal and insurance liabilities for the affected organizations; retaining their “human capital,” such as employees, business customers, or, in the cases of schools, students, or houses of worship, congregants; establishing an alternate facility for continuity of operations (COOP), and, finally, regaining their reputational branding.

Such comprehensive resilience can be achieved during the immediate and long-term aftermath of an active shooter incident through effective response and recovery actions, which can be viewed as a series of three waves (see, below). Note that this article does not discuss the “First Responder Wave to Incident,” which precedes the response phases.



As illustrated in this diagram, the three response waves and transitions can be mapped to their corresponding post-incident days – although this is intended for illustrative purposes, to provide a general overview for situational awareness.

1. Days 1-2: **Response Wave** – stabilizing an emergency situation in the immediate hours after an attack;
2. Days 2 to 7: **Mitigation Wave** – lessening the near-term impact of the critical incident; and

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3. Days 8 onwards: **Recovery Wave** (also referred to as continuity of operations, or COOP) –restoring an organization’s pre-incident operational functioning and the well-being of those affected by an incident.

Numerous tasks need to be accomplished during the three transitional waves to ensure a resilient recovery. Each wave has its own associated tasks, although some of them may be required in successive waves, with additional ad hoc tasks required, as needed. As an example, psychological counseling is likely to be given during each of the three waves. The key is to have a pre-arranged game plan for each successive wave, listing the task associated with them and assigning them to specific staff members in an organization.

Many of the tasks and their associated waves can be identified by reviewing emergency response plans and after-action reports produced by those who have been affected by and recovered from such incidents. The value for the emergency response community is to identify and provide the sequencing of tasks involved in such crisis situations to aid organizations in being better prepared to anticipate and respond to all possible scenarios, thereby shortening their response and recovery periods in a seamless and resilient manner.

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