School Emergencies

Schools encounter a wide variety of emergency situations requiring rapid and effective 9-1-1 response. This course prepares telecommunicators to act quickly and confidently when handling school emergency calls. Learners examine preparedness for incidents at local schools, common medical and non-medical emergencies, school safety terminology and response protocols, violent incidents, active shooter situations, and the treatment of injured victims. The course emphasizes situational awareness, accurate location identification, effective caller questioning, appropriate Pre-Arrival Instructions, and coordination with responding agencies.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Identify preparedness measures telecommunicators can take to become familiar with schools and school emergency procedures within their response area.
2. Assess common school emergencies and gather information necessary to make appropriate dispatch decisions.
3. Differentiate among school safety procedures, including lockout, lockdown, evacuation, reverse evacuation, and Standard Response Protocol terminology.
4. Gather and communicate critical information during violent incidents involving victims, suspects, weapons, and hazards.
5. Apply appropriate call-handling strategies during active shooter incidents, including managing multiple callers and providing safety guidance.
6. Explain the roles of rapid deployment, Rescue Task Forces, and other emergency responders during active shooter events.
7. Provide appropriate medical Pre-Arrival Instructions for injured victims when emergency responders cannot immediately reach them.
8. Apply course concepts through call analyses and knowledge checks addressing school emergency situations.

Module 1: Public Safety Preparedness

Preparation is essential when responding to emergencies at schools. This module focuses on developing familiarity with the schools within an agency's response area, including their official and common names, addresses, geographic locations, building layouts, door and room numbering systems, and designated assembly areas. Learners examine how detailed location knowledge can improve call assessment and help responders reach victims more quickly.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the schools within an agency's response area by official name, common name, address, and geographic location.
2. Explain how school campus and building maps assist telecommunicators and emergency responders during incidents.
3. Describe how door and room numbering systems can improve communication and location accuracy.
4. Identify the purpose and location of designated school assembly areas.
5. Apply the concept of identifying the "location within the location" when questioning callers during school emergencies.

Content/Activities

- Awareness and Identification of Local Schools
- Official and Common School Names
- School Campus and Building Maps
- Door and Room Number Identification
- Assembly Areas
- Location Within the Location
- School Preparedness Reflection Questions
- Knowledge Check Preparation

Module 2: Typical School Emergencies

This module examines common emergencies that may generate 9-1-1 calls from schools. Learners review medical emergencies, missing students, transportation incidents, bomb threats, fires, and natural disasters. Particular attention is given to gathering specific information, making appropriate dispatch decisions, providing Pre-Arrival Instructions, and recognizing situations that may require a larger emergency response.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify common medical emergencies that occur in school environments and the role of Pre-Arrival Instructions.
2. Describe circumstances involving missing or "misplaced" students that may require an emergency response.
3. Assess school bus and transportation incidents for the number of occupants, injuries, and potential mass-casualty needs.
4. Identify critical information to obtain when handling school bomb threats, fires, and other facility emergencies.
5. Evaluate natural-disaster calls for injuries, trapped victims, structural hazards, and other conditions affecting responder deployment.

Content/Activities

- Medical Emergencies: Allergic Reactions, Falls, Seizures, Poisoning, and Choking
- Missing Students
- Bus/Transportation Emergencies
- Bomb Threats
- Fires
- Natural Disasters: Hurricanes, Earthquakes, and Tornadoes
- Tornado 9-1-1 Call Analysis
- Situational Awareness and Search-and-Rescue Considerations

Module 3: School Safety Terminology

Schools use specific safety procedures to protect students and staff during emergencies. This module introduces lockout, lockdown, evacuation, reverse evacuation, and the Standard Response Protocols. Learners examine the circumstances that may trigger each response and review the reunification process used to safely return students to parents or primary caregivers following an emergency.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Differentiate among lockout, lockdown, evacuation, and reverse evacuation procedures.
2. Explain how the location and nature of a threat influence the type of school safety procedure initiated.
3. Identify the Standard Response Protocol terms Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter.
4. Explain why telecommunicators should understand school-specific emergency procedures and terminology.
5. Describe the purpose and basic process of student-caregiver reunification following a school emergency.

Content/Activities

- Lockout
- Lockdown
- Evacuation and Reverse Evacuation
- Standard Response Protocols
- Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter Terminology
- Standard Response Protocol Video
- Reunification Process
- Knowledge Check 1

Module 4: Violent Incidents

Not every violent incident occurring at a school is an active shooter event. This module examines the range of violent situations telecommunicators may encounter, including disputes, gang-related activity, accidental weapon discharges, drug activity, suicide attempts, and domestic violence involving targeted victims. Learners focus on gathering information about victims, suspects, weapons, and locations while providing appropriate assistance until responders arrive.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Distinguish active shooter events from other types of violent incidents that may occur at schools.
2. Identify examples of violent incidents that may involve students, staff, visitors, or other individuals on school property.
3. Determine the number and location of victims and suspects involved in a violent incident.
4. Obtain and communicate useful descriptions of suspects and weapons to responding personnel.
5. Provide appropriate medical Pre-Arrival Instructions while maintaining situational awareness during violent incidents.

Content/Activities

- Types of School Violence
- Disputes and Gang-Related Activity
- Weapon and Drug-Related Incidents
- Suicide Attempts and Domestic Violence Incidents
- Victim and Suspect Identification
- Suspect and Weapon Descriptions
- Medical Pre-Arrival Instructions
- Transition to Active Shooter Incidents

Module 5: Active Shooter Incidents

Active shooter events are rapidly evolving emergencies that can generate a large volume of calls within minutes. This module prepares telecommunicators to prioritize and triage calls, treat each caller as a potential source of new information, and apply the foundation skill of "thinking in multiples." Learners also examine the Run, Hide, Fight survival strategy and the transition to rapid law-enforcement deployment and Rescue Task Force response.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Prioritize and triage multiple 9-1-1 calls received during an active shooter incident.
2. Apply the concept of "thinking in multiples" to identify multiple shooters, locations, injuries, and caller perspectives.
3. Provide safety guidance consistent with the Run, Hide, Fight strategy without directing callers into greater danger.
4. Explain appropriate caller actions when law enforcement arrives to evacuate occupants.
5. Describe rapid deployment and the importance of coordinated training between telecommunicators and emergency response teams.

Content/Activities

- Active Shooter Call Volume and Call Triage
- Thinking in Multiples
- Run: Safe Evacuation
- Hide: Lock, Conceal, Silence, and Shelter
- Fight as a Last Resort
- Guidance When Law Enforcement Arrives
- Active Shooter Case Examples
- Rapid Deployment and Rescue Task Force Training

Module 6: Active Shooter Incidents Injuries

During an active shooter event, injured victims may not be immediately accessible to EMS personnel because law enforcement must first address the active threat. This module focuses on the telecommunicator's role in helping callers provide immediate lifesaving care. Learners examine bleeding control, airway and breathing management, school bleed-control kits, call analysis, Rescue Task Force operations, and the role of SWAT medics in reaching and treating victims in volatile environments.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Explain why immediate treatment of traumatic injuries can be critical during active shooter incidents.
2. Provide appropriate Pre-Arrival Instructions for bleeding control, airway management, and breathing emergencies when responders cannot immediately reach the victim.
3. Describe the purpose of school bleed-control kits and how available supplies may assist injured victims.
4. Analyze shooting-related calls for information concerning the threat, victim condition, caller location, suspect description, and responder access.
5. Explain how Rescue Task Forces and SWAT medics support triage, treatment, and evacuation of victims in volatile scenes.

Content/Activities

- Treating the Injured
- Bleeding Control and Tourniquet/Direct Pressure Concepts
- Airway and Breathing Management
- Bleed Control Kits at Schools
- School Shooting Call Analysis
- Rescue Task Force Operations
- SWAT Medics
- Knowledge Check 2

Course Completion

The course concludes by reinforcing that school emergency calls can vary greatly and often involve dynamic circumstances requiring a fast response. Telecommunicators are encouraged to become familiar with local schools, their safety procedures, and the tools available within their call-handling systems so that effective emergency response practices become part of their routine.

Course Completion Criteria

To successfully complete this course and earn continuing education hours, learners must achieve a minimum score of 75%. The quiz must be completed within 30 minutes.

- CE hours awarded: 1
- Certificate duration: 12 Months

Technical Requirements

- Desktop, laptop, or mobile device
- Speakers or headphones
- High-speed Internet access
- A current web browser