



St. Thomas Police Service

BOARD POLICY

Subject:	Active Attacker Incidents
Policy Number:	ER-011
Effective Date:	April 1, 2024
Reviewed:	April 22, 2026
Authorized:	Police Services Board

AUTHORITY/LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE

- *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1*
- *Ontario Regulation 393/23 – Active Attacker Incidents*
- *Ontario Regulation 392/23 – Adequate and Effective Policing (General)*
- *Ontario Regulation 87/24 – Training*

POLICY STATEMENT

The St. Thomas Police Services Board (the “Board”) is committed to ensuring that the St. Thomas Police Service (the “Service”) is prepared to respond effectively to incidents involving an active attacker.

Active attacker incidents present significant risk to public safety and require an immediate, coordinated response by police and other emergency services. The Board recognizes the importance of preparedness, training, operational coordination, and victim support in responding to these incidents.

POLICY APPLICATION

1. In this policy, “**active attacker**” means an individual who appears to be engaged in, attempting to engage in, or about to engage in an attack where there is reason to suspect that:
 - a. the attack will be sustained;
 - b. the attacker will cause serious bodily harm or death to other individuals; and
 - c. the attacker will continue to attack additional individuals if the attacker is not stopped.
2. Police officers shall be deployed immediately to an incident involving an active attacker and will follow response priorities in the following order:
 - a. to stop the active attacker;
 - b. to preserve life; and
 - c. to restore order.

3. The Chief of Police shall ensure compliance with **Ontario Regulation 393/23 – Active Attacker Incidents**.
4. The Chief of Police shall ensure that assistance is provided to victims of an active attacker incident and their families as soon as possible, including referrals to:
 - emergency services
 - health care professionals
 - victim support agencies
 - social service agencies
 - community support organizations.
5. The Chief of Police shall, where appropriate, ensure that a location is established for the purpose of providing victims and their family members and friends with information regarding survivors and death notifications.

Where established, this location shall:

- be separate from the incident scene;
 - be accessible only to victims, family members, and authorized personnel; and
 - be separate from media operations.
6. The Chief of Police shall ensure that members performing community patrol functions are issued medical supplies and equipment in accordance with the requirements of **Ontario Regulation 393/23**.
 7. The Chief of Police shall consider the following factors when determining the number of semi-automatic rifles to make readily accessible for response to active attacker incidents:
 - a. the policing needs of the community;
 - b. the geographic characteristics of the Service's area of responsibility;
 - c. responses to similar incidents in comparable communities;
 - d. the effectiveness of previous responses to such incidents; and
 - e. recognized best practices in responding to active attacker incidents.
 8. The Chief of Police shall take reasonable steps to develop partnerships with external service providers to facilitate assistance to victims following an active attacker incident, including establishing arrangements with:
 - health care providers
 - victim support agencies
 - social service organizations
 - community partners.

Where possible, services should be coordinated through a centralized location or common virtual platform.

9. The Chief of Police shall ensure that information regarding how victims may access support services following an active attacker incident is made publicly available.
10. The Chief of Police shall take reasonable steps to ensure that members of the Service, including communications personnel, participate in **scenario-based training exercises related to active attacker incidents at least every two years**, including training conducted jointly with:
 - fire departments
 - emergency medical services
 - other emergency response partners.
11. The Chief of Police shall ensure that the Service has the ability to issue **public alerts regarding active attacker incidents**, including information about:
 - the nature of the incident;
 - safety instructions for the public; and
 - areas to avoid.

Public alerts may be issued through emergency alert systems and other official communication platforms.

12. The Chief of Police shall establish procedures for responding to active attacker incidents that address:
 - a. communications during the incident;
 - b. actions of officers initially responding to the incident;
 - c. procedures for off-duty officers who wish to assist;
 - d. responsibilities for exercising command during the incident;
 - e. coordinated responses by officers acting as teams to locate and stop the attacker;
 - f. rescue operations and coordination with other emergency services; and
 - g. response considerations for schools or other locations where mass casualty events may occur.
13. The Chief of Police shall ensure that the wellbeing of members is prioritized following an active attacker incident and that appropriate supports are available.
14. Where members of the Service respond to an incident involving an active attacker within the Service's jurisdiction, the Chief of Police shall prepare a report reviewing and evaluating the Service's response to the incident.

The report shall include:

- general information regarding the incident;
- information regarding the attacker;
- details of police and emergency service response;
- analysis of the effectiveness of the response; and
- recommendations for improvement.

15. If members of the Service respond to an active attacker incident outside the Service's jurisdiction, the Chief of Police shall support the preparation of the report by the police service responsible for the jurisdiction in which the incident occurred.
16. The report shall be completed within **120 days** of the incident unless delayed by a Special Investigations Unit investigation.
17. Where the report cannot be completed within the required timeframe, the Chief of Police shall provide the Board with status updates every **30 days** until the report is completed.
18. The Chief of Police shall provide the completed report to the Board within **30 days of its completion**.

The Board shall publish the report in accordance with legislative requirements, subject to applicable redactions.