

Polk State College Procedure

Procedure Number	Procedure Title	Effective Date
7013	Response to Threats to Campus Safety	August 28, 2026

I. Statement

The purpose of this document is to define the various alerts, processes, and actions used to manage potential threats to the College and its stakeholders in compliance with Section 1006.601(4)(a)1., Florida Statutes.

II. Emergency Alerts

A. Heightened Security Alerts

The purpose of a state of *Heightened Security* is to enact processes to secure the campus and protect students, faculty, staff, and visitors from an outside (or off-campus) threat that does not pose an immediate threat to those inside or on campus. During a *Heightened Security* alert, the building perimeters are secured. Members of the Campus Security Team (including deputies and contracted security staff) control the buildings. Classes and College business continue; however, movement between and within buildings is restricted. If a state of *Heightened Security* is required, a Polk State ALERT notification will be issued, instructing individuals that building perimeters are to be secured.

B. Lockdown Alerts

The purpose of a *Lockdown* event is to reduce the risk of injury or danger to students, faculty, staff, and visitors. This occurs if an armed subject is present, or if a serious, immediate threat is determined to be on campus. A *Lockdown* minimizes access to rooms or buildings on campus. Once an armed subject or serious threat is determined to be on campus, a Polk State ALERT notification will be issued, instructing individuals to lock down.

C. Run/Hide/Fight Alerts

The purpose of *Run/Hide/Fight* is to provide a clear and simple framework and actionable decision for surviving an active assailant incident by guiding individuals through three escalating response options: *Run* if safe, *Hide* if escape isn't possible, and *Fight* only as a last resort. Once an active assailant is determined to be on campus,

a Polk State ALERT notification will be issued instructing individuals to lock down and run, hide, or fight when necessary.

D. Designated Authority for Alerts

The Director of Public Safety and Security (or designee) or the Associate Vice President of Communication (or designee) authorizes and issues any *Heightened Security*, *Lockdown*, or *Run/Hide/Fight* alerts.

III. LEVELS OF SECURITY

There are three levels of security that can be utilized for emergencies on campus: Heightened Security, Lockdown, or Lockdown-Run/Hide/Fight

During any level of security, law enforcement and other emergency personnel will be responding to the emergency.

1. Heightened Security

A. Heightened Security Notification

Notification of a campus state of Heightened Security will be communicated via the Polk State ALERT System, the College's mass communication platform. Notifications will be made by the Director of Public Safety and Security (or designee) or Associate Vice President of Communications (or designee) – both of whom have the authority to create messages for this system. Notification may also be made in person by a College staff member, Campus Security Team member, or law enforcement personnel.

B. Heightened Security Processes

Upon receiving a Heightened Security notification, the following processes should be followed:

1. All buildings on the affected campus are to be completely secured.
2. Exterior entrances of buildings are to be locked by facilities personnel or Campus Security Team members.
3. All interior doors should be closed and locked by office or classroom occupants.
4. All windows should be closed and locked by office or classroom occupants.
5. Once a door or window is locked, it must remain locked until the state of Heightened Security has been lifted.
6. Any individual who is outside when receiving the ALERT should evacuate to a safe area until directed to do otherwise.

7. No one is permitted to leave a classroom, room, or office unless escorted by a member of the Campus Security Team or law enforcement or until a Polk State ALERT notification advises that the state of Heightened Security has been lifted.

2. Lockdown

A. Lockdown Notification

Notification of a campus Lockdown event must be communicated via the Polk State ALERT System, the College's mass communication platform. Notifications will be made by the Director of Public Safety and Security (or designee) or the Associate Vice President of Communications (or designee) – both of whom have the authority to create messages for this system. Notification may also be made in person by a College staff member, Campus Security Team member, or law enforcement personnel.

B. Lockdown Processes

Upon receiving a *Lockdown* notification, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. All buildings on the affected campus are to be completely secured.
2. Exterior entrances of buildings are to be locked by Facilities personnel or Campus Security Team members.
3. For individuals located in interior rooms and offices at the time of the ALERT, all interior doors should be closed and locked if possible, or doors should be barricaded by office or classroom occupants.
 - a. Individuals should take cover to protect themselves and others.
 - b. If possible, individuals should cover any glass on doors to obscure visibility.
 - c. All windows should be closed and locked, and all window coverings closed by office or classroom occupants.
4. Once a door or window is locked, it must remain locked until the lockdown has been lifted.
5. Individuals should stay away from all doors and windows.
6. Individuals should remain inside a building, office, or classroom, preferably in a room without a window.
7. The air conditioning, ventilation, and lighting should be turned off, if possible.
8. Individuals should stay quiet and remain in place until notified by emergency personnel.
9. If an individual is outside at the time of the ALERT, they should evacuate to a safe area until directed to do otherwise.
10. No one is permitted to exit a classroom, room, or office until a Polk State ALERT is received advising them that the lockdown has been lifted.

3. Lockdown-Run/Hide/Fight

A. Run/Hide/Fight Notification

Notification of Run/Hide/Fight must be communicated via the Polk State ALERT System, the College's mass communication platform. Notifications will be made by the Director of Public Safety and Security (or designee) or the Associate Vice President of Communications (or designee) – both of whom have the authority to create messages for this system. Notification may also be made in person by a College staff member, Campus Security Team member, or law enforcement personnel.

B. Run/Hide/Fight Processes

Faculty/Staff

1. Doors should remain locked at all times. (DO NOT ADMIT ANYONE TO CLASSROOMS OR OFFICES)
2. If outside, evacuate students/faculty/staff to a safe area until directed to do otherwise.
3. Cover windows and close blinds.
4. Turn off lights and computer monitors.
5. Barricade access to your area if possible.
6. Create a list of names of students not in classroom or colleagues not in offices.
7. Keep all students/staff quiet.
8. If the classroom/office space is designed with a closet or bathroom, students/faculty/staff should be instructed to shelter in this location first. If the classroom/office does not have a hardened area such as a closet or bathroom, the hard corner should be utilized as a last resort.
9. There are classrooms/offices that will not have a hardened area or corner; therefore, students/staff should be instructed to get on the floor in a sitting or crouching position away from windows and doors.

When security and prevention measures fail and an intruder is in your facility; you have three response options known as Run/Hide/Fight.

1. Run - Run away from the intruder

- a. If you cannot lock the intruder out of your location, get out of the area by running away.
- b. An example of when to implement a "Run" approach may be if you are in the cafeteria when an intruder enters. Since the intruder is already in the

cafeteria there is no point in attempting to implement a "Hide"; so you order everyone to run.

Note: Using the Run/Hide/Fight approach, the Run approach should be implemented using a secondary exit (ground floor windows or exits) if the attacker attempts to defeat the lockdown. If Run is not an option, the Fight approach should be implemented as soon as the attacker attempts entry. This includes reaching through a defeated vision panel.

2. **Hide** - Keep the intruder out of your room or facility

- a. While no location can offer total protection from an intruder, implementing a lockdown inside a securable location provides some degree of protection. The purpose of a lockdown is to delay or slow down the intruder's progress until law enforcement arrives.
- b. During a lockdown, students and staff should be prepared to remain in this mode for an extended length of time. When the area is deemed safe, law enforcement will make the announcement.
- c. While locking the door is a vital component, there are methods of reinforcing the lockdown that can further deter an attacker. These methods are called target hardening and can include:
- d. Barricading doors: Use desks, chairs, shelves, etc. Note, barricades are most effective if the door opens towards the barricade. However, even if the door opens away from the barricade (usually into the hallway), stacked objects can delay and possibly deter an attacker.
- e. Tying off doors: This action limits the attacker's ability to open doors; even if they are unlocked. Generally, tying off doors is used to reinforce doors that open out (towards the hallway) where barricades have limited value. There are several methods to tie off doors and more than one should be attempted:
 - i. Tie one end of a belt or electric cord around the handle and secure the other end around a corner and out of sight. If the end cannot be secured, have several people hold it, while around a corner and out of sight. This will reinforce any type of door.
 - ii. For handicap accessible handles (levers that are pushed downward to open the door), chair or stool legs may be wedged between the handle and door, with at least 1/4 of the chair extending beyond the doorframe. When the door is pulled to open, the chair catches on the door frame.

- iii. Doors that have folding hinges above the door may be reinforced by tying the folding hinge tightly so that it cannot expand and allow the door to open.

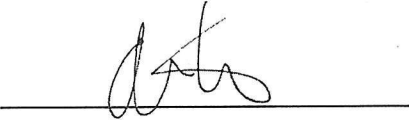
3. Fight - Fight back against the intruder

- a. If the attacker is in your immediate area and blocking your path and there is no way you can run or hide; you must then fight back against the intruder using any available means.
- b. When fighting back, use any available weapon such as a fire extinguisher, chair, or even books. The "Fight" option is to be used as a last resort.
- c. During the "Fight" response, staff and administrators must take charge and provide clear directions.
- d. For instance, if the Hide option is failing, and Run is required through a ground floor window, it is imperative that supervisors/managers direct staff. This direction should include not just climbing out the window, but where to go next.
- e. If the Fight option is required, supervisors/managers should prepare staff with clear and confident instructions.
- f. Should an attacker attempt to defeat a lockdown and running is not possible, the supervisors/managers should order staff to grab books and chairs and to throw anything and everything they can find at the attacker should he attempt to enter the area.

History

Adopted: February 22, 2024

Revised: August 28, 2026

 Signature Jay Culver Name	 Signature Anastasios Kamoutsas Name	08/28/26
Responsible Administrator	President	Date