

Communities Against Terrorism

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activities Related to Shopping Malls and Centers

What Should I Consider Suspicious?

- Efforts to surveil or “case” the shopping center (e.g., taking pictures, making videos, or drawing diagrams of the location).
- Unusual inquiries about security procedures.
- Tests of security responses.
- Extremist literature distributed at the mall or posted on public bulletin boards.
- Extremist graffiti spray-painted at the center.
- Vandalism accompanied by a message or claim.
- Threats to the mall with particular concern to those that are extremist in nature, very specific, or that mention a known terrorist group.
- Individual(s) with unseasonal bulky attire.
- Unattended packages, briefcases, satchels, or bags.
- Unattended, unfamiliar delivery vehicles in loading zones or in front of store entrances.
- Thefts of official vehicles, uniforms, identification, and access cards.
- Attempts to access restricted areas, including the roof, hallways, and electrical rooms.
- Extremist attacks on other malls, especially those with similar tenants.
- Loitering, vandalism, or unusual activities around mall tenants who may be targets of extremists
 - Vendors that sell fur products.
 - Pet stores, outlets, or special events that feature live animals.
 - Tenants with political or religious displays.
 - Abortion clinics.
 - Laboratories that engage in animal testing.
 - Government offices.
 - Military recruiting centers.
 - Businesses that have been picketed or protested, threatened, or attacked at any of their branches or stores.
 - Outlets that may draw the attention of extremists (e.g., radical bookstores, weapons dealers, campaign offices, and activist group centers).

It is important to remember that just because someone’s speech, actions, beliefs, appearance, or way of life is different, it does not mean that he or she is suspicious.

What Should I Do?

- Establish security procedures and a threat alert system, including a go-to person or telephone number for mall tenants to report suspicious activity.
- Establish terrorism training programs for security staff.
- Maintain an open line of communication with local law enforcement.
- Know the delivery vehicles and staff who are routinely on the property.
- Install security cameras around the property and facility.
- Inform tenants and local law enforcement if there is a concern about a special event that is to be held at the mall.
- Maintain close liaison with tenants who might be logical terrorist targets.
- Watch for people and actions that are out of place.
- Be aware of protests or demonstrations conducted at the mall.
- Make note of suspicious statements, people, items, and/or vehicles.
- If something seems wrong, notify law enforcement authorities.
- Do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.

Preventing terrorism is a community effort. By learning what to look for, **you** can make a positive contribution in the fight against terrorism. The **partnership between the community and law enforcement** is essential to the success of anti-terrorism efforts.

Some of the activities, taken individually, could be innocent and must be examined by law enforcement professionals in a larger context to determine whether there is a basis to investigate. The activities outlined on this handout are by no means all-inclusive but have been compiled from a review of terrorist events over several years.