

Communities Against Terrorism

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activities Related to Shopping Malls and Centers

What Should I Consider Suspicious?

Individuals or groups who

- Attempt to surveil or “case” security locations or procedures (e.g., take pictures, make videos, draw diagrams, or follow security personnel) in an unusual manner and beyond casual or professional interest.
- Dress in unseasonably bulky and inappropriate attire that would generally be considered suspicious.
- Deliberately attempt to access restricted areas, including roofs, hallways, and electrical rooms.
- Ask unusual or atypical questions about security procedures and at a level beyond mere curiosity.

Other potential indicators

- Deliberate tests of security responses that reveal physical, personnel, or cyber security capabilities.
- Terrorist literature distributed at the facility or posted on public bulletin boards.
- Terrorist graffiti spray-painted at the facility.
- Vandalism accompanied by a message or claim of responsibility from a known or suspected terrorist group.
- Threats to the facility, particularly those that are terroristic in nature, very specific, or that mention a criminal extremist group.
- Unattended packages, briefcases, satchels, or bags.
- Unattended, unfamiliar delivery vehicles in loading zones or near store entrances.
- Theft or diversion of or unauthorized attempts to acquire official vehicles, uniforms, identification, or access cards.
- Terrorist attacks on other malls or centers, especially those with similar tenants.
- Loitering, vandalism, or unusual activities that would arouse suspicion in a reasonable person and that occur around mall tenants who may be potential terrorist targets:
 - 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, protested against, threatened, or attacked at any of their branches or stores.
 - Political campaign offices.

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

What Should I Do?

Be part of the solution

- ✓ Establish training programs, security procedures, and a threat alert system, including a go-to person or phone number for mall tenants to report suspicious activity.
- ✓ Maintain an open line of communication with law enforcement and tenants who might be logical terrorist targets.
- ✓ Know the delivery vehicles and staff who are routinely on the property.
- ✓ Install security cameras around the facility.
- ✓ Inform tenants and law enforcement if there is a concern about a special event scheduled to be held at the mall.
- ✓ Make note of suspicious statements, behaviors, activities, items, and/or vehicles.

Remember...

- ✓ If something seems wrong, notify law enforcement authorities.
- ✓ Do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.
- ✓ Focus on behaviors and activities that are unusual or out of place for the situation.
- ✓ Individually, these activities could be innocent and must be examined by law enforcement professionals in a larger context to determine whether there is a basis to investigate.

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 these 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 in this handout are by no means all-inclusive but have been compiled from a review of terrorist events over several years.