



Assumption College

Department of Public Safety

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Recently, a University within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts experienced a situation involving an individual on campus with a firearm. The University released a “shelter in place” notification to students, faculty and parents. Unfortunately, there was some confusion regarding the terminology used and expectations of the University community in following the emergency notification. Emergency Management practitioners distinguish between “Shelter in Place” and “Lockdown” notifications based on the pending threat to a community.

In an emergency situation, what is the difference between a Shelter in Place and a Lockdown?

If you have heard the terms "Shelter in Place" and "Lockdown" and been confused as to the difference, you are not alone. The distinction is not necessarily intuitive, but important. The key thing to remember is that both are instructions to put effective barriers between yourself and a threat. The difference is in the types of threat, and what kind of barrier is suggested.

A shelter in place is the use of a structure and its indoor atmosphere to temporarily separate you from a hazardous outdoor atmosphere. This can be because of a hazardous material incident, or perhaps a weather-related emergency. It entails closing all doors, windows and vents and taking immediate shelter in a readily accessible location.

A lockdown may be instructed during situations such as the presence of a hostile or armed intruder on campus. A lockdown requires locking doors, windows, and barricading oneself to block entry to a campus facility, a classroom, or to an office suite.

In an emergency, the Assumption College Community will receive instructions via RAVE, Portal, email and the Assumption College website explaining what actions our community should take.