The Seven Signs of Terrorism

Fearing future terrorist attacks does not mean that people have to live in fear every day. There are several steps people may take to help prepare and protect their families. One such action is to become familiar with the **Seven Signs of Terrorism**, developed by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of New York, that have been adopted by State Police across the country as an educational tool.

THE SEVEN SIGNS OF TERRORISM 1. Surveillance:

Someone recording or monitoring activities. This may include the use of cameras (either still or video), note taking, drawing diagrams, annotating on maps, or using binoculars or other vision-enhancing devices.

2. Elicitation:

People or organizations attempting to gain information about military operations, capabilities, or people. Elicitation attempts may be made by mail, fax, telephone, or in person.

3. Tests of security:

Any attempts to measure reaction times to security breaches or to penetrate physical security barriers or procedures in order to assess strengths and weaknesses.

4. Acquiring supplies:

Purchasing or stealing explosives, weapons, ammunition, etc. Also includes acquiring military uniforms, decals, flight manuals, passes or badges (or the equipment to manufacture such items) or any other controlled items.

5. Suspicious persons out of place:

People who don't seem to belong in the workplace, neighborhood, business establishment, or anywhere else. Includes suspicious border crossings and stowaways aboard ship or people jumping ship in port.

6. Dry run/Trial Run:

Putting people into position and moving them around according to their plan without actually committing the terrorist act. This is especially true when planning a kidnapping, but it can also pertain to bombings. An element of this activity could also include mapping out routes and determining the timing of traffic lights and flow.

7. Deploying assets:

People and supplies getting into position to commit the act. This is a person's last chance to alert authorities before the terrorist act occurs.

- 1. <u>Surveillance:</u> Be on the lookout for someone recording or monitoring activities. The type of recording does not have to be as obvious as a camera or a video camera; the person may be taking notes, drawing diagrams, annotating maps, or using binoculars, etc.
- 2. **Elicitation:** Be wary of people or groups who attempt to learn information about military operations, capabilities, or people. The attempts do not have to be face-to-face. They may be made by mail, telephone, etc.
- Tests of Security: If someone is attempting to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of security measures,
 or if he is attempting to record and analyze reaction times to security breaches, contact your local
 authorities.
- 4. <u>Acquiring Supplies:</u> Be vigilant about people who purchase or steal explosives, weapons, ammunition, etc. Other supplies that may be needed for a terrorist attack are military uniforms, flight manuals, badges or

- the equipment to make them, and any other controlled items. And, as we learned in the Boston bombing, materials such as pressure cookers and fireworks also may be supplies that terrorists purchase in large quantities.
- 5. Suspicious persons out of place: Of course, we are wary of people who don't seem to belong in our neighborhoods. But, people also may arouse suspicion at work, businesses, or anywhere, for that matter. Also be alert for people who suspiciously cross the border, stow away on board a ship, or jump ship in port if you are traveling.
- 6. <u>Dry run/Trial run:</u> Terrorists may practice their attack prior to carrying it out, so watch for people who move around but don't seem to have a true purpose. A terrorist also may map out routes or time traffic lights, so be on the lookout for these types of activities.
- 7. **Deploying Assets:** Terrorists have to get people and supplies positioned prior to committing the terrorist act. If you suspect these activities are occurring, immediately contact the authorities because this may be the last chance you have to do so before the terrorist act takes place.

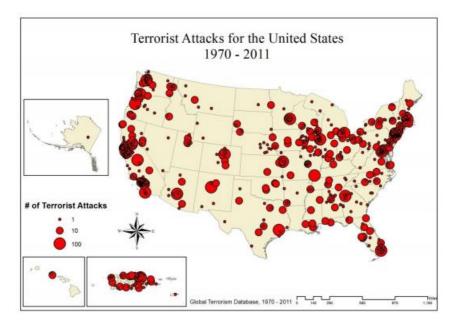


Figure 4. Terrorist Attacks in the United States, 1970-2011

Image via National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

Virtually all state and federal agencies encourage families to take the time to prepare for terrorist attacks. There are **three steps** to help you get started on protecting your loved ones from acts of terrorism:

- 1. Know your work, school, and community disaster plans. If you do not know the plans, contact your supervisor, school administrators, or local fire department for information.
- 2. Identify an alternative hospital. Hospitals closest to the event always are the busiest.
- 3. Use online resources to create disaster plans and review steps for protecting yourself and your loved ones. FEMA provides a **downloadable Family Emergency Plan**.