**Panic Buttons**

**What problem are we trying to solve?**

The purpose of a panic button is to allow a person under duress to quickly and silently call for help in the event of an emergency. Panic alarms are generally used when it may be unsafe or uncomfortable to call for help in other ways. For example, if a belligerent person is standing in your lobby, it may be unwise to further escalate the situation by picking up a phone to call for assistance. A panic alarm can provide a quick and convenient way to summon help without drawing attention.

**Are we solving the issue with our current practice?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pro’s | Con’s |
| Solves Emotional Needs | Maintenance Issues with Battery Replacement |
| Perceived Safeguard In Place | Annual Inventory Assessment Necessary |
|  | Expectations Unrealistic |
|  | Deputies Arrival may be triggering for some |
|  | No policy or procedure in place |
|  | No proper training in place for usage |
|  | Alarm does not go to Sheriff’s Department |
|  | Does not provide information to first responders |
|  | Not all devices work and devices are not routinely tested.  |
|  | Accidentally use due to poor placement. |
|  | Different styles of buttons are used, some alarmed, others not.  |
|  | In appropriate reactions due to no training.  |

**Current Recommendation:**

Remove unauthorized or defective panic buttons in place. Train employees on proper protocol for situations requiring de-escalation or law enforcement presence.

**Effective options for preparedness without a panic button:**

1. Ask for deputy presence if any issues are anticipated prior to the meeting.
2. Keep door open during meeting or ask for someone else to join the meeting.
3. De-escalation or similar training for use during repeated interactions.
4. Have an office “safe word” or phase with training in place.

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| **College** | **Panic Buttons** | **Activation Location** | **Notes** |
| Southwestern | No |   |  Removed all 4 years ago. |
| San Diego City | Yes  |  Police Department Dispatch | Parties requesting pay all associated costs. |
| Palomar | Yes |  Knight Security Systems | Parties requesting pay all associated costs. |
| University of San Diego | Yes  |  Police Department Dispatch | Parties requesting pay all associated costs. |