

7 Signs of Terrorism

We as citizens have a duty to help protect our communities. We can help provide safety and security in Coral Gables by remaining vigilant and reporting unusual behavior or events immediately. Listed below are seven signs of terrorism that may help detect potential terrorist acts.

1. **Surveillance:** Terrorists will likely observe a chosen target during the planning phase of an operation. They do this to determine the strengths, weaknesses and number of emergency personnel that may respond to an incident. Suspicious actions during this phase may include someone recording or monitoring activities, drawing diagrams, or making notes on maps, using vision-enhancing devices, or having possession of floor plans or blueprints of places such as high-tech firms, financial institutions, or government facilities, including military installations. Routes to and from the target are also usually established during the surveillance phase.
2. **Inquiries:** A second sign, inquiries, entails attempting to gain information about a place, person, or operation pertaining to the target. Terrorists may attempt to elicit information about a critical infrastructure such as a power plant, water reservoir, maritime port, military base, bridge, or tunnel by making unusual inquiries. They may inquire about usage and operations. Additionally, they may attempt to place people in legitimate employment at key locations to monitor day-to-day activities and gather detailed knowledge to make their mission or scheme more effective.
3. **Tests of Security:** Terrorists may also test a target's security to gather data. To do this, they may drive by the target, moving into sensitive areas and observing security or law enforcement response. They are likely assessing how long before personnel respond to a security breach, or the routes responders take to a specific location. Terrorists may also attempt to penetrate physical security barriers or procedures to assess strengths and weaknesses.
4. **Acquiring Supplies:** Terrorists may purchase or steal explosives, weapons, ammunition, or attempt to store harmful chemical equipment. To gain easier entrance to a secured area, they may also try to acquire uniforms, equipment, or identification of first responders, including military personnel. Other items they may try to obtain include flight passes, flight manuals, passports, or other pieces of identification. If they are unable to steal these types of things, they may attempt to create counterfeit copies.
5. **Suspicious/Out-Of-Place Behavior:** Profiling individuals is wrong. However, profiling behaviors may indicate suspicious behavior. Sometimes suspicious people just "don't belong" or a behavior seems out of place. This may include a person in a workplace, building, neighborhood, or business establishment that does not fit in because of demeanor, language usage or unusual questions they ask.
6. **Dry Runs:** Before executing the final operation or plan, terrorists may engage in a practice session, or "dry run," to work out flaws or unanticipated problems. Although they normally conduct multiple practice sessions at or near the target area, a "dry run" may be the heart of the planning stage of a terrorist act. During a "dry run," terrorists may monitor police radio frequencies and record emergency response times.
7. **Deploying Assets/Getting into Position:** The deploying assets or getting into position stage is an individual's last chance to alert authorities before the terrorist act occurs.