

MASS OUTCOME OR MASS INTENT?

A Proposal for an Intent-focused, No-minimum Casualty Count Definition of Public Mass Shooting Incidents

Proposed Definition

- A gun violence incident (or intended incident), perpetrated by (or intended to be perpetrated by) one or two offenders , targeting one or more public or populated locations, within a 24-hour period.
- At least some of the victims (or intended victims) must be chosen at random or for their symbolic value.
- If the perpetrator(s) does not kill four or more victims, they must demonstrate behavioral evidence suggesting mass victim intent.
- Excludes familicide, gang violence, routine crime.

Public Mass Shooting Categories

Public mass shooting incidents can be sorted in 4 categories depending on the casualty counts.

A completed mass shooting is an incident involving four or more fatalities (excluding the perpetrator).

A failed mass shooting is an incident involving zero victim casualties, but the perpetrator arrived at their intended target with their weapon, and they tried to carry out their attack on that day.

Measuring Mass Intent

We propose a novel coding strategy using observable behavioral indicators to assign an intent rating score to each individual incident.

- Aimed at victims
- Aimed at others
- Verbal intent
- Written intent
- Hunted
- Costume
- Grievance against location
- Known targeted victims
- Gun obtainment
- Train
- Extra ammo
- Planning/preparation

An attempted mass shooting is an incident involving fewer than four deaths, but at least one gunshot casualty (fatality or injury).

A foiled mass shooting is an incident involving zero victim casualties that did not progress past the planning and preparation stage into actualized initiation.