How close is too close? Hard question for Orlando paramedics

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — When the first paramedics arrived on the scene of the Pulse nightclub shooting, they could still hear gunfire coming from inside the club.

In active-shooting cases, recent federal guidelines call for medics to put on body armor and go into potentially dangerous situations alongside police officers when possible. But paramedics Jodi Granada and Carlos Tavarez didn’t have bullet-proof vests and they never made it inside the nightclub. Instead, they treated the wounded across the street in the parking lot of a bagel shop.

In all, they made five trips to the emergency room, taking 13 victims to a hospital just a few blocks away. Could they have saved more lives if they had body armor and went inside the gay Orlando nightclub, where 49 people were killed and 53 wounded in the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history? It’s tough to know, they told The Associated Press.

Since the Columbine High School massacre in 1999 in Colorado, paramedics have struggled with how close they should get to active shooter scenes when they know there are wounded victims who need help. The federal guidelines suggest that victims’ chances of survival improve when paramedics go inside “the warm zone.”

Paramedics have traditionally waited for an “all-clear” that it’s safe to go into an active-shooter situation. But studies of past mass shootings have shown the “value of having medical and rescue personnel who are properly trained and equipped to enter the warm zone to maximize victim survival,” according to a 2014 policy statement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“FEMA therefore encourages first responder agencies to develop this capability,” the policy statement said.

At Columbine, some survivors were holding a wounded teacher who bled to death over almost four hours could have been saved if it had been treated earlier. Instead, firefighter-paramedics, as well as many officers, waited to go inside the school. Thirteen people were killed and 24 others wounded.

In this 2012 file photo, President Barack Obama walks in as he delivers pizza to volunteers during an unscheduled visit to a local campaign field office in Orlando, Fla.

Obama campaign machine reviving up to elect Clinton

WASHINGTON (AP) — The vaunted data-driven machine that twice got President Barack Obama elected is reviving up to help elect Hillary Clinton, as Democrats look to recreate the political advantage they used against Republicans in 2008 and 2012.

With Obama’s popularity rebounding, Democrats have been eagerly awaiting the president’s return to campaigning, and will hold his debut event for her Tuesday in North Carolina. Yet campaign officials say just as critical to her success could be an Obama political operation that remains potent four years after his re-election, including deep troves of voter and donor information, and a corps of trained field staffers and volunteers that Clinton’s campaign is now copying.

The crown jewel of Obama’s machine, an email list of supporters that included 20 million addresses in 2012, is now fully available to Clinton.

That list had been closely held within an Obama campaign committee that still exists to pay off old debt. Democratic groups and even Obama’s Organizing for Action nonprofit had to rent the list for a hefty sum.

Now a copy of that list, which helped propel Obama to record-breaking fundraising, is controlled by the Democratic National Committee, which can send emails at will going through Obama’s campaign. That’s according to individuals familiar with the list, who weren’t authorized to discuss the arrangement and requested anonymity.

Just recently, the DNC started sending emails signed by Clinton to the entire list, including one last week inviting donors to enter a raffle to be Clinton’s guest to a concert of her choosing, “Hamilton.”

When supporters, the handover of the email list is the hottest topic of con- cern that concerns that sprang up after Obama’s re-election have turned out unfounded.

In 2013, when Obama declined to transfer the list to the bundled party, Democrats griped that he was holding out on them partly by sequestering his most valuable campaign resources.

In this file photo, President Barack Obama makes an on-the-fly stop to deliver pizza to volunteers during an unscheduled visit to a local campaign field office in Orlando, Fla.

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