



COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY & SAFETY COALITION

Safety Checklist & Resources | Houses of Worship & Faith-Based Institutions

Below is a series of checklists for houses of worship and faith-based institutions seeking to bolster safety for their staff and visitors. Please note that this list is not exhaustive. Given the unique nature of each individual institution, CSSC recommends meeting with professionals to assess specific security needs.

5 Step Basic Checklist for Safety

- ☐ **Plan Early:** Assess risks, know your venue, and coordinate with law enforcement well in advance.
- ☐ **Build Key Relationships:** Connect with local police, emergency responders, and partners who can support you before, during, and after your event.
- ☐ **Train Your Team:** Ensure staff and volunteers know the plan — including who to call, what to do, and how to communicate in a crisis.
- ☐ **Stay Alert & Share Info:** Monitor relevant threats and report anything suspicious. Safety improves when everyone is engaged and informed.
- ☐ **Lean on Others:** Other NGOs outside of yours and your community might have connections, support systems, or other tools at their disposal – we are in this together.

Before Busy Seasons & Major Holidays

- ☐ **Establish Open Lines of Communication with Local Law Enforcement:** Many law enforcement agencies have a division or liaison that oversees neighborhood engagement and may be able to help with security assessments. Get to know them before you need them.
- ☐ **Preparation is Key:** Leadership, clergy, ushers, and staff must work with security experts to plan *early*. Tap into your internal/external network, including groups like CSSC for support/planning.
- ☐ **What Else Can I Do?** Keep abreast of trends and possible threats. Share relevant updates with staff.

Welcoming Visitors & Newcomers

- ☐ **Pre-Registration when Possible:** When possible, visitors should be registered in advance. Ideally, they are known to staff. If not, a quick internal check can help verify.
- ☐ **Welcome Desk or Greeter Card:** Staff a desk to provide a quick, warm check-in for first-time visitors. If a front desk isn't feasible, consider having greeters provide visitors with a welcome card.
- ☐ **Protocol for an Unruly Individual:** De-escalate where possible. Engage security personnel and/or follow security procedures to address any threats.



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- ❑ **Buddy System:** Create a buddy system for ushers or greeters.

Resources for Safety

Where to Start: Organizational Security Preparedness Resources

- Start the process --- discover and educate yourself: [Mitigating Attacks on Houses of Worship Security Guide | CISA](#)
- Conduct a vulnerability assessment: [Houses of Worship | CISA](#)
- Evaluate risk and implement security improvements: [Physical Security Performance Goals for Faith-Based Communities | CISA](#)
- Test security improvements (training and exercises): [CISA Tabletop Exercise Packages | CISA](#); contact CISA Exercises --- cisa.exercises@cisa.dhs.gov

Individual Safety & Security Resources

- [Pathway to Violence | CISA](#) (fact sheet and video)
- [Power of Hello Houses of Worship Guide | CISA](#)
- [De-escalation Products and Resources | CISA](#)
- (13-minute video) [Violence Prevention through De-escalation Video | CISA](#)
- [Personal Security Considerations Action Guide | CISA](#)
- [Security Planning Workbook | CISA](#)

Funding Resources

State/Federal Funding Opportunities: [CSSC List of Security Funding Opportunities](#)

Federal Funding: [Nonprofit Security Grant Program \(NSGP\)](#)