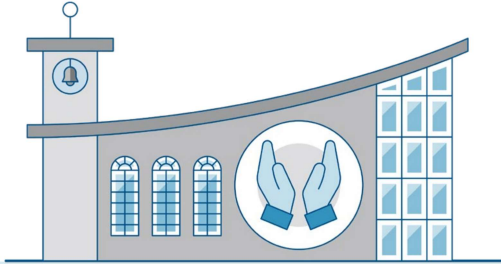




PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP: SIX STEPS TO ENHANCE SECURITY AGAINST TARGETED VIOLENCE



OVERVIEW

This document outlines actions that faith-based organizations and community leaders can take to increase security. These six steps can help protect places of worship against potential threats of targeted violence in a cost-effective manner that maintains an open and welcoming environment.

PLAN AHEAD

Following these six steps will help places of worship better understand potential risks, prepare a response plan, and pursue additional resources for security. ➤

IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS

Immediately call 9-1-1. Set the emergency action plan in motion. Every employee and volunteer who has an emergency task should know how and when to perform it; this may include life-saving procedures. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [You Are the Help Until Help Arrives](#) curriculum and the Department of Defense [STOP THE BLEED®](#) program teach life-saving first aid techniques that should be incorporated into planning efforts. After the emergency, report the incident to your local [Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#) field office, community groups, and relevant faith-based security organizations.

STEP 1 Understand the Risk

- ▶ Review the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin](#) to understand and monitor national trends and developments.
- ▶ Connect with local law enforcement, the local FBI field office, DHS Intelligence Officers within the [DHS Fusion Centers](#), and other places of worship in the area to better understand localized threats.
- ▶ Perform a [security self-assessment](#) of the facility to determine potential vulnerabilities or contact the local Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) [Protective Security Advisor](#) or local law enforcement to conduct the assessment.

STEP 2 Understand Your Space

- ▶ Evaluate your facility through a [layered security approach](#) that considers the outer, middle, and inner perimeters of the building and grounds.

STEP 3 Develop and Practice a Plan

- ▶ Create a security and emergency action plan to [document](#)¹ the steps that personnel and volunteers will take to respond if an incident occurs.
- ▶ [Practice](#) the plan to build muscle memory of the actions that will be taken if an incident occurs.

STEP 4 Inform and Educate Greeters

- ▶ Identify suspicious behaviors and possibly prevent a potential attack through [de-escalation](#) techniques.
- ▶ Recognize [signs of terrorism-related suspicious activity](#) and how to [Report Suspicious Activity](#) to local law enforcement or a person of authority. Many states also have designated a unique “tip line” to collect reports of terrorism-related suspicious activity.

STEP 5 Pursue Grants

- ▶ Apply for [grants](#) that can provide new resources for security.

STEP 6 Report Hate Crimes and Other Incidents

- ▶ [Report](#) hate crimes or any other criminal incidents to local law enforcement and the FBI.

¹ Example template that may be used for active shooter-specific scenarios.

RESOURCES



Protecting Places of Worship

CISA Faith Based Community Resources: cisa.gov/topics/physical-security/protecting-houses-worship

FBI Active Shooter Safety Resources:

fbi.gov/about/partnerships/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-resources

CISA De-Escalation Series: cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/de-escalation-series

CISA Critical Infrastructure Exercises: cisa.gov/resources-tools/services/stakeholder-exercises

DHS Prevention Resource Finder: dhs.gov/prevention

Department of Justice (DOJ) Hate Crimes Prevention and Enforcement: justice.gov/hatecrimes

DOJ Protecting Places of Worship Program: justice.gov/file/1376571/download



Grants

DHS Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program: dhs.gov/tvtpgrants

DOJ Grants to Combat Hate Crimes: ojp.gov/doc/fy23-hate-crime-funding.pdf

FEMA Nonprofit Security Grant Program: fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security

Office of Management and Budget (OMB): grants.gov



Stay Informed

DHS National Terrorism Advisory System: dhs.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system

DHS TRIPwire (Technical Resource for Incident Prevention): tripwire.dhs.gov

Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI)

Threats Against Houses of Worship Highlight the Importance of Religious Community Outreach:

[dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/jcat/firstresponderstoolbox/129S - First Responders Toolbox - Threats Against Houses of Worship Highlight the Importance of Religious Community Outreach.pdf](https://dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/jcat/firstresponderstoolbox/129S_-_First_Responders_Toolbox_-_Threats_Against_Houses_of_Worship_Highlight_the_Importance_of_Religious_Community_Outreach.pdf)

ODNI US Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators (2021 Edition):

dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/news_documents/Mobilization_Indicators_Booklet_2021.pdf



Suspicious Activities and Incidents

Report Hate Crimes to FBI: tips.fbi.gov

1-800-CALL-FBI

DHS “If You See Something, Say Something®” Campaign: dhs.gov/see-something-say-something



Contacts

CISA Protective Security Advisors (PSAs):

To locate the PSA in your area, contact central@cisa.dhs.gov or visit cisa.gov/resources-tools/programs/protective-security-advisor-psa-program
For additional CISA Regional Support, visit cisa.gov/about/regions

DHS Intelligence Officers (IOs):

To locate the IO in your area, contact DHS.INTEL.ORI.OMT@hq.dhs.gov

FBI Field Offices: fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices

To access the digital version of this guidance, follow the QR code below:

