

FREE RESOURCE

CHURCH SECURITY READINESS CHECKLIST

01 / People, property and children

Use this with your pastor, ministry leaders and safety team. Check only what you have verified. An unchecked item needs an owner and a next step.

Church: _____ Review date: _____
Reviewed by: _____ Next review: _____

Leadership and responsibility

- ☐ A safety coordinator and backup are named for each service and event.
- ☐ Greeters, ushers, children's workers and leaders know whom to contact.
- ☐ Written procedures cover medical emergencies, fire, severe weather and threats.
- ☐ Local police, fire or emergency management have been invited to review the plan.
- ☐ Volunteers know their limits, when to call 911 and how to avoid confrontation.

Building and arrival

- ☐ Before opening, assigned people check entrances, rooms and exterior conditions.
- ☐ Exit routes are clear; exit doors open from inside without keys or special knowledge.
- ☐ Exterior lighting works; walkways and emergency vehicle access are unobstructed.
- ☐ Unused areas have controlled access without blocking emergency exits.
- ☐ Keys and access codes have assigned owners and are updated when roles change.

Children and vulnerable attendees

- ☐ Child check-in and release confirm that each child leaves with an authorized adult.
- ☐ Children's areas have controlled access and assigned, screened workers.
- ☐ Workers follow approved supervision and abuse-reporting procedures.
- ☐ A missing-child response and family reunification process are documented.
- ☐ Assigned helpers can assist people with mobility, hearing, vision or language needs.



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02 / Communication and response

Review these checks before services, after staffing or building changes, and during scheduled practice sessions. Verify that volunteers can explain their role.

Communication and reporting

- [ ] Phones or radios work in the sanctuary, children's rooms and other occupied areas.
- [ ] The church address and emergency contact numbers are available to volunteers.
- [ ] A designated person calls 911; a backup is identified if that person is absent.
- [ ] The team uses clear language and has a backup if radios or power fail.
- [ ] Concerns are reported based on behavior and credible threats, without profiling.

Emergency response and equipment

- [ ] Evacuation routes, assembly locations and shelter areas are identified.
- [ ] The plan explains evacuation, shelter and lockdown decisions for different hazards.
- [ ] The team has practiced emergency communication and helping attendees move safely.
- [ ] First-aid supplies are accessible; available AEDs are checked and trained help identified.
- [ ] Assigned staff know how to guide responders and account for people afterward.

Training and follow-through

- [ ] A brief safety huddle confirms roles, absences and special needs before each service.
- [ ] Volunteers receive orientation and periodic refresher training for their assigned roles.
- [ ] Incidents and concerns are documented factually and stored with restricted access.
- [ ] A spokesperson and process for contacting affected families are identified.
- [ ] Leaders review incidents and exercises, assign fixes and schedule the next review.

Before the next service: Walk the exits. Confirm children's release procedures. Test communication. Name the person who calls 911. Address urgent hazards immediately.



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03 / Turn gaps into action

Choose your three highest-priority gaps. Record a specific action, one responsible person and a due date. Recheck the item only after you verify the fix.

Priority 1 | Gap: _____

Action: _____

Owner: _____ Due: _____ Verified on: _____

Priority 2 | Gap: _____

Action: _____

Owner: _____ Due: _____ Verified on: _____

Priority 3 | Gap: _____

Action: _____

Owner: _____ Due: _____ Verified on: _____

Service safety huddle
Coordinator / backup: _____
911 caller / backup: _____
Who meets responders: _____
Children's lead / reunification lead: _____
Next practice / plan review: _____

Keep the welcome. Strengthen the plan.
This checklist is a starting point, not a security certification or complete emergency plan. Tailor procedures with local responders and qualified professionals. Keep completed checklists and sensitive response details accessible only to authorized people.

Further planning resources
CISA: Mitigating Attacks on Houses of Worship Security Guide
CISA: Houses of Worship Security Self-Assessment
Original checklist by The Organized Church. No government endorsement implied.