

Harnett County Sheriff's Office



Security and Safety

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Parking lots:

1. People (1 for each parking lot) with vest visibly marked security.
 - A. These individuals may/may not be armed. Be especially diligent.
 - B. Rotate these individuals out with 4 others each service to provide opportunity to attend service.
 - C. If feasible block entrance to one of drives to limit access.
 - D. Do foot patrol around buildings and edge of property noting where any access may be.
 - E. Keep radio contact with each other
 - F. Divided into 4 sectors and clear each sector every 15 mins.
 - G. Note any strange cars parked in the parking lot and investigate calling in any suspicious autos.
 - H. Have availability to phones.
 - I. Contact with Law Enforcement/EMS in time of emergency.

Main Entrance:

1. Have one main entrance and notify entire congregation to use.
 - A. Make sure congregation uses and not alternative ones.
 - B. During service lock all alternative entrances.

Sanctuary:

1. Have Ushers/Greeters to cover both doors and note any new people.
 - A. Approach any new people and simply ask may I help you.
 - B. Strategically place allowed concealed carry and law enforcement officers for adequate coverage.
 - C. Strategically place EMS personnel for adequate assistance.
 - D. Have individuals to assist the elderly and infirm.
 - E. Have Ushers/Greeters in contact with parking lot security via WT equipped with earpiece.
 - F. Provide locks to doors from inside in case of a shooter alert.

Pastor:

1. During time of emergency/shooter yells code red.
 - A. This can be yelled by anyone who spots the emergency/shooter.

Camera Monitor:

Monitor all cameras and have contact, via WT, with all security

Congregation:

1. Should consider training for active shooter.
 - A. Train congregation to get low when this occurs to allow armed congregation to engaged shooter.
 - B. Individuals who engage should close the gap to shooter.
 - C. Only security should call 911 to avoid overloading.
 - D. Exit only when safe to do so.
 - E. Children's church should adopt schools active shooter drill. Use the red/green placards.
 - F. Have a safe room or area.

FOCUS POINTS FOR ASSESSING

PERIMETER AND PARKING AREAS

Goal: These areas should be clean, lit sufficiently at night (with either steady lights or motion activated lights) to prevent concealment, with clear markings and helpful signs, and they should be as free of hazards as possible, with continually open access for emergency vehicles and personnel.

- Multiple security assessments should be conducted to reflect status changes with time of day, day of week, season, and as the number of vehicles and pedestrians change.
- Look for evidence of loiterers or inappropriate or unsafe activities. (Cigarette stubs, cans, bottles and litter in areas that could be used by vagrants, graffiti, litter, rags, blankets, odors, paraphernalia, etc.)

The lack of evidence shouldn't completely eliminate a concern, but the presence of evidence gives additional reasons to enhance security for an area or item.

Within reason for the specific setting and situation of a place of worship, the following elements are preferred:

- The property line should be clearly defined with signs, fences or other indicators.
- Effective seasonal maintenance of driveways, sidewalks, trees, shrubs and other elements of the grounds, perimeter and parking.
- Within reason, there should be no items that could block vision for vehicles or pedestrians or allow concealment of people or hazardous items.
- The area should have enough lights to light up the perimeter, parking spaces, exterior of the building, doors and areas of potential concealment.
- Sheds or storage should be kept locked, even if maintenance staff or others are gone for only a few minutes.
- Maintenance items, liquids, seasonal chemicals, etc., should have safety labels, and safety signs should be posted.
- There should be no hazards to traffic flow, vehicles or pedestrians.
- Signs assisting visitors and emergency responders are beneficial: Arrows to main entrance, contact numbers, parking row or section identifiers, etc.
- No illegal parking by members or guests should be allowed. Overflow parking should be directed to legal parking areas.

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT PERIMETER AND PARKING

1. Surrounding area

Are there any aspects of the community, neighborhood, terrain, geology or other issues that might affect the safety and security of the place of worship?
(Rivers, weather patterns, crime in area, traffic, threats, etc.)

Are there preventive or protective devices or elements in place specifically for any of those, if beneficial? (Earth barriers, walls, shelters, water channels, alarms, pumps, graffiti resistant paint, removal of elements that attract vagrants, etc.)

2. Surveillance or patrol of area

Overall status?

•Cameras? Operable? Located optimally?

Who monitors and when?

Is this program effective?

•Patrol?

Can the parking area be viewed from inside the building or must patrol be done on foot or by vehicle?

Who conducts patrol?

Hours of patrol?

Training? Documentation?

Is this program functioning effectively and without liability concerns?

3. Parking

Status and condition?

•How many vehicles can be parked in marked parking spaces?

•On average, how many are present during services?

•Lines and markings clear?

•Signs as needed? (Emergency reminders, phone numbers, directions to entrance, etc.)

•Pedestrian risks?

•Risks to children? (Are there play activities in parking area at other times?)

•Snow/ice removal status?

•Any parking spaces more risky than others for any reason?

• Are staff or pastoral vehicles obvious to strangers? (Note: This may be acceptable or not, according to the situation.)

•Parking assistance?

Who is in charge? Training? Documentation?

Is this program functioning effectively and without liability concerns?

4. Lighting for perimeter and parking

Overall status? (Type and location)

- Are most parking spaces reasonably illuminated at night?
- Lighting controls secure?
- All lights operable and at reasonable brightness level?
- Are they tamper resistant and appropriate for weather?
- If lights are motion activated are they set for effective distance and movement?

5. Driveway(s):

Overall status? (Location and number)

- Visual barriers or distractions?
- Traffic concerns expressed by members or visitors or by motorists?
- Issues that might cause vehicle damage or impair movement?
- Emergency vehicle access marked if needed?
- Fire hydrants clear?
- If exit is into alleys or similar throughways, are signs needed to encourage caution about pedestrians, motorists, limited sight, etc?

6. Fences, borders, walls, other perimeter markings

Overall status?

- Is the perimeter of the property clearly defined?
- Are fences and walls well maintained and free of damage or graffiti?
- Is there some reason the height or material in fences creates a concern?

7. Outbuildings, sheds, items

Overall status?

- Are they in use? Empty? Used for storage but not accessed often?
- Potential hazard for children, others?
- Secured so not accessible to anyone other than authorized staff?
- Electricity in the sheds? Is it safe and operable?
- Propane or other fuel tanks? How are these secured? Can they be used as a place of concealment?
- Air conditioning units and fans and similar equipment: Condition? Safety factors?

8. Grounds care

Overall status?

- Are grounds well cared for seasonally to give the appearance of attention not neglect?
- Are items locked up or stored in a secure manner?

- Are all items inscribed with identifying information?
- Fuel or other liquids in safe containers?
- Safety signs and labels as needed?

9. Trash receptacles other bins, cans or containers

Overall status?

- Away from buildings?
- Fire resistant?
- Any combustible hazards anywhere on the grounds?
- Do dumpster or bin contents create potential problems?
- Are dumpsters or other containers located to make it difficult to get behind them?

10. Decorative items (Flags, banners, statues, symbols, crosses, etc.)

Overall status?

- Potential hazard for children or others?
- Updated and well maintained?
- High value? Could they be replaced with lower value items if they are unique and thievery is a concern?
- Off-season items. Are they secure and protected from damage?

11. Trees, bushes, shrubs and other landscaping features

Overall status?

- Trimmed to avoid blocking views, windows, doors, and to prevent easy concealment under or in them?
- Are tree branches trimmed for reduced weather damage or falling on buildings or vehicles?
- Any features that present hazards or potential for crime, vandalism, etc.? (Water, rocks, planters, etc.) Can they be made more secure?

12. Vehicle barriers, barricades and access

Overall status?

Are there natural, decorative or other barriers to prevent vehicles from crashing into doors or windows, driving into pedestrian areas, blocking doors, driving up close to allow quick crimes and escapes?

13. Parked vehicles

Overall status?

- List routinely parked vehicles such as busses, vans, carts, other fleet vehicles. Who is responsible for their care and maintenance?
- Locked at all times when no driver is present?
- Maintained: Clean inside and out, equipment working, operable, parked safely?

- If not used often, are they checked at least weekly?
- Long-term parked vehicles (List and list reason for having them in the parking area.)

Kept clean and maintained to prevent an unsightly abandoned appearance?

Locked at all times?

Trunks filled to prevent children from getting inside? (The trunks should be locked, not just have the locking mechanism removed.)

14. Sidewalks and stairs

- Are stairs and sidewalks to all entrances well-maintained and lighted?
- Are stairs clear on either side or without concealment areas?
- Railings in good repair?
- Stairs going into basement areas lit, clean and safe?
- Wheelchair ramps clear and lighted?

15. Playgrounds, basketball courts, etc.

Overall status?

Are these on areas that are also driveways? What precautions are used?

Are these easily observed to provide security for children and others?

Is it well lit, if it is used at night with church approval?

16. What other issues about the perimeter, grounds, parking or the general area, should be inspected? Any other areas of concern?

BUILDING EXTERIOR

Among the issues regarding safety and security are: building age, architectural features, patterns of use and the design and materials of the exterior. Many of the following questions can be adapted to fit the specific features of your place of worship.

Goal: All buildings should be well maintained, locked and lighted in a way that deters crime and unauthorized access and increases safety at entrances and exits. It may be appropriate for exteriors to be strengthened against hazardous weather conditions for the area or to have extra protection at doors and windows for other reasons.

- Doors and openings to buildings should all be able to be locked and usually should be locked between services and activities, unless there are other customs in your place of worship.
- Private entrances or other access points should be locked after every use, even between short intervals of use. No doors should be propped open.
- Devices such as peepholes and intercoms may be helpful, to allow screening on appropriate doors.
- As few entrance doors as possible should be unlocked and used any time.
- Entrances not used should be as well lit and maintained as those that are use often.
- Easily visible signs should direct people to preferred entrances.
- Windows and doors should be locked and able to be seen by patrols.
- Alarm systems should be obvious and working, and should be tested on a schedule. (Alarms are not always a practical answer for securing an entire place of worship. If they are used, consider having a mechanism for having flashing lights to accompany the alarm, to attract more attention.)

Hiring a locksmith or other repairman (or enlisting the help of a knowledgeable member of the congregation) to evaluate doors and locks may be helpful if the equipment is old, has not been well maintained or maintenance records are not available.

Potential Questions about the Exterior

1. Overall appearance and condition?

Are any portions damaged to the extent that it could be a hazard? (Loose stones, splintered wood, nails showing, sections missing, loose decorative features on roof or gables, etc?)

- Are drain pipes, trellis, decorative letters and symbols and other attachments to the exterior solidly attached?

2. Roof

How can the roof be accessed? Can it be secured?

- If access is gained, what is on the roof that could present a hazard to the person accessing it or to those in the place of worship?
- Is there anything to be stolen? (Copper, conduit, etc.)
- Are skylights and transom windows closed and locked?
- What is the status of vents, electrical equipment, HVAC installations, loose objects? (Check for repair needs or any apparent tampering.)
- Status and condition of roof? Water or wind damage visible? Fire hazards?

3. Generators, fuse boxes and other equipment

Compliance with codes and safety regulations?

- Locked when allowed by code? Inspection records maintained?
- Evidence of tampering?

4. Lights

•At doors: Are they tamper resistant? Sufficiently bright?
Are they steady burning or on sensors?

•Other lights: Are there enough of them to help reduce risk to windows and doors? Are they placed correctly to be effective for their purposes?

5. Doors

(Starting at one point and working around the building, at each door)

- Condition of door, parts and hinges as to repair, sturdiness, maintenance?
- Locking mechanism: According to the type of lock being used, is it workable, in good repair? When it locks, does the door lock solidly?
- Condition of door frame?
- Are emergency exit doors clear and operable?
- Is the timing of automatic and handicapped accessible doors appropriate for all times and conditions? (Should be long enough to allow exit, but not so long that the doors stay open after the person using the door has left, if others are not present.)
- Is there a method of knowing and controlling who has keys and how they are used? Have there been any concerns about key use or control?

6. Windows

Inspect all ground level windows, including those that cannot be opened or that are decorative.

- Are there indicators that anyone has tried to gain access? (Keep window frames repaired to make this more obvious.)
- Bathroom windows or other small windows locked when no one is present?

- Window coverings prevent seeing in when rooms aren't being used?
- Upper level windows secured and unable to be accessed or opened?
- Basement windows secured and in good repair?
- Are window wells clean and covered?

7. Any other aspect of the exterior that needs to be assessed?

MAIN ENTRANCE/EXIT AND FOYER AREA

Places of worship vary considerably in configuration of entrances/exits, foyers, waiting areas, and other architectural features. Adapt the following suggestions:

Goal: The interior of foyers and lobbies should be well-lighted when the doors are unlocked and the building is in use. Candles and décor should be displayed in a safe, secure manner.

Items of value: Many places of worship have displays, furniture or décor that are either costly or have historic or emotional value. Members may be so accustomed to them they do not realize their appeal to collectors or criminals. Vandalism is also a threat to these items.

- Items on display should be in easily observed, well-lighted locations and as secured as possible, or in a way that would make removal attempts obvious.
- Consider replacing real items (antique bibles or books, art work, chalices, silver candle holders, tapestries and other artifacts) with facsimiles or photographs.

Emergency preparedness: Issues for the main entrances and exits might include:

- Are light controls in a protected area or disguised?
- A procedure established for opening all front doors in the event of an emergency.
- Is there a procedure for quickly locking-down the building to prevent an attacker from entering? (While not creating a safety hazard in the event of fire or panic.)
- Consider the size, weight and location of furniture and fixtures that could be used as protective barriers if needed. Ushers and greeters should be aware of what areas might provide the best cover or be most easily secured in the event of a violent situation.
- Consider having a cabinet or nearby closet with emergency equipment: Flashlights, first aid kit, air horns and anything else that would be appropriate for the setting in potential emergencies. (Consider having enough flashlights to be able to distribute some to the congregation if needed.)
- Fire suppression items? Who is trained to use it?
- Are doors and hallways leading into private areas locked or kept closed if they must be kept unlocked? (Consider self-closing doors or doors with buzzers to alert staff.)
- Plants, furniture or other barriers may be useful to prevent people from standing next to large expanses of glass. This may be helpful in a weather emergency or if the glass is broken in any other way.

Assessing at varied times, days and seasons is the best way to fully consider the safety, security and emergency preparedness factors of the space.

SANCTUARY/AUDITORIUM/ OTHER WORSHIP AREAS

Goal: The main worship area and other areas used for worship should be maintained in a safe and secure manner during and between use, and emergency response options should be known by members. The space should be evaluated for hazards or concerns, maintenance issues, exit in case of emergency and for areas of protection in the event of harmful situations.

Features that do not change: Some general information may not change over time: Maximum occupancy, average attendance (or, actual attendance if the assessment is being conducted during a service) location of exit doors and location of light and temperature controls. However, having those items on the assessment list or form reminds assessors to evaluate current concerns about each of them.

Potential Questions for Main Worship Areas:

1. Overall space and seating:

- Maximum occupancy? Average attendance (or current attendance)
- Is the layout of the space or the placement of any item likely to be hazardous during an emergency exit? (Musical instruments, people standing or sitting in aisles, etc.)
- Status of light controls, thermostats, electrical outlets, etc.?
- If seating is on levels, are all levels able to be observed by ushers or others? Concerns?
- Hazards related to steps, furniture, candles, activities, large numbers of people, etc?
- Handicapped area status? Clear route to emergency exits?
- Seating: Condition of seats or pews and in and around seats. Status of books, materials, cards, etc. and holders. Hazards, concerns?
- Are there hazards related to clear movement (carpet condition, kneeling rails, etc.)? How can those be limited or eliminated?

2. Use and status of space

How is the space used on a daily basis, other than main worship times--daytime or nighttime? Have assessments been done during those times?

•If the space has other functions, is there a process for clearing and securing it between uses, if that would be beneficial?

•If the space is open for other purposes when few people are present:

Are emergency exits clear and open during that time?

Are valuable items secured?

Is there a way to contact staff quickly in an emergency? (Buzzer, intercom, etc.)

•Other concerns about how the space is used?

3. Entrances and exits to auditorium:

- Are side rooms or hallways locked to prevent the auditorium from being entered without the being observed?
- Are emergency exits lighted and marked and the path cleared?
- If emergency exit doors lead to other hallways or rooms, then to outside exits, are those doors and paths clear?
- Can doors be locked from either or both sides? If so, what is condition of lock, frame and hinges?

4. Windows

Overall status?

- If entrance could be gained from outside, are they locked, with locks and frames in good repair?
- If windows are decorative, are they firmly in place and in good repair?

5. Choir, musician waiting areas, etc.

Overall status or potential hazards?

- Are waiting areas secured to prevent access by unauthorized people?
- Are valuables secured?
- Are musical instruments secured?
- Fire suppression and other emergency equipment available?

6. Rooms or spaces adjacent to sanctuary or auditorium

Overall status?

- Are these rooms secured to prevent unauthorized access, or cleared after use?
- Are there areas that could easily offer concealment for people or items?
- Fire hazards?
- If the door is not always locked, when is it locked and how?
- Windows locked?

- Other issues of concern about the space or room?

7. Platform, pulpit area

•Overall status of area?

- Is the area free of potential safety hazards (cords, loose rugs, steep steps, etc.)?
- If there are potential hazards have they been protected against in an effective way (located away from movement area, covered, barriers, warning signs, etc.)
- Are candles maintained safely? Is fire suppression equipment nearby?