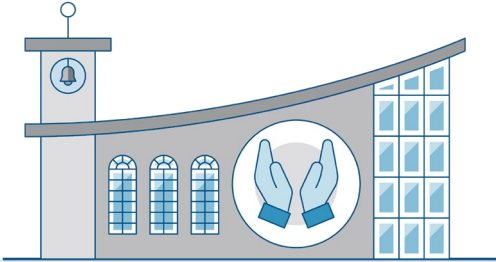




# PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP:

## 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](#)<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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](https://cisa.gov/topics/physical-security/protecting-houses-worship)

**FBI Active Shooter Safety Resources:**

[fbi.gov/about/partnerships/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-resources](https://fbi.gov/about/partnerships/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-resources)

**CISA De-Escalation Series:** [cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/de-escalation-series](https://cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/de-escalation-series)

**CISA Critical Infrastructure Exercises:** [cisa.gov/resources-tools/services/stakeholder-exercises](https://cisa.gov/resources-tools/services/stakeholder-exercises)

**DHS Prevention Resource Finder:** [dhs.gov/prevention](https://dhs.gov/prevention)

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

**DOJ Protecting Places of Worship Program:** [justice.gov/file/1376571/download](https://justice.gov/file/1376571/download)



### Grants

**DHS Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program:** [dhs.gov/tvtpgrants](https://dhs.gov/tvtpgrants)

**DOJ Grants to Combat Hate Crimes:** [ojp.gov/doc/fy23-hate-crime-funding.pdf](https://ojp.gov/doc/fy23-hate-crime-funding.pdf)

**FEMA Nonprofit Security Grant Program:** [fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security](https://fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security)

**Office of Management and Budget (OMB):** [grants.gov](https://grants.gov)



### Stay Informed

**DHS National Terrorism Advisory System:** [dhs.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system](https://dhs.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system)

**DHS TRIPwire (Technical Resource for Incident Prevention):** [tripwire.dhs.gov](https://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-FirstRespondersToolbox-ThreatsAgainstHousesofWorshipHighlighttheImportanceofReligiousCommunityOutreach.pdf)

**ODNI US Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators (2021 Edition):**

[dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/news\\_documents/Mobilization\\_Indicators\\_Booklet\\_2021.pdf](https://dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/news_documents/Mobilization_Indicators_Booklet_2021.pdf)



### Suspicious Activities and Incidents

**Report Hate Crimes to FBI:** [tips.fbi.gov](https://tips.fbi.gov)

1-800-CALL-FBI

**DHS “If You See Something, Say Something®” Campaign:** [dhs.gov/see-something-say-something](https://dhs.gov/see-something-say-something)



### Contacts

**CISA Protective Security Advisors (PSAs):**

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

**DHS Intelligence Officers (IOs):**

To locate the IO in your area, contact [DHS.INTEL.ORI.OMT@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:DHS.INTEL.ORI.OMT@hq.dhs.gov)

**FBI Field Offices:** [fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices](https://fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices)

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