



ChurchSecurity.co Ultimate Church Safety Checklist

Executive Summary

At ChurchSecurity.co, we equip church leaders with practical resources to foster a secure and welcoming environment for worship and community activities. This ultimate safety checklist offers actionable steps to evaluate and strengthen church safety, covering everything from routine operations to emergency responses. Each section is designed to support a holistic approach to safety, addressing staff training, facility security, congregant protection, and emergency preparedness.

Checklist Sections

1. Training & Emergency Preparedness

- **First Aid & CPR/AED Training:** Certify staff and key volunteers in first aid and AED operation, ensuring rapid response to medical emergencies.
- **Emergency Drills:** Schedule and conduct regular drills for fire, severe weather, and lockdowns, simulating varied scenarios to reinforce preparedness.
- **Medical Response Plan:** Designate roles for medical emergencies, and ensure first aid kits and resources are accessible throughout the facility.

2. Facilities & Property Security

- **Exterior Lighting & Surveillance:** Install and maintain proper lighting in parking areas and at entrances, alongside surveillance to monitor activity and deter threats.
- **Secure Doors & Windows:** Perform regular inspections of locks and entry points, considering additional security measures for sensitive areas.

- **Safe Entry/Exit Access:** Keep all exits clearly marked, unobstructed, and well-lit, ensuring safe and easy evacuation when needed.

3. Worship Service Protection

- **Active Shooter and Threat Training:** Train designated staff on handling disruptive or violent situations, utilizing scenario-based exercises to build confidence.
- **Security Roles for Greeters & Ushers:** Empower greeters and ushers to identify potential security risks and guide congregants to safe areas in emergencies.
- **Crowd Control Protocols:** Establish procedures for managing large gatherings to ensure safety, particularly during high-attendance services and events.

4. Children's Ministry and Childcare

- **Volunteer Background Checks:** Conduct thorough screening for anyone involved in children's ministry, ensuring only qualified individuals serve.
- **Controlled Access to Childcare Areas:** Limit entry with check-in/check-out systems and ID verification, while marking emergency exits clearly.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Maintain clean, safe childcare spaces with locked storage for hazardous items and childproofed areas.

5. Technology and Communications

- **Communication Systems:** Equip the facility with intercoms or radios for instant communication, ensuring swift response during emergencies.
- **Security Alarms:** Regularly test alarms and review distinct response protocols for each type with all staff.
- **Digital Security:** Protect sensitive information with secure access protocols and encryption where applicable.

6. Maintenance & Upkeep

- **Regular Safety Inspections:** Routinely inspect fire extinguishers, lighting, HVAC, and other systems to maintain their effectiveness.

- **Hazard Management:** Identify and mitigate risks like trip hazards and exposed wiring, especially in high-traffic areas.
- **Emergency Supply Readiness:** Store essential items, including flashlights, batteries, and first aid kits, in accessible locations throughout the facility.

7. Special Event Security

- **Event Safety Planning:** Integrate crowd control, parking, and emergency exit strategies into event planning, addressing unique needs for each type of gathering.
- **Security Staffing:** Designate additional security personnel for events with larger attendance to ensure comprehensive coverage.
- **Coordination with Local Authorities:** Build relationships with local law enforcement for quick support, especially during high-profile or large events.

Next Steps

To enhance your church's safety measures, **schedule a consultation** with one of our experienced public safety professionals. We'll provide tailored guidance to help implement these safeguards effectively, ensuring a secure environment for every church gathering.

Detailed Checklist

1. Training & Emergency Preparedness

- ☐ Ensure all staff and volunteers are CPR/AED certified.
- ☐ Provide first aid training for staff and key volunteers.
- ☐ Designate emergency roles for staff and regular volunteers.
- ☐ Schedule and conduct fire drills every quarter.
- ☐ Schedule severe weather and lockdown drills bi-annually.
- ☐ Ensure AED devices are maintained and batteries are charged.

☐ Stock first aid kits in accessible locations, including childcare and high-traffic areas.

☐ Create a list of emergency contacts and post it in prominent locations.

☐ Train staff on emergency response protocols for different scenarios.

2. Facilities & Property Security

☐ Install or update lighting in parking lots, entrances, and all exterior points.

☐ Conduct monthly checks on all security cameras and alarms.

☐ Maintain clear sightlines by trimming bushes, trees, or other obstructions.

☐ Ensure all doors have functional locks; repair or replace faulty locks.

☐ Equip main entrances with self-locking doors.

☐ Check all windows and reinforce those that pose a security risk.

☐ Mark all exits clearly and ensure they are unobstructed.

☐ Equip doors with alarms or cameras where additional security is needed.

☐ Set up regular patrols or monitoring for parking areas and entry points during services.

3. Worship Service Protection

☐ Develop a protocol for identifying suspicious behavior.

☐ Conduct active shooter training for select staff and volunteers.

☐ Role-play emergency scenarios with greeters, ushers, and key volunteers.

☐ Designate "safe zones" in the building for emergencies.

☐ Instruct greeters and ushers to be vigilant for potential threats.

☐ Create a system for ushers to communicate discreetly during services.

☐ Ensure greeters and ushers know emergency exit paths and congregation evacuation routes.

☐ Develop a plan to secure offering collection points.

- ☐ Monitor and manage traffic flow, particularly in high-traffic areas.

4. Children's Ministry and Childcare

- ☐ Conduct background checks for all staff and volunteers working with children.
- ☐ Use a secure check-in and check-out system for childcare and children's programs.
- ☐ Clearly mark emergency exits in all childcare areas.
- ☐ Keep all cleaning products, sharp objects, and hazardous items locked away.
- ☐ Install childproof locks and outlet covers where needed.
- ☐ Conduct monthly safety checks of all childcare areas and equipment.
- ☐ Create a dedicated medical response plan for children with known health issues.
- ☐ Provide staff with specific training on emergency responses for children.
- ☐ Post emergency contacts in children's ministry rooms for quick reference.

5. Technology and Communications

- ☐ Install and test intercom systems for immediate communication across the facility.
- ☐ Train staff to use intercoms or radios, with backup options if power fails.
- ☐ Perform monthly tests on all alarm systems.
- ☐ Ensure that all staff know how to respond to different alarm types.
- ☐ Secure all digital data (e.g., member information) with encryption and password protection.
- ☐ Restrict access to sensitive information to designated personnel.
- ☐ Regularly update passwords for systems containing personal data.
- ☐ Provide secure login credentials for authorized personnel only.
- ☐ Keep all church software and security systems updated with the latest versions.

6. Maintenance & Upkeep

- ☐ Schedule routine inspections of fire extinguishers, replacing as necessary.
- ☐ Inspect emergency lighting and backup power sources monthly.
- ☐ Keep stairways, ramps, and exits free of obstructions.
- ☐ Secure or repair trip hazards like uneven flooring or exposed cables.
- ☐ Store emergency kits, including flashlights and batteries, in multiple locations.
- ☐ Regularly check HVAC systems for functionality and safety compliance.
- ☐ Ensure that emergency exits are easy to open and not blocked by storage or equipment.
- ☐ Test all smoke detectors and replace batteries bi-annually.
- ☐ Clean and maintain high-traffic areas to reduce accident risks.

7. Special Event Security

- ☐ Plan event layouts to include ample room for emergency exit access.
- ☐ Increase security staffing based on expected attendance.
- ☐ Identify high-traffic areas and assign personnel to manage crowd flow.
- ☐ Communicate with local authorities about large or high-profile events.
- ☐ Arrange for additional parking or shuttle services if needed.
- ☐ Develop an emergency evacuation plan tailored to event specifics.
- ☐ Train event staff on identifying and addressing potential hazards.
- ☐ Review protocols for securing valuable equipment during events.
- ☐ Ensure food safety protocols are followed if serving refreshments.

This checklist offers a structured approach, making it easier to address every safety concern systematically and keep your church safe and secure for every event and gathering.

About ChurchSecurity.co

James Martin, founder of ChurchSecurity.co, is a dedicated public safety professional and pastor with over two decades of experience serving and growing churches. James brings a unique blend of protection and pastoral care, leveraging his background in public safety (police, fire, and EMS) to safeguard congregations while staying deeply committed to loving and serving people.

For James, theology is foundational—shaping his philosophy of ministry and directly informing his approach to safety. This perspective allows him to bridge biblical principles with practical safety measures, ensuring that each safeguard aligns with both spiritual convictions and effective, real-world application.

Bonus Section: A Summary of the ChurchSecurity.co Guide to Conducting a Comprehensive Security Assessment

Introduction

Creating a safe environment for worship is a priority at ChurchSecurity.co. This guide offers a step-by-step approach to conducting a thorough safety and security assessment for your church. It addresses key areas—such as facility, processes, and people—ensuring your church is well-prepared for both common and unexpected safety needs.

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Each chapter contains:

1. Purpose of a Church Security Assessment

The primary goal of a church security assessment is to create a safe, welcoming space for worship and community. This involves proactive safety measures, emergency preparedness, and continuity planning. Regular assessments help identify potential risks, establish prevention strategies, and ensure your congregation feels both safe and comfortable.

Key Goals:

- Protection of people and property.
 - Emergency response readiness.
 - Ensuring continuity for uninterrupted worship and community activities.
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2. Assembling Your Security Assessment Team

Your security team should ideally include church staff, trained volunteers, and, if available, local emergency professionals. Team members should:

- Have a working knowledge of the facility and services.
- Prioritize a balanced approach to safety and sensitivity toward congregants.

- Be effective communicators open to collaboration.

Tip: Include a briefing for each team member about church-specific nuances, including services, activities, and any heightened risks, to prepare them for thorough evaluation.

What's included: A detailed explanation and example policy.

3. The Macro-Median-Micro Assessment Approach

This assessment framework helps focus on both the big picture and detailed specifics:

- **Macro (Big Picture):** Review the overall security framework and prioritize high-traffic or vulnerable areas.
- **Median (Segmented Focus):** Concentrate on specific sections within the church, such as entrances or child ministry areas.
- **Micro (Detailed Examination):** Inspect specific components, like locks, alarms, lighting, and signage, within each area.

This approach ensures no aspect of security is overlooked and that evaluations balance broad coverage with detailed scrutiny.

What's included: A detailed explanation and example policy.

4. Detailed Focus Areas

Perimeter and Parking

- ☐ Maintain well-lit and clear parking and entry areas.
- ☐ Inspect for potential hazards or hiding places (e.g., overgrown bushes).
- ☐ Check entrances and property boundaries for visibility and accessibility.

Building Exterior

- ☐ Regularly inspect doors, windows, and locks.
- ☐ Install or maintain surveillance at entry points.
- ☐ Ensure all exit paths are well-marked and unobstructed.

Worship and Gathering Areas

- ☐ Set up controlled access points during services.
- ☐ Train greeters and ushers on security protocols and emergency responses.
- ☐ Plan evacuation routes and designate "safe zones" for emergencies.

Children's Ministry and Childcare

- ☐ Use a secure check-in/check-out system.
- ☐ Conduct background checks on all childcare volunteers and staff.
- ☐ Childproof rooms and ensure emergency exits are clear and accessible.

Technology and Communications

- ☐ Ensure intercom systems are functional and accessible.
- ☐ Test all alarm systems and confirm staff knowledge of alarm responses.
- ☐ Secure sensitive digital records with encryption and restricted access.

Maintenance and Facility Upkeep

- ☐ Schedule inspections for fire extinguishers and emergency lighting.
- ☐ Address any potential hazards (e.g., slippery floors or exposed cables).
- ☐ Maintain emergency kits, including first aid supplies and flashlights.

5. Creating the Assessment Report

After the assessment, compile findings into a detailed report with:

- Prioritized actions and immediate concerns.
- Recommendations for long-term improvements.
- Suggested training sessions for staff and volunteers.

This report is both a record of assessment and a resource for continuous improvement.

What's included: A detailed explanation and example policy (and report templates)

6. Ongoing Security Practices

Security is a continuous effort. Plan to reassess regularly, stay updated on best practices, and remain responsive to new risks. An effective security program is one that evolves with your church, maintaining its role as a safe and welcoming place for all.

What's included: A detailed explanation and example policy.

This guide summary provides a structured approach to assessing and improving safety and security in your church, making it simple to address each critical area with practical and actionable steps.

👉 **Email james@churchsecurity.co to request your custom comprehensive plan**