

# **Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston**



## **Safety and Security Guidelines for Parishes and Religious Education Programs**

## **Acknowledgements**

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"How to Assess the Safety and Security of Your Place of Worship." 2009.

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## **Introduction**

Parishes are the home of the Christian community, where the Gospel is proclaimed and celebrated, and where children and adults learn the tenets of their faith and how to put faith into action. Parish communities are not, however, immune to the dangers of the society in which we live. Acts of violence in our church communities are rare; nevertheless, in our rapidly changing society, it is important that we be prepared. This is true for all parishes, but especially those with religious education programs.

Parents and guardians have come to expect more from their communities in terms of safeguarding their children. Schools in Massachusetts are mandated to have emergency preparedness plans and anti-bullying policies in place, and school officials are held accountable when such policies are not followed. Because the expectations are higher, our parish communities need to responsibly meet these expectations as best we can with the resources we have. We have to take measures to assess the security risks that exist at our facilities, mitigate those risks, and educate staff and volunteers on their role in helping to maintain a safe environment for all. To this end, the Office of Risk Management has developed these guidelines, in consultation with local first responders and in collaboration with the Office of Religious Education.

We recognize that there are many variables among the parishes and religious education programs within the Archdiocese of Boston – urban versus rural, small parishes versus large, etc. Thus, the goal of these guidelines is to give you tools to develop your own safety policy based on your parish's unique needs and circumstances. If after reviewing this you have questions or concerns about how to tailor these guidelines to your situation, please feel free to contact the Office of Risk Management, telephone 617-746-5742, or via email at [ormlosscontrol@rcab.org](mailto:ormlosscontrol@rcab.org).

### **Security is Everyone's Concern**

Engage all of your employees and volunteers. It is not only the job of those in administration; it is everyone's responsibility to create a safe environment - from not leaving doors propped open to immediately alerting supervisors of suspicious behavior. Do not feel overwhelmed by lack of money or technology. Work with the resources you have. Encouraging an attitude of safety and awareness among staff members and volunteers is your best defense.

### **Getting Started – Establishing a Safety & Security Committee**

The first step in enhancing the safety of your premises is to establish a **Safety and Security Committee**. The goal of this committee is to assess the security needs of a parish, establish a safety and security plan, educate staff, volunteers and parishioners regarding the plan, and implement the safety and security protocols that are developed. The pastor is responsible for the safety and security of your parish, although for the purposes of this plan he may assign a designee as his representative, such as the parish business manager. The primary responsibility, however, remains with the pastor.

# Safety and Security Guidelines for Parishes and Religious Education Programs

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The pastor, or his designee, should work in collaboration with members of the parish council and finance council to form the safety and security committee. Suggested participants include:

- Pastor
- Director or coordinator of religious education
- School principal/vice principal (if the parish has a school affiliated with it)
- Pastoral associate
- Facilities manager or custodian
- Volunteer ushers or greeters
- Parishioners who work in the following professions:
  - Medical field, preferably a nurse
  - Law enforcement
  - Emergency Medical Services
  - Fire Safety
  - Insurance or risk management
  - Therapist, guidance counselor or social worker

Assign a secretary to take minutes and follow up with others on action items. Plan on having frequent meetings at the beginning of the process. Once you have established a security plan, meet at regularly-scheduled intervals to review the plan and keep it up-to-date. Educate parishioners, staff and volunteers about the committee's role and responsibilities. Ask parishioners to voice security concerns they may have; security is everyone's responsibility and all have a part to play in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment.

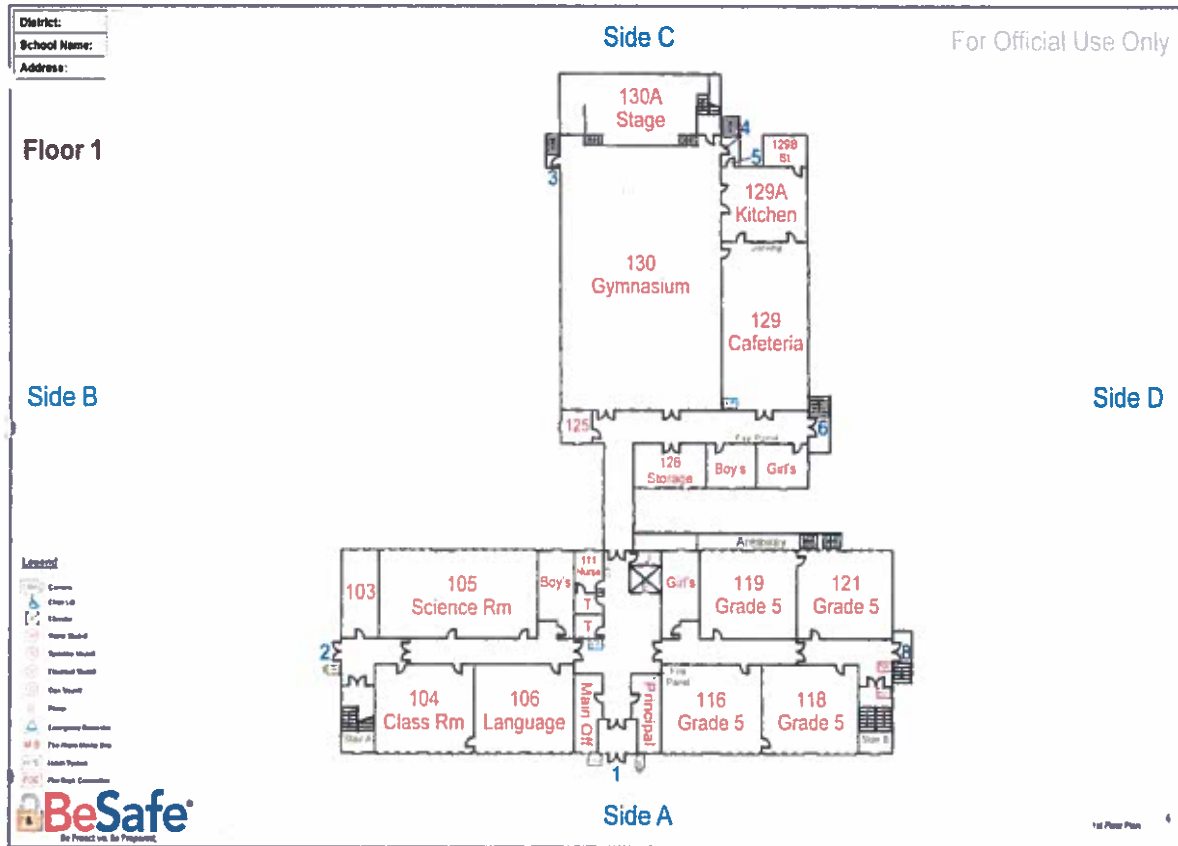
To begin the process of establishing a safety and security plan for your parish, the security committee will want to conduct a **security assessment** (see Appendix A). A security assessment is an evaluation of your parish community's current state of safety, security and preparedness for an emergency. Assessments take place by gathering information, inspecting facilities, speaking to individuals, and evaluating processes already in place.

## **Compiling Building Information**

In order to develop emergency procedures, it is important that you compile written information about specific parish buildings. Ask your parish custodian to complete this task and submit it to the security committee as a first step in the process. Please see Appendix B for a guide to compiling this information. Please note: building floor plans and the details of security systems should only be disclosed to committee members and authorized personnel such as police and firefighters.

The building floor plans should be simple diagrams of each floor of each building, marked to show exterior doors, windows, stairwells, fire doors, and the numbers and use of all rooms and areas. Copies of the floor plan should be kept with the safety and security plan and within your Critical Incident Response Kit. (For more on Critical Incident Response Kits, please see Appendix C.) Copies of the floor plan should also be filed with the local police and fire department as this is information you will want to share with local first responders in the event of an emergency. Keep this information in a secure place. Computer files containing this information should be password-protected.

*Please see sample floor plan below:*



### Telephone System

Consider installing caller ID, recording and tracing capabilities, and procedures that can be used to identify threatening or harassing incoming calls. Distribute copies of the Bomb Threat Form (see Appendix D) to anyone who receives incoming calls and show them how to use it. Compile staff and volunteer cellular telephone numbers and ensure that staff has programmed the numbers for the main office/points of contact (i.e., pastor, parish business manager, director of religious education, chair of safety committee) and direct dial for police, fire, and emergency medical services into their cell phones.

## **Communications and Warning Systems**

Identify the location and operating procedures of the following systems and equipment, document them in the parish safety and security plan, and post instructions adjacent to the equipment:

- Fire alarm, public address, intercom, VOIP telephone system, and bell systems that can be used for communications and warning: post scripts for ordering evacuation, lockdown, and shelter-in-place.
- Electronic notification system: make sure that those with access have wallet cards with instructions for accessing via their cell phone. Prepare scripts for emergency announcements.
- Telephone systems for emergency communications purposes: make sure emergency telephone numbers are posted on all phones; identify the location of phones that can be used to call an outside number.

Identify the warning system used to alert staff, volunteers and students within the building to lockdown. You should also identify a means to warn those who may be outside the building during an emergency. See Appendix E for more information on communication systems. Identify the location of the fire alarm control panel and review the types of alarm indications (e.g., smoke or heat detector, manual pull station, or sprinkler waterflow) and the locations or areas covered by each zone.

## **Coordinate with Outside Agencies and the Community**

Strong relationships with outside agencies including law enforcement, fire departments, public health departments, mental health providers, and leaders in the community are critical. First responders should be familiar with your parish and, as noted earlier, should have floor plans on file for your parish campus. Invite them to come to your parish and meet with your safety and security committee. After you conduct your audits and establish your safety and security plan, ask a local first responder to review your plans. First responders are on the front lines of incidents and can often bring to our attention things we might easily overlook.

Church facilities have very similar concerns, regardless of the type of congregation. If you have not already done so, develop relationships with other houses of worship in your community and keep each other informed of threats or incidents that may arise.

### **Law Enforcement**

You may have police officers in your congregation who could assist with your security efforts, or serve on your safety and security committee. Your police department may also have a crime prevention officer who can provide valuable information about crime patterns in your area or incidents that have been occurring in the community. In addition, if you know the parish buildings will be unoccupied for a period of time, or if you have reason to believe your parish is being targeted for a crime, ask local law enforcement to increase patrols in your neighborhood and to keep an eye out for suspicious activity at your parish. A positive relationship with law enforcement is critical.

## **Fire Department**

Your community fire codes may require regular inspections by the fire department. If not, contact your local fire department and ask them to visit your parish and provide insights about fire safety and suppression and the best way to respond to a small fire. They may also be able to provide training in the use of fire extinguishers.

## **Emergency Medical Assistance**

If you have a large number of staff or parishioners with specific medical conditions, ask emergency medical technicians if there are special precautions staff or volunteers need to take, or if they can receive training in specific responses. Your local EMTs may also be able to provide you with CPR, first aid and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) training. (In addition, please see our website for information on AED guidelines and vendors: <http://www.rcabrisk.org/loss-control-topics/cpr-and-aeds/aed-guidelines>)

## **Mental Health Providers**

Identify mental health providers in your community who can be called upon to assist in the event of a crisis. It is especially important to establish relationships with providers who specialize in children and adolescents. They will be helpful resources in the event anyone is seeking a referral for mental health assistance.

## **Conducting Walk-Throughs**

After your safety and security committee has compiled information about your buildings and grounds, ensured that there is a floor plan on file, and reached out to first responders, your next step is to plan a walk-through of your buildings and grounds at various times of the day and week – when religious education classes are taking place, when Masses and other events are in progress, and when there is a lull in activities. Designate a leader to coordinate, schedule and lead the walk-through. Be thorough, considering potential problems as well as immediate concerns. Take detailed notes and be sure to file the notes in a safe location as soon as the assessment is over. Taking pictures is one of the easiest and most convenient ways to document the space you are assessing and making note of any problem areas. Making a recording with a video camera is also helpful.

## **When to Assess**

During the weekday, assess areas that are open to the public. Observe the impact of weekday traffic, foot traffic, parking situations, and door security. Thoroughly examine the facility and perimeter in full light. Interview staff and volunteers and ask if they have any specific concerns. In the evening, look at the exterior of your parish as it is seen by vandals or those looking for access or exits. If you have lights outside, consider turning them off to simulate conditions if lights were broken or burned out.

In the fall and winter months, weekday classes often take place during non-daylight hours. What would happen if an electrical failure caused the lights to go out? Conduct an assessment in the buildings with the lights off (be sure each member of the safety and security committee has a flashlight and no one else is occupying the building at that time. Determine how adults and children would be able to exit a classroom or building in the



dark. Is there emergency lighting? If not, are flashlights within reach and easy to find? Check for blocked exit doors and chairs or tables that people might stumble over.

Observe the facilities before, during and after Masses on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. This will also give the safety and security committee an opportunity to speak with greeters, ushers and hospitality workers while they are carrying out their ministry.

Take action about what is observed. If something is a serious problem, have it fixed as soon as possible. Put a follow-up date on your calendar to remind yourself to touch base with the person responsible for fixing the problem. Do the paperwork after the assessment. Brief reports should contain the following: risks and problems observed; positive observations if something specific is noted; overall observations, opinions and comments; recommendations and timelines, if any.

In evaluating a room or area of a building, look for any potential risk or hazard that could result in injuries. Does some aspect of the space increase the risk of crime or other harm? Is there something about the space, its maintenance, condition, the value and security of equipment or items, or any other situation that should be brought to the attention of the pastor? In a violent, hazardous or threatening situation, is there an area that would offer increased safety? Could the room be evacuated without using the door? Could the door be locked from the inside or barricaded, without increasing danger to occupants? Could fire suppression devices help if occupants were trapped inside? Are there supplies or equipment to assist in various emergencies?

### **Assess for Specific Situations**

Every parish and program should have a crisis management plan that indicates the types of crises that can occur (i.e., fire, active shooter, natural disaster) and the action to be taken in the event of such a crisis. **Because all parishes and religious education programs differ, there is no one-size-fits-all recommendation. For this reason, it is critical that security assessments be conducted for specific situations.** For more information on crisis management and planning, please contact the Office of Risk Management at 617-746-5742 or via email: [ormlosscontrol@rcab.org](mailto:ormlosscontrol@rcab.org).

### **Special Items in the Place of Worship**

Pay special attention to sacred vessels, vestments, artifacts of high value, and church relics. Extra security measures should be taken; i.e., security cameras or limiting access. Each high-value item should be documented with photos and a written description.

### **Outside Groups Using the Premises**

Religious institutions are frequently used by outside organizations for meetings and private functions. Make sure those using the building are aware of which areas they have access to, and which are restricted. Lock the doors to all classrooms, offices, and other areas of the building when not in use. Take note of what types of groups are sharing your facilities simultaneously. Is a youth group taking place at the same time as an Alcoholics' Anonymous meeting, for example? Are the meetings within close proximity to each other? Are there designated bathrooms for youth that are off-limits to adults?

Minimize duplicating keys to your building and always maintain a log of who has key access. Instead of offering keys to each group using the facility, ask a representative from your church or program to open and lock the building for other groups. In this way, control can be maintained and unnecessary duplication of keys can be avoided. This same representative can monitor the building during use to ensure that guests are using the facility in an appropriate manner. All staff should be well-versed in security procedures and lock-up routines to ensure consistency. If a key is lost, or your parish or program undergoes personnel changes, consider changing the keys immediately so that only those who need entrance to your facility are granted access.

### **Offices of Clergy and Staff**

Parish office staff may feel vulnerable to security concerns for a variety of reasons. Offices are sometimes located in more isolated parts of the building and staff may not be aware of intruders or visitors. When conducting an audit, consider ways to make office areas safer. Encourage parish staff to lock doors and utilize buzzers or an intercom system. Establish guidelines for who can be allowed in and under what circumstances. Staff cell phones should have key contact numbers for maintenance, emergency response and parish administrators programmed into them.

### **Ushers and Greeters**

Ushers and greeters can play an important role in the safety and security of your parish. In addition to creating a welcoming environment, they can keep a watchful eye for individuals exhibiting suspicious behavior. They should be trained in body language indicators and they should know whether, when, and how to approach an individual who is suspect. In addition, greeting newcomers should not end once Mass begins. Many situations of church violence or theft have occurred when the perpetrator entered church after a service began, hoping to be unnoticed. For more information on the role of ushers/greeters, please see Appendix F.

### **Training and Drills**

Training is needed to ensure everyone understands individual roles and responsibilities. Try to include safety and security issues at each staff meeting or at meetings with volunteers who spend time in the building. Every staff member and volunteer should know evacuation routes and the location of fire alarms and safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits and AEDs, if you have them.

It may not be feasible to perform regular drills with your entire religious education program, but your office should at the very least conduct lockdown and evacuation drills with your staff and volunteers. Children learn and practice drill procedures at school and will be used to taking direction from their teachers; therefore, the critical point is that the adults know what to do in the event of an emergency so that they may calmly and effectively lead the children to safety. For more information on emergency drills for religious education programs, please see Appendix G.

## **Office of Risk Management Resources**

The task of reviewing and implementing security measures can seem like a daunting one, especially given the nature of our places of worship. One of the greatest challenges our worship communities face is striking a balance between the security measures we take and the need to maintain an open, inviting and welcoming atmosphere. As you begin the security process, keep in mind that assessing the security program of a parish is ongoing. A thorough assessment cannot be done in a day; it must be part of a continuous series of activities. The Office of Risk Management is here to help you during any phase of your assessment. If you have any questions or concerns about anything in this guide, or if you would like more information about crisis management resources, please contact the Office of Risk Management at 617-746-5742 or via email: [ormlosscontrol@rcab.org](mailto:ormlosscontrol@rcab.org).

## **Appendix A: Safety Assessment Checklist**

### **Building Site**

- The parish layout maintains open sight lines throughout through careful placement and maintenance of buildings, landscaping features and lighting.
- Property lines are clearly marked. Boundaries between joint-use areas and private areas are similarly marked.
- Vacant buildings or other places or spaces adjacent to the parish that might provide offenders with “cover” or provide a location for illicit activities have been made safer by boarding up, or other means.
- Unsupervised site entrances are secured during low-use.

### **Landscaping**

- Landscaping reinforces access control, natural surveillance, and territoriality.
- Trees are located far enough away from buildings or are trimmed appropriately to avoid providing window or second story access.

### **Exterior Lighting**

- Exterior lighting is uniform and eliminates pockets of shadow and glare.
- Exterior lighting fixtures are vandal resistant, beyond easy reach (12-14 feet minimum off the ground), maintainable, and built with break-resistant lenses or protected by cages or other means.
- Exterior lighting is well-maintained.

### **Site Utilities**

- Access to site utilities, such as electrical transformers, generators, and electric and gas meters is limited and secure, and the exposed portions are protected against vandalism and vehicular damage.
- Site utilities do not create hiding places.
- Exterior mechanical equipment enclosures are lockable. Doors have protected hasps, hinges and deadbolt locks or high security padlocks. Hasps and hinges have secure fasteners and hinge pins are non-removable.
- Exterior mechanical equipment is difficult to climb.
- Utility lifelines (water, power, voice, data and Internet communications, etc.) are adequately protected from vandalism and natural disasters, preferably by concealing, burying or encasing. They are protected at points of entry into the building.

## **Building Access Control**

- Access into the building is 100% controllable through designated, supervised or locked entry points. Windows and service entries are not exceptions. Entry is either granted by supervising staff or by using proximity cards, keys, coded entries, or other devices.
- Signs, in all relevant languages and with simple maps or diagrams where needed, direct visitors to designated building entries.
- High value targets for theft, such as computers, instrument, safes and sacred artifacts are secured and kept in locked rooms when applicable.

## **Windows**

- All windows lock securely. Sliding windows have lift and slide protection. In existing buildings, window hardware and frames are in good condition.
- Second-floor windows are inaccessible or protected against burglary.
- Basement windows are protected from unauthorized entry by security grills or window well covers.

## **Doors**

- All exterior doors are designed to prevent unauthorized access into the building.
- Exterior doors should have as little exposed hardware as possible.
- Exterior doors should be equipped with hinges with non-removable pins.
- Exterior doors should be constructed of steel, aluminum alloy, or solid-core hardwood.
- Exterior door frames should be installed without excess flexibility to deter vandals from prying them open.
- Exterior glass doors should be fully framed and equipped with breakage-resistant tempered glass.
- Panic bar latches on exterior doors should be protected by pick plates to prevent tools and plastic cards from releasing the bolt.
- Exterior doors with panic push-bars should be equipped a metal plate covering the gap between the doors.
- Windows and sidelights are sized and located so that if they are broken, vandals cannot reach through and open the door from the inside.

### **Means of Egress in Existing Buildings**

- All means of egress from each part of the building, including stairways, egress doors, and any panic hardware installed thereon, aisles, corridors, passageways and similar elements are maintained in a safe condition and are available for immediate use and free of all obstructions.
- Every passageway from corridors and stairs to the street is clear of obstructions or impediments.
- Exit doors are equipped with emergency exit hardware and have no locks, chains, or fastenings to prevent escape from inside the building.
- Exit doors open in the direction of egress travel from areas designed to be occupied by more than 50 people.
- All exits and the routes to them are clearly visible, conspicuously indicated and reliably illuminated, with signs in appropriate languages, so everyone readily knows the direction of escape from any point. Exit signs are distinctive in color and easily distinguished from decorations, finishes, and other signs. "EXIT" lettering is at least 6 inches high with principal strokes not less than 3/4-inch wide.
- Exits do not rely on passage through rooms or spaces subject to locking.
- Exit signs are illuminated, well maintained, easily seen, and pointing in the right direction.
- Clear and precise emergency evacuation maps are posted at critical locations. They are customized or posted to match their positions in the building and are protected from vandalism or removal.

### **Emergency Contact Information is Updated and Accessible**

- Police, Fire, EMS
- Parish Authorities
- Office of Risk Management

## Appendix B: General Building Information

Number of buildings on parish property \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a map with a location of each building on property? \_\_\_\_\_

| Name of Building | Purpose of building | Occupancy | Hours of Use |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------------|
|                  |                     |           |              |
|                  |                     |           |              |
|                  |                     |           |              |
|                  |                     |           |              |

**Location of first aid kits:**

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**Location of AEDs:**

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**Fire Protection Systems – fire detection, alarm and communications**

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of fire protection system used |  |
| Frequency of inspections            |  |
| Location of control panels          |  |

**Security Systems**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Point of access doors   |  |
| Motion detection devices  |  |
| Surveillance cameras location, field of view, monitoring positions and remote access capabilities |  |
| Security alarm system   |  |

**Specific Building Information**  
**(To be filled out for each building – one sheet per building)**

Building Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Building Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Structure – indicate quantity; i.e. three entrances, two exits**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Entrances and exits   |  |
| Stairways, elevators  |  |
| Windows (operable or inoperable?)                                     |  |
| Walls (solid masonry or framed drywall?)                              |  |
| Fire doors  |  |
| Roof access, including skylights (indicate if operable or inoperable) |  |
| Basement, attic or crawlspace access                                  |  |

**Utilities**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Natural gas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Types of appliances used</li> <li>• Location of appliances used</li> <li>• Location of main gas shutoff</li> </ul>                             |  |
| Electrical service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of main building disconnect</li> <li>• Location of major subpanels</li> </ul>  |  |
| Cable television access/shutoff   |  |
| HVAC System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location/accessibility of air intakes</li> <li>• Location of controls for shutdown, including remote shutdown capability</li> <li>• Shutdown procedures</li> </ul> |  |

Telephone System: \_\_\_\_\_

Does phone system have caller ID? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_      Intercom capability? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Location of calling tree: \_\_\_\_\_

**Security**

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Location of key log                |  |
| Location of intercom/buzzer system |  |
| Secure point(s) of entry           |  |



## Appendix C: Critical Incident Response Kit (CIRK)

Among the recommended items in the CIRK are architectural blueprints; procedures to cut-off fire alarms, utilities, sprinkler systems, and cable television; keys to the building in a separately locked container; information on evacuation routes and safe rally locations; and emergency contact information for students, volunteers and staff.

| ITEM  | PERSON IN CHARGE | DATE PLACED |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| Floor plans   |                  |             |
| Maps  |                  |             |
| Blueprints  |                  |             |
| Aerial photos   |                  |             |
| Evacuation plan with routes and rally points  |                  |             |
| Placards with directional words   |                  |             |
| Procedures to cut off: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire alarm</li> <li>• Utilities</li> <li>• Sprinkler system</li> <li>• Cable television</li> </ul>  |                  |             |
| Keys and/or codes   |                  |             |
| Master schedule   |                  |             |
| Clergy and staff contact information  |                  |             |
| Contact List <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and Emergency phone numbers</li> <li>• Volunteer and parish council contact numbers</li> <li>• RCAB Office of Risk Management</li> </ul>                                    |                  |             |
| Optional Miscellaneous Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pens/pencils</li> <li>• Notepad</li> <li>• Tape</li> <li>• Flashlight</li> <li>• Batteries</li> <li>• Name tags</li> <li>• Paper towels</li> <li>• Laptops</li> </ul> |                  |             |

# Appendix D: Bomb Threat Form

## BOMB THREAT CALL PROCEDURES

Most bomb threats are received by phone. Bomb threats are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly, but remain calm and obtain information with the checklist on the reverse of this card.

### If a bomb threat is received by phone:

1. Remain calm. Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible. **DO NOT HANG UP**, even if the caller does.
2. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
3. Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
4. If possible, write a note to a colleague to call the authorities or, as soon as the caller hangs up, immediately notify them yourself.
5. If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters on the window display.
6. Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist (reverse side) immediately. Write down as much detail as you can remember. Try to get exact words.
7. Immediately upon termination of the call, do not hang up, but from a different phone, contact FPS immediately with information and await instructions.

### If a bomb threat is received by handwritten note:

- Call \_\_\_\_\_
- Handle note as minimally as possible.

### If a bomb threat is received by email:

- Call \_\_\_\_\_
- Do not delete the message.

### Signs of a suspicious package:

- No return address
- Excessive postage
- Stains
- Strange odor
- Strange sounds
- Unexpected delivery
- Poorly handwritten
- Misspelled words
- Incorrect titles
- Foreign postage
- Restrictive notes

### DO NOT:

- Use two-way radios or cellular phone; radio signals have the potential to detonate a bomb.
- Evacuate the building until police arrive and evaluate the threat.
- Activate the fire alarm.
- Touch or move a suspicious package.

## WHO TO CONTACT (select one)

- Follow your local guidelines
- Federal Protective Service (FPS) Police  
1-877-4-FPS-411 (1-877-437-7411)
- 911

## BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

Date:  Time:

Time Caller Hung Up:  Phone Number Where Call Received:

### Ask Caller:

- Where is the bomb located?  
(Building, Floor, Room, etc.)
- When will it go off?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will make it explode?
- Did you place the bomb? Yes No
- Why?
- What is your name?

### Exact Words of Threat:

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### Information About Caller:

- Where is the caller located? (Background and level of noise)
- Estimated age:
- Is voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like?
- Other points:

#### Caller's Voice

- Accent
- Angry
- Calm
- Clearing throat
- Coughing
- Cracking voice
- Crying
- Deep
- Deep breathing
- Disguised
- Distinct
- Excited
- Female
- Laughter
- Lisp
- Loud
- Male
- Nasal
- Normal
- Ragged
- Rapid
- Raspy
- Slow
- Slurred
- Soft
- Stutter

#### Background Sounds:

- Animal Noises
- House Noises
- Kitchen Noises
- Street Noises
- Booth
- PA system
- Conversation
- Music
- Motor
- Clear
- Static
- Office machinery
- Factory machinery
- Local
- Long distance

#### Threat Language:

- Incoherent
- Message read
- Taped
- Irrational
- Profane
- Well-spoken

#### Other Information:

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**Homeland Security**



### TechRadium, Inc. – Immediate Response Information System

**What is IRIS?** The Immediate Response Information System – IRIS – is a high-speed, high capacity, electronic mass communication alert notification and response system capable of sending emergency recipients. IRIS provides highly secure, virtually instantaneous, one-to-many communication using multiple contact points, devices and languages. Message recipients receive detailed information, in their choice of multiple languages, through the recipient's preferred communication devices such as telephone, cell phone, digital pager, fax, wireless PDA devices, email, satellite devices and more. IRIS sends each message to each recipient's device in the priority order defined by the recipient. IRIS keeps a record of all broadcast messages and provides administrators with the ability to track message delivery and how the message was received including the time and method of delivery. IRIS provides a real-time, on demand conference calling capability after message delivery and a polling feature to allow administrators to receive responses from recipients.

#### **IRIS Benefits:**

1. **Ease of Use** – IRIS was designed to provide you with an uncomplicated, user friendly method to communicate with a large number of people in a matter of minutes. Messages can be easily composed from your computer or telephone.
2. **Delivery Speed** – IRIS broadcasts alerts to thousands of recipients in seconds with a click of the mouse.
3. **Access / Installation** – IRIS is an Internet-based Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) requiring no additional hardware, software or system installations. IRIS is also available as an On-Premise System with the computer server located on your premises.
4. **Format and Message Flexibility** – IRIS messages reach each recipient on all communication devices at virtually the same time. IRIS is TTD and TTY capable for the hearing impaired, uses text-to-speech technology, and gives you the ability to broadcast an alert through voice, text or both.
5. **Two-Way Polling** – IRIS' two-way polling feature allows you to survey/poll your message recipients and log their responses. Two-way polling can be used for real time coordination and mobilization of first responders under emergency conditions or for determining if message recipients need assistance.
6. **Conference Calling** – IRIS' robust conference-calling feature gives you the ability to telephone conference with select message recipients immediately after sending an alert message providing you with immediate, live communications in an emergency.
7. **Message Consistency** - IRIS provides a highly controllable method to deliver time sensitive, consistent information to message recipients. Messages can be pre-recorded for delivery of routine information, or they can be recorded and sent immediately in emergency situations. Messages can be delivered in one of multiple preferred languages of the message recipient.
8. **Receipt Verification** – IRIS verifies the receipt of each message and saves the data for output in a variety of reports for later evaluation by your administrator.
9. **Cost Effectiveness** – IRIS is competitively priced for each industry.
10. **Unmatched Reliability** – As an industry leader in rapid verification and response communications, IRIS employs both physical and logical architectural mechanisms to promote continual availability of the platform and data services – all supported by one of the world's most reliable internet backbones.
11. **Maximum Data & Operation Protection** – IRIS operates under one of the most robust security standards in the industry to safeguard all personal data and operation. The encryption technologies used by IRIS to protect customer data meets or exceeds the industry standards for data protection.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT DAVID HUSKINS at 617-746-5742.**

## **Appendix F: Role of Ushers and Greeters**

*The following is the work of Tina Lewis Rowe ([www.tinalewisrowe.com](http://www.tinalewisrowe.com)) and is adapted from her guide, "Security Concerns for Churches: The Role of Greeters and Ushers."\**

Greeters and ushers can have a leadership role in safety, security and emergency planning related to many concerns in a place of worship. Their knowledge and experiences about church schedules, members and visitors and concerns or problems they have observed or handled, can make them invaluable contributors to the overall church security program.

### **The Security Role of Greeters and Ushers**

In the role of greeter/usher, you serve as a representative of the church and the pastor. You work as part of a church team and must be careful to not go outside guidelines you are given. Your primary security tasks are to observe and assess, then get assistance or take appropriate emergency action. The best way for you to fulfill your role is to be aware, alert and ready to get assistance.

Get assistance if you have a concern. Ask one – preferably two – greeters or ushers to assist you if you need to talk to someone whose behavior concerns you or if you are checking on a suspicious situation. This protects you, may prevent a violent action, and provides a witness for anything that occurs.

Your security activities should focus on:

1. **Observation:** Observe people and the environment continuously and purposefully.
2. **Assessment:** Make a reasonable evaluation of the potential for harm.
3. **Action:** Get help, then warn and help others. You may be able to do something to prevent violence or keep it from getting worse, but you should first try to get help and warn and help others.

### **Considering the Risks**

Everyone involved in church leadership, including those who are often the frontline of security responses – greeters and ushers – should be involved in considering the risks that are present in a specific church. Do some of these issues fit your church?

- Churches in urban areas have a higher likelihood of random violence – although no church is immune from danger.
- Churches in isolated or rural areas may be viewed as easier targets or defenseless.
- Every church has beliefs that may be controversial to some and these can result in threats, vandalism or violence.
- Churches that are near highways and main thoroughfares provide escape routes for criminals.
- Churches with schools may be targets for that reason.

- If a church is thought to provide food, lodging or financial assistance, it can attract people who are disturbed, resentful or desperate, as well as criminals. If a request for assistance is turned down, there may be a criminal or violent reaction.
- Churches who have had conflicts with individuals, groups or neighbors may be the subject of revenge or retaliation.
- People who have already committed criminal acts may go to a church to seek help, then become violent over the way they feel they were treated.
- Churches that attract attention, even for positive reasons, can also attract the attention of those who want to commit a crime or do a violent act. The attention may be from publicity, special events, church programs, well-known pastors, or dozens of other reasons.

**Observation: Continuous and Purposeful**

The same diligence that is necessary to ensure that guests and members are made to feel welcome will also allow you to do a brief security observation of each person. It may be helpful to have one or two greeters/ushers whose primary job is to observe and assist.

**Assigned responsibility:** Each door, group of doors, or general entrance area should have an assigned greeter/usher. One of the main causes of security failures is when everyone assumes someone else is doing a task.

**Observe with purpose:** Visually scan and personally greet visitors. This not only fulfills your greeting role, it allows you the chance to observe people close-up and establish a friendly relationship with them. A friendly greeting and good eye contact can make a difference in how someone reacts, even when angry or upset.

**Hands and body first:** Before you make eye contact, look at the hands, general appearance, items being carried or worn, and the overall actions and demeanor of the person you are greeting. That is when you can observe the person's facial expression and reaction. In addition, really looking at someone and smiling at them is the best way to show warmth and welcome.

**Limit entry areas after Mass begins:** Consider reducing the number of doors that are open and post a sign about which door(s) should be used after that time. Fire department restrictions may affect which doors can be blocked when people are present.

**Security walk-through:** Your church leadership may prefer that greeters/ushers not engage in security patrols, so be certain of your responsibilities. However, if no one else is doing it, you may want to suggest that you and other greeter/ushers could perform a quick walk-through. Check unused offices and rooms and lock those that should be locked. If *you* can walk in a room or office, someone who wants to commit a crime can do so as well. If there is a child care area, check to ensure there are no outside doors propped open and that all children are in the child care area and attended to by the respective care givers. Look for anything that could be a safety or security hazard or

### Classes Meeting in Parish School

If your parish is affiliated with a school and your religious education program utilizes the school facility for classes, plan to meet with the school principal to discuss the lockdown procedures they have in place. Adapt the same procedures and ask if it is possible to have access to the school PA/communication system in the event a lockdown needs to be ordered while religious education classes are in session.

### Classes Meeting in Church Basements, the Parish Hall or Converted Parish Buildings

It would be preferable to have one point of entry to classrooms in a basement or parish hall, and it would be beneficial if that entry were manned to ensure that only religious education students, parents, staff and volunteers were given entry. Other exterior doors should be locked from the outside but accessible from the inside out so that students can exit in the event of an emergency. The DRE or his/her designee should always be present in the vicinity during classes to keep a watchful eye on the premises, greet late-comers or visitors, and address any emergency that may arise.

### Sign in Sheets

Regardless of where your classes meet, it is important that you have a sign-in system for all volunteers and students. Each teacher should collect his/her class sign-in sheet before the start of class and keep it on hand until class is over and everyone has left the building. In the event of an emergency, it will be necessary to account for everyone present and the sign-in sheets will let you know who should be accounted for.

### **General Lockdown Instructions: If Assailant is in the Building**

- Take refuge in nearest classroom or other office, room, etc.
- If students are in hall, bring them to a secure location.
- Lock and/or barricade door using whatever is available; i.e., desks, table, cabinets.
- After securing door, stay behind objects and away from door.
- If it is safe to do so, allow others to seek refuge with you.
- If assailant enters room and leaves, lock and/or barricade door behind him.
- If time allows, close blinds and block windows.
- Silence cell phones and keep people/students calm and quiet.
- After securing room, people should be positioned out of sight and behind items that might offer additional protection – walls, desks, file cabinets, etc.
- Take attendance in order to account for students in your class.
- Do not communicate with anyone at your door until you hear official instructions from a recognized administrator or readily identifiable police officer.
- If you find yourself in an open area, immediately seek protection.
- Call 911. Stay on the line until it is answered – do not hang up, even if you are unable to talk. Be prepared to give the following information:
  - Your location (building name and room number).
  - Description of what is occurring.
  - Number of people at your location.
  - Injuries, if any.
  - Description of assailant(s) – try to be as specific as possible.

**If An Armed Intruder Enters Your Classroom**

- Keep yourself and students calm and quiet.
- Don't argue, agitate or try to negotiate with intruder.
- Cooperate with intruder and follow his/her instructions.
- If an intruder enters and begins shooting, tell the students to GET OUT ANY WAY POSSIBLE.

**The Director of Religious Education or Designee's Lockdown Checklist**

- Call 911.
- Use a pre-determined communication method to alert others to a lockdown.
- Secure front office and retrieve the Critical Incident Response Kit.
- Notify the Pastor.
- Meet and brief responding law enforcement.

**If the Assailant is on Parish Grounds**

If the assailant is outside, the exterior of the building must be secured to prevent the assailant from entering the school or building. Your parish safety and security team, with the help of local first responders, should put a plan in place for securing the building in the event of an external lockdown.

**If Students are on Way to Parish When Incident Occurs**

Have a plan if a lockdown takes place while students are on their way to classes. Designate an evacuation meeting area for these students/staff/volunteers ahead of time and inform parents of the designated meeting area that is to be used in case of an emergency.

**Recovery**

In the event of an incident, is your parish prepared to immediately provide mental health services? Consult with your pastoral associate, if applicable, and local mental health professionals as part of the planning phase.