



**Praise
& Preparedness**

HUMAN-CAUSED DISASTERS ANNEX

The purpose of this annex is to educate congregants and staff in (insert house of worship name) how to be prepared and respond to any human-caused disaster

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Human Caused Disasters

Human caused disasters are caused by the intentional actions of an adversary.

SECTION IX

1.) ACTS OF VIOLENCE/ACTS OF TERRORISM

A. Bomb Threats, Explosions and Suspicious Packages

Any bomb threat, explosion or suspicious package will be regarded as a danger. A bomb threat, explosion or suspicious package may be received at any time by anyone.

1. Guidelines

- The safety and wellbeing of all members and staff shall be of primary concern.
- It's encouraged for the evacuation site to be looked over and scanned by personnel who are familiar with the evacuation site area and are able to recognize objects not normally there. This search should be completed prior to evacuating congregants to the site.
- If evacuating the building, congregation and staff will be moved at least 1,000 feet away from the building. Everyone should face away from the building.
- Identification of the person or persons making the threat is very important.
- Immediate reporting of any bomb threat will be made to the [house of worship leadership team] and to 9-1-1 by the person who received the call.
- Any suspicious packages found should not be touched or disturbed in any way.

2. Response

General Response

- If the bomb threat is written, the note should be evaluated by law enforcement to assess the validity of the threat. The note must then be given to the law enforcement officer in charge.
- If the bomb threat is received by telephone, the person receiving the call should:
- After the caller disconnects, place the line on hold and dial *69 and/or *57.
- Take note of specifics of conversation.
- Notify [House of Worship Leadership Team].
- Implement the correct protocols, if necessary.
- Law enforcement will determine if the threat is credible and take the necessary actions.
- Small group leaders should scan their rooms for suspicious objects.

Bomb Threat – Probable Hoax

- If the [house of worship leadership team] believes the threat is a probable hoax, the following actions should be taken:
 1. Continue the proper protocol.
 2. Call 9-1-1 and report the call and advise that the building is not being evacuated.

Bomb Threat – Credible Threat

- Notify [house of worship leadership team].
- Call 9-1-1.
- Start the evacuation process.
- Announce over the [PA system]:
 1. We have a bomb threat. Please prepare to move your members to the assembly area that will be designated during this announcement.
 2. Use the same procedures as for a fire drill to supervise your congregants.
- Establish an Incident Command Post outside the building, at least 1,000 feet away from the facility.
- After the building is evacuated the search teams, led by law enforcement, will search all areas.

Suspicious Package

- In the event a suspicious package is found:
 1. Evacuate the building/area immediately.
 2. Call 911.
 3. Do not touch or move the suspicious package.
 4. Notify the law enforcement in charge.
 5. The [House of Worship Leadership Team] should confer with the [Risk Assessment Team] and on site emergency service commander to make the decision if the congregation and staff should be evacuated from the evacuation site to the Family Reunification Site. The image below illustrates significant elements found in a legitimate suspicious package.
 6. Request transportation to the reunification site, if needed.
 7. Implement the Family Reunification protocol, if necessary.



B. Hostage Barricade

In recent years, there have been an increasing number of fatal attacks at houses of worship that take place in the sanctuary, the steps, and even the parking lot of the house of worship. Houses of worship that once opened their doors to the public at all times, now have gone to measures to secure their buildings with security guards, surveillance equipment, and parts of the building that are on constant lockdown.

1. Warning

- Congregation will be notified by a predetermined intruder alert signal on the PA system.

2. Preparation

- Make a study of building map for places to use for best protection if gunfire is heard.
- Practice a tornado drop drill in classes to use if gunfire is heard. A tornado drop drill is dropping to the floor, tucking the body in as small as possible and covering the head.
- Establish a team to close all entrances and serve as guards.
- Close and lock all doors in the building.

3. Response

- When a hostage/terrorist act occurs notify:
 1. All staff
 2. Law enforcement authority (call 9-1-1).
 3. Congregation of any threat to their safety.
- Lock down and keep congregation in classes and away from trouble area.
- If there are children on a playground and gunshots are heard, have them lie down flat in the best protective area (do not try to walk them back into the building).
- If members are in classrooms and gunshots are heard, have them drop to the floor and lie flat.
- Staff will not attempt to negotiate with hostage takers or barricaded suspects once law enforcement officers are on the scene.
- Be prepared to put Emergency Response Team members into operation.
- Be prepared to put Evacuation and Family Reunification Protocols into operation.
- Put news media control procedure in place.

C. Missing Child, Kidnapping

If it is discovered that a child is missing, staff will notify members and provide a description of the child and information about the incident as soon as possible. Appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified immediately by a member of the staff.

- Recommend that the plan have a provision for an appropriate lockdown if any threat is indicated that a kidnapping/~~childnapping~~child napping is about to occur or has taken place and any additional threat or danger is perceived.
- The plan should include a procedure to notify local law enforcement immediately after a child is reported missing or a kidnapping occurs.
- Consider establishing a procedure to direct staff to conduct a thorough search of the entire facility and grounds for the missing child including restroom closets and other potential hiding places.
- Recommend that you develop a procedure directing staff to coordinate with local law enforcement regarding the notification of the child's parent/guardian, in the event that the parent/guardian is not on the campus at the time.
- Recommend that the plan specify that siblings of the missing child who are also in the facility are monitored at all times. Staff of other houses of worship should be advised to observe these siblings.
- Recommend that a procedure be developed for appropriate notification of staff.
- Recommend establishing a procedure to provide responding law enforcement officers with a picture and clothing description of the ~~child~~(child(ren) if possible.
- Recommend social workers and psychologists to develop a crisis plan for assisting all houses of worship and families affected (ex. Siblings at houses of worship, parents/guardians working in the house of worship, etc.)

D. Intruder, Suspicious Person

The presence of an intruder/suspicious person on the campus can be generated by activities within the building or in the surrounding area. Regardless of the reason, an intruder/suspicious person is someone who is alien to the [*name of house of worship*] environment and whose presence on the campus is uninvited and unwelcomed. An intruder/suspicious person represents the potential to jeopardize the safety of staff and members.

1. Warning

- The [*house of worship leadership team*] should be notified immediately when an intruder/suspicious person is on the house of worship's property. Provide the [*head of establishment*] with as much information as possible regarding the person's description, location and what behavior that person is exhibiting. The

[House of worship leadership team] will determine if additional police presence is necessary.

- The [house of worship leadership team] will then determine whether or not whether a lockdown is necessary.

2. Preparation

- Restrict free access to the building to as few doors as possible.
- All exterior doors locked during the day should have signs that provide directions for visitors advising them to use the main entrance.
- Discourage members and staff from opening locked doors for others as this will breach the house of worship security.

E. Report of a Weapon on Campus

A weapon is any firearm, knife, or other object capable of inflicting serious injury or death when used against another person.

1. Preparation

- Any report that any person has a weapon of any type on the house of worship's campus should be immediately reported to the police.

2. Response

[House of Worship Leadership Team's] Response

- Call 9-1-1 for law enforcement assistance.
- Describe in detail to law enforcement the person's race, sex, clothing, and behaviors
- If a weapon is suspected:
 1. Call 9-1-1.
 2. Escort police to the scene.
 3. Stay out of view of the person.
 4. Work with police officers as directed.
 5. Under the advisement of the police officers, consider the following options and notify staff:
 - Evacuate the building (do not use the fire alarm).
 - Maintain control and keep membership calm.
 - Be ready to implement the Family Reunification Protocol if necessary.
- If a weapon is visible:
 1. Call 9-1-1.
 2. Escort police to the scene.
 3. Stay out of view of the person.
 4. Work with police officers as directed.
 5. Under the advisement of the police officers, consider the following options and notify staff:

- Evacuate the building (do not use the fire alarm).
- Maintain control and keep membership calm.
- Be ready to implement the Family Reunification Protocol if necessary.

Membership Response

- Contact the [head of the establishment] as soon as possible.
- Try to calm the other members that may know.
- Do not approach the person who has a weapon.
- Do not attempt to confiscate the weapon.
- If the person is visible, or if the person is threatening, ask the person in a calm voice for permission to evacuate the rest of the group.
- Evacuate quietly if allowed.
- If an evacuation is not allowed, keep talking with the person until the police arrive. Ask them the following:
 1. Ask them to stop what he/she is doing.
 2. Ask them what is wrong or what do they want?
- When police arrive, do as they advise.
- After the incident, file a report as soon as possible.

F. Active Shooter

Active shooter situations are defined as those where an individual is “actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.” Unfortunately, houses of worship are not immune from this tragedy.

1. Preparation

- Determine how to evacuate or lockdown personnel and visitors. Remember to pay attention to disability-related accessibility concerns when advising on shelter sites and evacuation routes. Also, think about how to evacuate when the primary evacuation routes are not accessible.
- Select effective shelter-in-place locations (optimal locations have thick walls, solid doors with locks, minimal interior windows, first aid-emergency kits, communication devices and duress alarms).
- Determine how those present on the grounds will be notified that there is an active shooter incident underway. This could be done using familiar terms, sounds, lights, and electronic communications, such as text messages or emails. Include in the courses of action how to communicate with those who have language barriers or need other accommodations such as visual signals to communicate with hearing-impaired individuals. Planners should make sure this protocol is readily available and understood by those who may be responsible

for sending out or broadcasting an announcement. Rapid notification of a threat can save lives by keeping people out of harm's way.

- Determine how to let the congregants know when buildings and grounds are safe.
- Train staff, house of worship leadership, and congregation, as appropriate, what to expect and how to react in the event of an active shooter.
- Work with first responders to help highlight common pre-attack behaviors displayed by past offenders.
- Congregants and staff should be trained to cooperate and not to interfere with first responders. They should display empty hands with open palms and anticipate that law enforcement may instruct everyone to place their hands on their heads and/or get down on the ground.
- Before an emergency, the emergency management team should determine how, when, and by whom loved ones will be informed if their loved one is missing or has been injured or killed. Law enforcement typically takes the lead on death notifications, but all parties should understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure there is a plan in advance to keep the media away from families that do not want to engage with them. This includes strategies for keeping the media separate from families while the emergency is ongoing and support for families that may experience unwanted media attention at their homes.

2. Response

- If able, those closest to a communications system should communicate the danger and necessary action to respond to the active shooting taking place.
- Upon recognizing danger, as soon as it is safe to do so staff or others should alert responders by contacting 911 with as clear and accurate information as possible.
- There are three basic response options: run, hide, or fight.
 1. **Run:** If it is safe to do so, the first course of action that should be taken is to run out of the building and far away until in a safe location. Congregants and staff should be trained to:
 - Leave personal belongings behind
 - Visualize possible escape routes, including physically accessible routes for individuals with disabilities.
 - Avoid escalators and elevators
 - Take others with them, but do not stay behind because others will not go
 - Call 911 when safe to do so
 - If a child, let a responsible adult know where they are.
 2. **Hide:** If running is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible. Congregants and staff should be trained to hide in a location where the walls

might be thicker and have fewer windows. In addition:

- Lock doors
 - Barricade the doors with heavy furniture
 - Close and lock windows and close blinds or cover windows
 - Turn off lights
 - Silence all electronic devices
 - Remain silent
 - If possible, use strategies to silently communicate with first responders; for example, in rooms with exterior windows, make signs to silently signal law enforcement and emergency responders to indicate the status of the room's occupants
 - Hide along the wall closest to the exit but out of the view from the hallway (allowing for an ambush of the shooter and for possible escape if the shooter enters the room)
 - Remain in place until given an all clear by identifiable law enforcement.
3. **Fight:** If neither running nor hiding is a safe option, as a last resort, when confronted by the shooter, adults in immediate danger should consider trying to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force and items in their environment, such as fire extinguishers or chairs.
- After the scene is secured, the Emergency Management Team will begin to help with triage assessment, providing emergency intervention services and victim assistance, as well as providing family members with timely, accurate, and relevant information.
 - Essential steps to help establish trust and provide family members with a sense of control can be accomplished by:
 - Identifying a safe location separate from distractions and/or media and the general public, but close enough to allow family members to feel connected in proximity to their children/loved ones
 - Scheduling periodic updates even if no additional information is available
 - Being prepared to speak with family members about what to expect when reunified with their child/loved one
 - Ensuring effective communication with those that have language barriers or need other accommodations, such as sign language interpreters for the hearing impaired.
 - Providing crisis counseling to affected congregants.

G. **Sexual Assault**

The number of members and staff on the house of worship's property, and the diversity of the groups, officials should be prepared in the event of a sexual assault.

1. Preparation

- Provide education/awareness to staff and appropriate-aged members about the signs and symptoms of sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Require all house of worship employees and volunteers to submit to a background check prior to beginning duties.
- Staff should be progressive in interjecting if they witness any signs of sexual harassment and/or sexual assault.
- Counseling should be provided to members who may exhibit sexual aggression.

2. Response

- Call 911 to request law enforcement and EMS.
- Notify the family of the victim.
- Dissuade the victim from washing, cleaning up or using the restroom, restroom is possible.
- Assign a staff member to protect the crime scene.
- Isolate family members who are on the campus.
- Provide counseling to any parties needing assistance.
- Obtain preliminary statements from the victim and provide to the police upon their arrival.
- After the incident, attempt to determine what security factors (or lack thereof) may have contributed to the assault.
- Officials must remember that sexual assaults are a very serious crime. The victim and the assault location must be protected as any other crime scene. No actions should be taken that would move or damage possible evidence unless it must be done for safety reasons.

H. Civil Disturbance

If a civil disturbance seems imminent or is actually taking place, the “actual crisis response” protocol (see emergency operations plan for full detail of this protocol) will be issued and the procedures outlined followed. The staff on duty will notify key officials and local public safety agencies, and, if necessary, local law enforcement officials will be requested to handle outsiders who cause disruptions. Staff and members will be instructed to refrain from any verbal exchanges with outsiders when the disturbance is occurring.

SECTION XI

5) ACCIDENTS

A. Injury, Illness, Suicide and Death

Every house of worship should be prepared to provide basic first aid, while requesting necessary emergency assistance.

1. Preparation

- Establish and maintain a list of emergency medical telephone numbers.
- Establish and maintain a list of staff and members qualified to administer first aid and CPR.
- Maintain a file of member and personnel home telephone numbers, family business phone numbers, names and numbers of other individuals authorized by the family to make decisions regarding emergency treatment.
- A file listing members with known medical needs with instructions for emergency.
- Maintain a list of staff members trained to deliver serious injury and/or death notification in conjunction with emergency response.
- Provide families with a policy statement of legal responsibilities and liabilities, including house of worship insurance restrictions and actions that will be taken when family members cannot be reached.

2. Response

- In non-critical situations:
 1. Administer first aid, if necessary.
 2. Contact family members.
- In critical situations:
 1. Notify emergency medical services and emergency 911 communications.
 2. Administer first aid to the extent possible.
 3. Limit activity in the vicinity of near the affected member(s).
 4. Notify the family of the affected member(s). If the family cannot be contacted immediately, continue attempts to contact family members and keep a record or procedures, times and actions.
 5. If the member is transported to a hospital, a staff member will accompany the member.
 6. Keep a record of procedures administered (first aid, CPR, etc.) times and actions.
 7. If violence was involved, keep the incident scene secured. Do not disturb possible evidence, identify witnesses and keep them separated.
- In the event of death:

1. Be aware that any situation involving death is considered a crime scene. Therefore, secure the scene and restrict activity in and around the crime scene. Trained law enforcement personnel will process the scene.
2. Notify family personally and offer support. Trained personnel, in conjunction with uniformed, trained law enforcement personnel should do this.
3. If violence was involved, keep the incident scene secure. Do not disturb possible evidence, identify witnesses and keep them separated.
4. Limit activity up to and including a lockdown, if necessary.
5. Initiate the Family Reunification Protocol, if necessary.
6. Provide available information to staff, and members.
7. Initiate the Media Response Protocol.
8. Remove personal items of the deceased from room, etc when allowed by law enforcement and/or medical examiner.
9. Stop any pre-incident notices and/or memos of any kind, from inadvertently being sent to the family