



**Roman Catholic
Diocese of
Springfield**

in partnership with **RATIO**
RISK SERVICES

Safety and Security Guide



**Roman Catholic
Diocese of
Springfield**

Dear Parish Administrator,

This Parish Safety and Security Guide is designed to help you enhance the safety and security of your worship community. Tailored to take into account our diocesan policies and guidelines, this publication gives your parish a framework for developing a safety and security plan of its own.

We recognize that there are many variables among the parishes and religious education programs within the diocese. 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 guide you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

Mike Ford
Chief Financial Officer
Diocese of Springfield
65 Elliot Street
Springfield, MA 01102

For more information on the resources we offer, please see our website: www.springfieldrisk.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.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Four Steps to Developing a Plan	4
Step 1: Establishing a Safety Committee	5
Step 2: Conducting Security Assessments	6
Floor Plans	6
Communications Systems	8
Coordinate with Outside Agencies	9
First Responders	9
Mental Health Providers	10
Conducting Walk-Throughs	10
When to Assess	11
Assess for Specific Situations	12
Outside Groups Using the Premises	12
Offices of Clergy and Staff.	13
Card Access System	13
Key Control Policy	13
Parish Collection Counting and Controls	14
Assisting Individuals with Special Needs	18
Ushers and Greeters.	20
Step 3: Document Your Plan.	21
Step 4: Training Staff and Volunteers.	22
Training and Drills	22
Reassess.	22
Resources	23
Appendix A: Safety Assessment Checklist	24-25
Appendix B: General Building Information.	26
Appendix C: Critical Incident Response Kit (CIRK).	27
Appendix D: Bomb Threat Checklist	28
Appendix E: Emergency Kit Checklist for Religious Education Classrooms	29
Appendix F: Emergency Drills for Religious Ed.	30-31
Appendix G: Active Shooter	32-35
Appendix H: Emergency Contact List.	36

The Diocese of Springfield and Ratio Risk Services assume no liability arising out of the use or application of this information. This guide is not intended to be a substitute for live training. This information should not supersede directives provided and information by local first responders.

4 STEPS TO DEVELOPING A SAFETY PLAN

The process of preparing your parish for emergency situations can seem overwhelming. To help you get a handle on it, we recommend breaking it down into manageable steps: establishing a safety committee; conducting security assessments; documenting your plan; training staff and volunteers.



The Diocese of Springfield, Ratio Risk Services, and Bree Publishing assume no liability arising out of the use or application of this information. This guide is not intended to be a substitute for live training. This information should not supersede directives provided and information by local first responders.

STEP 1: ESTABLISHING A SAFETY COMMITTEE

Your first step is to establish a Safety Committee under the leadership of your parish pastor/administrator. The goal of the committee is to enhance the safety and security of your parish, and this is accomplished by:

- Assessing the security needs of your parish
- Establishing a safety and security plan
- Educating staff, volunteers, and parishioners about the plan
- Implementing the safety and security protocols developed

Your safety committee should include key personnel, such as the head custodian or facilities manager, the business manager, and faith formation leaders. Don't forget to include long-standing volunteers on your committee. Because ushers and greeters assist with the flow of congregants at each Mass, they know the congregation and the footprint of the church better than most. A representative from this group should be included on your team.

Include representatives from outside groups who use your facilities, such as the Boy Scouts or Alcoholics Anonymous. They need to be aware of your safety protocols and must adhere to them if they are to use the facilities.

There is a wealth of occupations and experience among your parishioners. Law enforcement personnel and first responders should have a presence on your committee. Equally important are therapists and school guidance counselors - their experience will be valuable in the aftermath of an incident.



SUGGESTED SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Pastor
- School principal if parish has a parish school (or liaison from regional school)
- Facilities manager or custodian
- Faith formation/youth group leaders
- Pastoral associate
- Volunteer usher or greeter
- Representative from an outside group that frequently utilizes premises
- Parishioners who work in the following professions:
 - Medical profession
 - Law enforcement
 - Emergency Medical Services
 - Fire Safety
 - Risk management
 - Mental health (therapist, guidance counselor, social worker)

STEP 2: CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

Once your committee is formed, assign a secretary to take minutes of your meetings and document “action items.” Action items are tasks assigned to a specific person or group. Do not rely on memory alone - assign and document tasks, and give the secretary the role of following up with other team members on the assigned tasks.

The initial tasks of delegating roles and formulating a plan will take time, so count on having frequent meetings at the beginning of the process. Once you have a plan in place, you will not need to meet as frequently as in the beginning.

Educate parishioners, staff and volunteers about the committee’s role and responsibilities. For security reasons, you don’t want to publish your safety plan for all to see, but you do want to make sure parishioners know you have a plan in place. Having a plan demonstrates good stewardship. When speaking about safety, use the opportunity to include parishioners in the process by encouraging them to voice any security concerns they may have. The retired librarian who faithfully attends daily Mass may notice something that others overlook, for example. Security is everyone’s responsibility and all have a part to play in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment.

CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

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. To start your assessment, compile as much written information about specific parish buildings as you can. To aid in the process, please see the Safety Assessment Checklist and the General Building Checklist in the Appendix section.

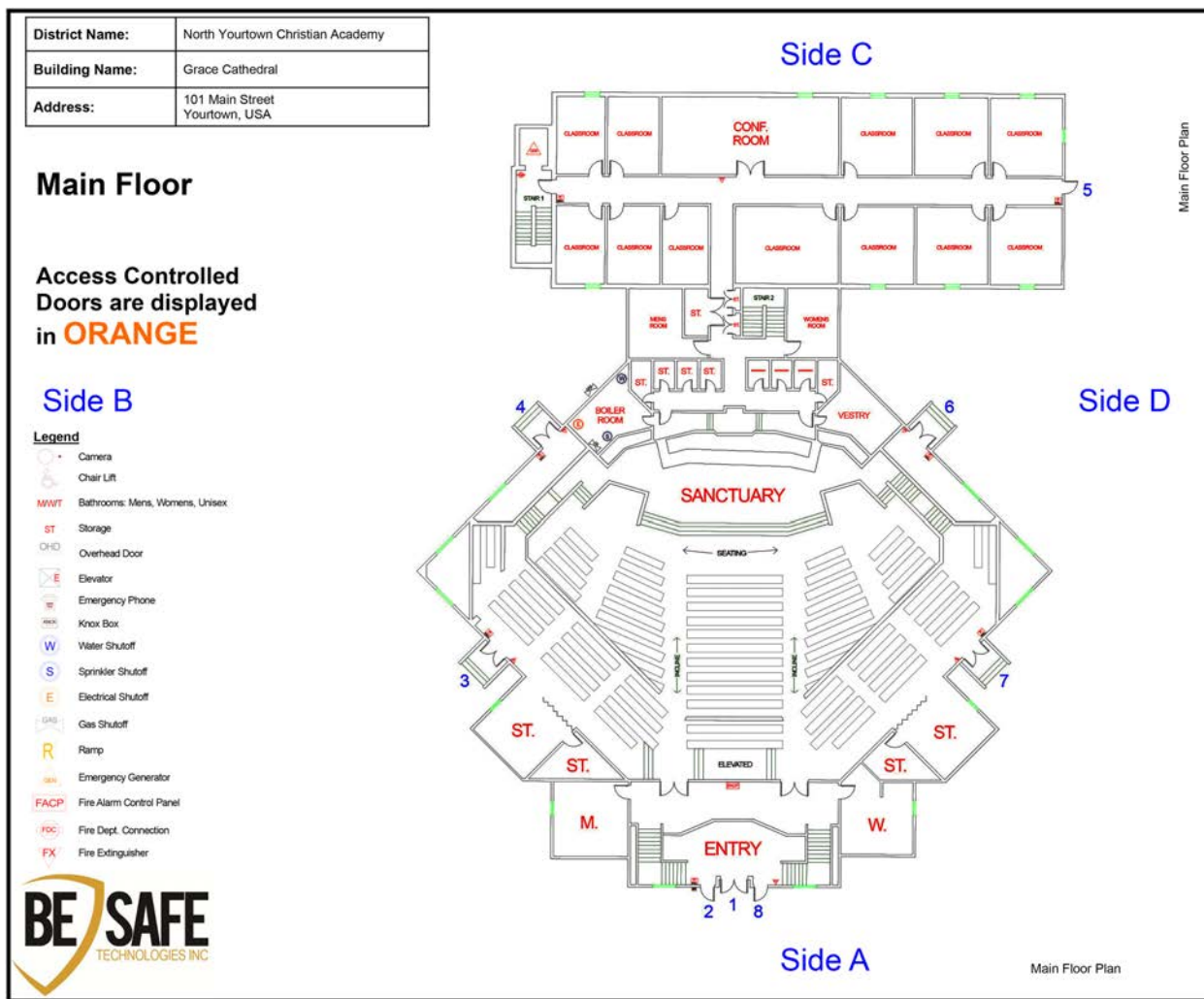
FLOOR PLANS

If you do not already have floor plans for your facilities, now is the time to create them. A floor plan is a simple diagram of each floor of each building. The plans are marked to show exterior doors, windows, stairwells, fire doors, and the use of all rooms and areas.

It is critical that you share your floor plans with local police and the fire department. In the event of an emergency, their response will be more effective if they know exactly where to go. Keep it in a secure place, such as within your Critical Incident Response Kit (See Appendix C). Computer files containing this information should be password-protected. There are many companies who can assist you in developing a floor plan. Ratio Risk Services recommends BeSafe Technologies, based in Centerville, Massachusetts.

Once a location contracts with BeSafe, a team is sent to conduct an on-site visit. The team collects approximately 50 pieces of data during its visit, including the names of the facilities if it is a multi-building campus, room names, room numbers, the location of doors and in which direction they swing open, and location of windows and fire equipment.

Digital photos are taken of electrical and gas shutoffs, lobbies, cafeterias, and stairwells, and exterior photos of all the ways in and out of the building. The photos are put onto the computer so that the digital floor plan links to the photos.



This information is then put onto the secure web-based application that is shared with local fire and police departments. Information such as the names of key personnel and phone numbers can be updated by the client through a secure website, which sends the changes to the client's authorized users, such as police and fire officials, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that current information is in the hands of those who need it **when** they need it.

First responders can access this information online, but in the event that the Internet connection is lost, it is available on flash drives and on hard copies.

For more information, contact:

Kevin Harrington, BeSafe Technologies, Inc.

Email: kharrington@besafe.net

Tel: 919.809.6681

www.besafe.net

CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Effective communication in an emergency is critical. When conducting your assessment, include a review of your communication methods, such as your phone systems, electronic notification systems, and alarms. How will emergency situations be communicated to your staff, volunteers, and those you serve?

TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Know your telephone system and how to use it. Are you able to identify incoming calls through Caller ID? Does it have recording and tracing capabilities? This is helpful in identifying threatening or harassing incoming calls. Distribute copies of the Bomb Threat Form (see Appendix D) to anyone who receives incoming calls and go over 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.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Emergency or mass notification systems enable organizations to send alerts to many contacts at once using a variety of communication channels, such as voice, email, SMS text, and desktop alerts. In addition to notifying employees and key stakeholders about critical events, it can also be used for day-to-day communications. If using an emergency notification system, be sure those who need access have the login and password details. Prepare scripts in advance for a variety of emergency announcements.

ALARMS AND INTERCOM SYSTEMS

Identify the location and operating procedures of fire alarms, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and intercom systems. Post instructions adjacent to the equipment and document the information in the parish safety plan. 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. Go over the protocol with staff regarding alarms. For example, some may be inclined to pull a fire alarm during an active shooter situation in order to quickly evacuate the building. **However, fire marshals recommend only pulling the fire alarm if there is an active fire.** To do otherwise creates confusion and could send people out of rooms and into large groups in hallways, where they would be targets.

TWO-WAY RADIOS

As discussed in the “Ushers and Greeters” section of this guide, make sure ushers and greeters have a plan to communicate information to each other. Some parishes equip ushers and greeters with walkie-talkies which provide instant communication without the need for infrastructure. In addition to instant communication with staff and key volunteers, modern two-way radios will allow you to notify law enforcement about a potential threat with the push of a button.

THE FAITH COMMUNITY

Church facilities have very similar concerns, regardless of the type of congregation. Develop relationships with other houses of worship in your community and keep each other informed of threats or incidents that may arise.

The Department of Homeland Security maintains a website dedicated to safety resources specific to Houses of Worship:

<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/faith>

COORDINATE WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Strong relationships with outside agencies including law enforcement, fire departments, public health departments, mental health providers, and community leaders 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 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 your attention things that might be overlooked.

FIRST RESPONDERS

You may have police officers in your congregation who could assist with your security efforts, or serve on your safety 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.

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.

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.

CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

Identify mental health providers in your community who can be called upon to assist in the event of a crisis. Establish relationships with providers who specialize in children and adolescents. They will be helpful resources in the event someone is seeking a referral for mental health assistance. Be proactive in establishing these relationships now so that you have the resources at your fingertips when you need them.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders in your community. Just as CPR training helps a person with no clinical training assist an individual following a medical emergency, Mental Health First Aid training helps a person assist someone experiencing a mental health crisis. In both situations, the goal is to support an individual until appropriate professional help arrives.

Mental Health First Aiders learn a 5-step strategy that includes: assessing risk for suicide or harm; listening non-judgmentally; giving reassurance and information; encouraging appropriate professional help; and encouraging self-help and other support strategies. Participants are introduced to risk factors and warning signs for mental health or substance use problems, engage in experiential activities that build understanding of the impact of illness on individuals and families, and learn about evidence-supported treatment and self-help strategies. To find a course near you, go to: www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/

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 video recording with a smartphone 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. 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?

See Appendix A for a SAFETY ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST to help you complete a safety assessment of your facility.

CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

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 Ratio Risk Services at info@ratorisk.com.

Pay special attention to sacred vessels, vestments, artifacts of high value, and church relics. Extra security measures should be taken. Consider installing security cameras or limiting access to these areas. Document each high-value item with photos and a written description, and keep the documentation in a secure location.

OUTSIDE GROUPS USING PARISH 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 locks 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.

CARD ACCESS SYSTEM

If your facility is able to make the investment, consider upgrading to a card access system. Individuals are given a card or a key fob that can be used to electronically gain entry to a building or room. The advantage is that access can be controlled remotely. If an employee with an access card quits, for example, the administrator can automatically deactivate the access card.

KEY CONTROL POLICY

- Develop and maintain a key control policy that documents how many keys the facility has, who is in possession of the keys, and the method by which outside groups gain access.
- Be extremely selective in issuing keys. Only give keys to individuals who have a legitimate reason for needing a key, and only give them keys to specific areas they need to access.
- Keep a log of who has keys at all times.
- If your facilities utilize master keys, only a few individuals, such as the pastor and facilities manager, should have the master keys.
- Never allow the duplication of keys.
- No one should loan their key to anyone, nor use it to grant access to others who are not authorized access.
- Immediately report any missing, stolen, or damaged keys.

CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

PARISH COLLECTION COUNTING AND CONTROLS

The following are procedures to help ensure the integrity of the process from the time the collection is taken to the time of deposit in the bank. It is prudent, even imperative, that all parties that come in contact with the money are protected to the maximum extent possible. The institution and the subsequent following of controls are essential to the safeguarding of not only the money but also the reputations of all who come in contact with the money. Any temptation to tamper with collections should be significantly reduced by the strong likelihood that this will be discovered.

It is important to ensure that the entire amount collected be accurately counted and deposited intact into the bank. It is a diocesan regulation that all parish disbursements occur by means of parish check. Accordingly, the taking of any money from the collection before it is counted, deposited and recorded in the parish accounting records is prohibited.

TAMPER PROOF PLASTIC BAGS

To help protect the integrity of the collection and those individuals involved in collecting and counting it, we strongly recommend the use of tamper proof, serially numbered plastic bags. The bags are to be used as follows:

- Prior to use, the bags should be stored in a safe place to prevent theft or alteration, with access limited to those who need it. Each Mass is to be assigned one serially numbered bag for the regular collection and a separate serially numbered bag for any second or special collection to be taken. A log, preferably a formal logbook, must be kept to record the serial numbers of the bags assigned to each Mass. This can be a hard copy, bound (not looseleaf) book with numbered pages and space to record the bag number, date, Mass time, the purpose of the collection (weekly or special), and a place to record that the bag was returned following use for proper disposal. Alternatively, the bag numbers can be recorded in the regular Mass book along with the other information for that Mass. The numerical sequence of the bags must be controlled at all times in a manner similar to the control of pre-numbered checks. An usher (or some other individual) may be given the task of obtaining the required number of bags prior to a Mass and making sure that the numbers recorded in the log are accurate. In addition, the intended Mass collection may be written on each bag in permanent marker.
- The bags are to be placed inside of the larger basket used to accumulate the collection from the smaller containers used to collect by the ushers. The ushers will place their collection inside the plastic bag located inside of the larger basket. When all ushers have placed their collections into the basket, the plastic bag should immediately be sealed in plain view of the congregation. Once inside the sealed bags, if any tampering takes place, the seal on the bag will show it.

- The collection should be removed to a safe place, preferably a fireproof, locked safe, until the counting team arrives to count.
- When the counting team receives the bags, they should first check the bag seal to determine if tampering has occurred. Their second action should be to compare the serial number on the bag to the control log of serial numbers to ensure that the assigned bags are the ones being counted. (This will protect against someone opening the bag, removing money and placing the remaining collection in a new, sealed tamper proof bag.)
- Once the collection has been counted and reconciled, the total deposit (cash, checks and deposit slip) should be placed into a new, serially numbered and tamper proof bag for the trip to the bank. This will help ensure that no tampering takes place after the collection has been counted.

The process described above should ensure that the envelopes, cash and checks reaching the counting table are intact and that nothing has been prematurely removed from the collection and that subsequent to counting no funds are removed prior to deposit in the bank. Bags may be purchased from various sources. One recommendation is that the bags ordered be sufficiently large to fit comfortably inside of the larger collection basket.

COUNTING PROCEDURES

- We recommend that the counting teams consist of at least three un-related individuals. We also recommend that there be several counting teams and that the teams rotate from week to week.
- Under no circumstances should the pastor, administrator or bookkeeper ever be involved in the collection counting process.
- Under no circumstance should anyone ever be left alone with the collection once it has been removed from the plastic bags. At least two (unrelated) individuals should be present at all times.
- Cash collection sheets must be used to record and summarize the collections. These collection sheets become the source document for the bookkeeper to use to record the collection in the accounting system. Since this is the recording document, accuracy is of paramount importance.
- It is important for the count team leader to sign and date the cash collection sheets and preferably the entire team should sign the sheets. The purpose is to authenticate the sheet as the original. This practice will prevent someone from changing the totals on the sheet to potentially cover up any tampering with the collection after it has been counted. Someone could take cash, destroy the original sheet and create a new sheet with altered numbers to cover up any theft of the counted cash.

CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

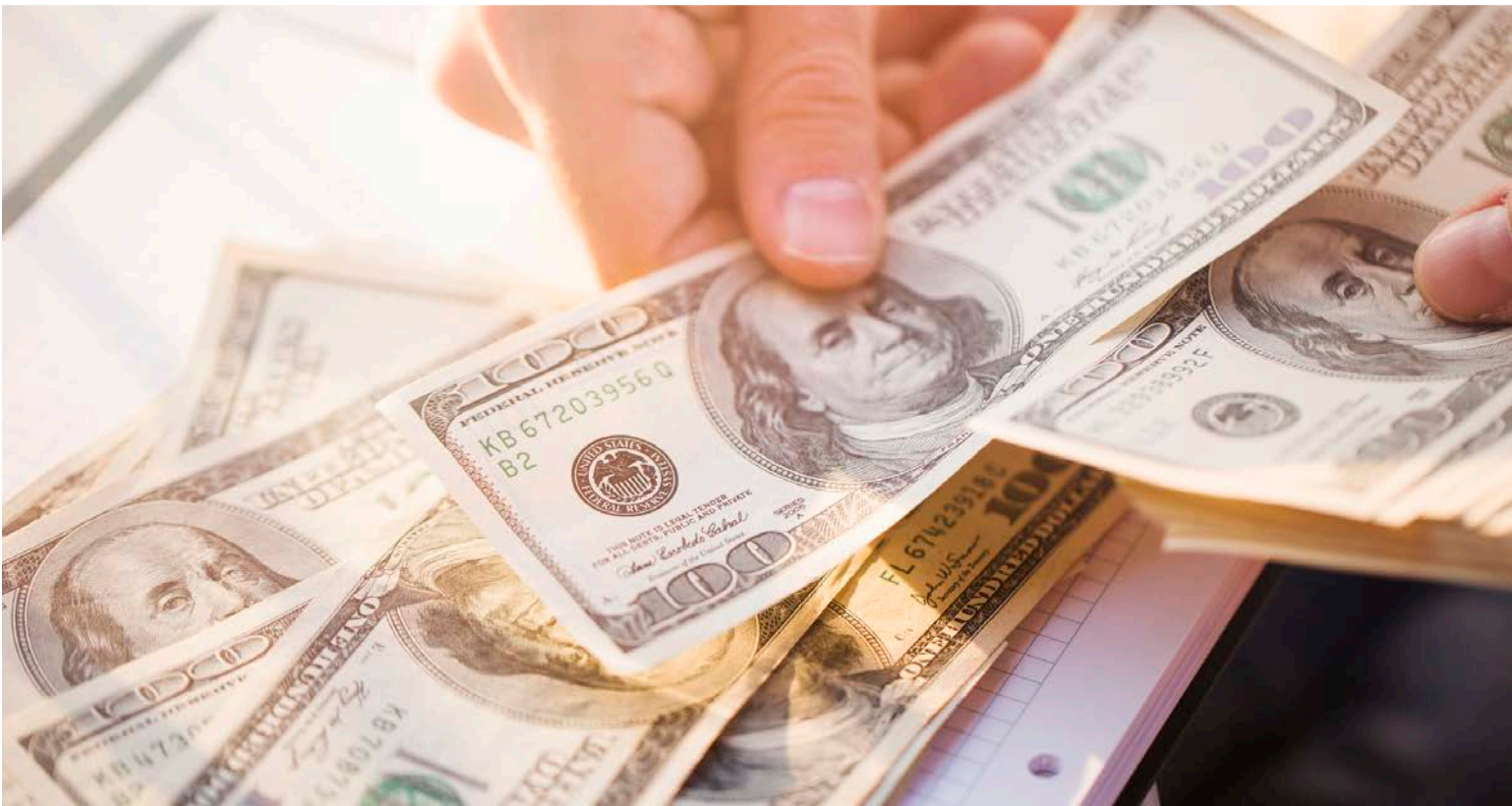
COUNTING THE COLLECTION:

It is essential that the collection be counted and recorded accurately. This task requires superior concentration and attention to detail. The following recommendations are made in that regard:

- At least two (unrelated) members of the count team should be present before the tamper resistant bag(s) are opened.
- The first step is to separate the collection(s) from each Mass as they should be counted separately.
- When the counting for a given collection begins, keep the envelope contents separate from the loose cash. Open each envelope and examine the contents and make sure that the amount marked on the front of the envelope agrees with the content. For those envelopes where the parishioner did not record the contents or where the parishioner has an incorrect amount, mark the front of the envelope with the correct amount of its contents. Checks should be given a restrictive endorsement (for example, by using a stamp with “For deposit only,” Name of Church, Name of Bank, and the operating checking account number) to prevent checks from being cashed for any reason.
- Once all of the contents have been removed, count the cash and checks and record the amount. Then, run a tape of the amounts marked on the envelopes and agree that amount to the count of the checks and cash. If there is a difference, immediately begin to re-count the cash and checks and re-run a tape of the envelopes. Do not proceed with any other steps until this important step has been completed. Finally, record the reconciled count on the collection summary sheet.
- Once the envelopes have been reconciled to their contents, then begin the counting of any loose cash and checks Double-check your count and record the loose cash and check totals separately on the collection summary sheet.
- **IMPORTANT: KEEP THE CASH FROM EACH INDIVIDUAL COLLECTION COMPLETELY SEPARATE UNTIL EACH INDIVIDUAL COUNT IS COMPLETE AND RECONCILED.**
- If parishioners include a single check or cash amount to cover multiple envelopes, we recommend that these contributions be segregated from the collection. After the remainder of the collection has been counted, open and count the single check/single cash amount for multiple envelopes donations. Use a separate worksheet to record the split among the various collections included in the donation. After all multiple envelope donations have been counted and entered on the worksheet, total the worksheet by donation type and consolidate the cash/checks and collection information with the main collection. Do not attempt to move cash around or “make change” etc. This serves to be a source of confusion and leads to errors. Also, count the funds received TODAY as TODAY’s donation. DO NOT attempt to assign donations received late to any other date than TODAY’s date.
- Once all Masses have been counted and duly recorded on the collection summary sheet, total the summary sheet to arrive at a grand total for the deposit.

- Once the grand total has been computed, bring all of the cash and checks together and check the counts to ensure that the amount recorded on the collection sheet is in agreement with the amount of cash and checks. Remember that “CASH IS KING,” meaning that the actual count of cash and checks is the determining factor for the deposit and that the books and records must mirror the actual cash and checks collected. The cash collection sheet is NEVER correct unless it matches exactly the actual count of the checks and cash for deposit.
- Deposit slips should clearly indicate the respective amounts of cash vs. checks and copies should be attached to the weekly count sheets to help reconcile with bank statements. All offertory should be deposited intact, including all coins.
- Place the cash and checks into a fresh serially numbered, tamper proof plastic bag for the trip to the bank. The empty bag(s) should be returned with the count sheets and empty envelopes where the numbers should be compared with the collection bag log book to make sure no substitutions have been made.

We sincerely hope that you and your counting teams will find the information above helpful. The counting of the collection is an important function of parish life. We must be grateful to parishioners who volunteer their time to provide this necessary service to the parish. However, it is still important that the function be performed accurately and in accord with the guidelines outlined above.



CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Every congregation has individuals with special needs who may need assistance during a crisis. Be sure to establish a system in advance to assure they will get the help they need. Meet with the individuals and work with them to develop a plan. Bring first responders into the discussion, and document what to do in a variety of emergency situations.

In general, when taking into consideration those with special needs, consider the following:

- **Assess Emergency Routes.** When doing your safety assessments, make sure there are emergency evacuation routes that are wheelchair accessible.
- **Designate an Area of Refuge.** Identify an area of refuge and/or designated stairwells where a wheelchair user can wait for assistance during an emergency. Mark these areas with signs, and make sure that your training includes mandating that individuals check these areas to offer assistance to those who need it.
- **Use the Buddy System.** Appoint individuals who will serve as “buddies” to those with special needs. The buddy will alert the individual of an emergency, check with them if the situation allows, and assist them as needed. However, sometimes a designated buddy is not there when the emergency occurs. For this reason, ALL staff need to know how to assist ahead of time; whoever is in the presence of a deaf person or a person with special needs automatically becomes their “buddy.”
- **Consider Communication Methods.** Plan for alternative methods of notifying those who are deaf and hard of hearing, such as turning lights on/off or waving arms. For those who are blind or have low vision, provide simple instructions to exit the building. Provide details about where you are going and any obstacles the person may encounter along the route. In most cases, the deaf are able to help themselves and have excellent intuition in regard to taking action. However, communication support is always critical.
- **Ask Before Doing.** Not every person with special needs will be identified ahead of time in your planning process. For example, you may have a wheelchair-bound person at Mass who is visiting the church for the first time. If an emergency occurs and you want to assist individuals you do not know, be sure to always ask how you can help before giving assistance. Ask how the individual can best be assisted or moved, and whether there are any special considerations or items that need to come with the person.

These are just a few suggestions to help you in your planning. The Massachusetts Office on Disability hosts meetings for communities to prepare persons with disabilities for an emergency. They bring together people with disabilities, local emergency planners, and first responders. For more information, go to:

www.mass.gov/disability-emergency-preparedness

ONLINE RESOURCES

Make sure people with disabilities in your community have the help they need in an emergency. The following websites provide useful information:

- www.ready.gov/disability
- www.mass.gov/disability-emergency-preparedness
- www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/inclusive-preparedness-resources.html
- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/emergencypreparedness.html>

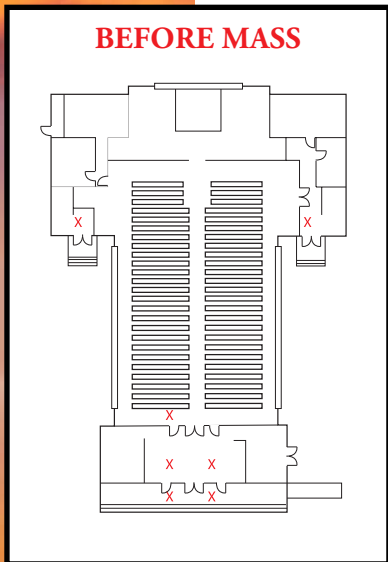


CONDUCTING SECURITY ASSESSMENTS

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. While you would not want them to take on the duty of security guards, their roles as greeters afford them the opportunity to observe and look for any potential threats so that they may “warn, inform and assist.” It is helpful if they are trained in body language indicators and can help identify if, when, and how to approach an individual who is suspect.

Many recent incidents of church violence have occurred when the perpetrator entered church after the service began. In light of this, it is prudent to ensure that each door, group of doors, or general entrance areas have an assigned greeter/usher prior to the start of Mass. Once Mass begins, reduce the number of doors that are open and post a sign about which door(s) should be used after that time. Station ushers at the remaining points of access to observe latecomers to Mass.

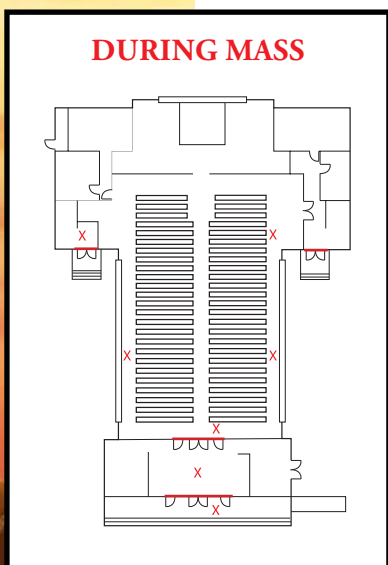


Fire department restrictions may affect if, and how, doors can be secured when people are present in the church. Please check with your first responders and engage them in the planning process.

An example of enhancing the role of the ushers is to station one or two outside the church entrance. While greeting parishioners and visitors, these ushers can also observe activity on the street, looking for anything suspicious or out of the ordinary.

During Mass, consider the strategic positioning of ushers; for example, seating or positioning them around the perimeter of the church interior in order to allow for continued monitoring of the congregation and the ability to communicate direction to the congregation in the event of an emergency.

Ushers need a plan to communicate information to each other and to any first responders who may be attending Mass. If doors need to be secured quickly, or if an usher feels there is a need for congregants to leave the open area of the church, how will the usher communicate this to others? Develop a communication plan among the ushers that permits prompt collaboration and action, such as securing the entrance doors, notifying local first responders, and communicating to the congregation. In violent intruder incidents, it is critical to have leaders who can direct others to safety. Engage all ushers in the planning and practice drills; ensure that each Mass has ushers who have participated in active shooter training and know how to evacuate or barricade your specific church.



STEP 3: DOCUMENT YOUR PLAN

DOCUMENT YOUR PLAN

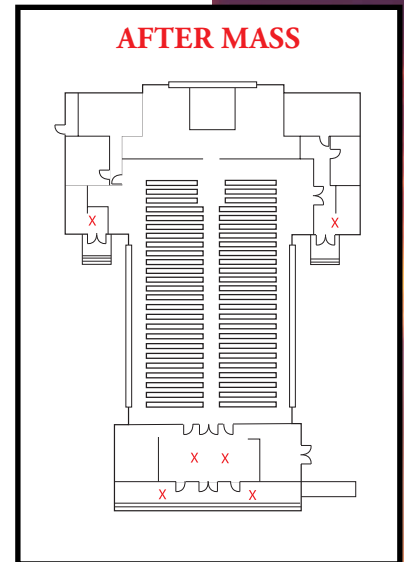
Once your assessment has been completed, it's time to develop your plan and put it in writing. In order to do this, the team may need to meet frequently for the first few months in order to jumpstart the process. At the first meeting, the team should:

- Document key players and roles
- Identify possible crises situations
- Update key contact information and establish a system for keeping contacts up-to-date
- Determine whether your facility has floor plans and evacuation routes
- Set goals and target dates
- Identify and document a plan for staff/volunteer training

At subsequent meetings, the team should decide on procedures and personnel to do the following:

- Actively train employees and volunteers in their roles
- Check and test communication methods/systems
- Meet with local first responders and community leaders
- Seek assistance from the Ratio Risk Services, if necessary.
- Assign one person to be responsible for documenting the plan, updating the plan, and distributing the plan to the committee members. (See blue box below regarding a planning template you may utilize.)

Every plan should include dates for reviewing and reassessing the plan at regular intervals.



Ratio Risk Services has prepared a step-by-step PARISH SAFETY PLAN TEMPLATE to aid you in documenting your plan. To request an electronic copy of the template, please email: info@ratorisk.com

STEP 4: TRAINING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

TRAINING AND DRILLS

A plan is only good if it's put into practice. Training is essential to ensure everyone understands individual roles and responsibilities. Studies show that our brains function at a lower level when we are thrown into high stress situations. Why? Because under stress, our bodies are naturally programmed to go into fight-or-flight mode. In this mode, the body produces a stress hormone called cortisol, which slows down the area of the brain where critical thinking takes place and enlarges the area of the brain where emotions rule. In addition, the place in our brain where learning and memory take place temporarily narrows. This means that our natural tendency in a time of emergency is to act emotionally rather than rationally.

Modern threats require that we remain calm and in control in order to carry out the functions necessary for survival, such as calling 911 or administering first aid. **Fortunately, through training and drills, we can actually rewire our brains to operate on a higher level during emergency situations.** Going over drills again and again will train our bodies and our brains to respond appropriately in a time of crisis.

Try to include safety and security topics 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 are used to taking direction from their teachers; therefore, it is critical 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 the Appendix.

REASSESS

Remember to regularly reassess your plan. Training exercises are a good way to ascertain what works and what doesn't work. Recommendations from federal safety agencies sometimes change. Be sure your plan is up-to-date and in line with current best practices. Schedule yearly meetings with local first responders and be open to any changes or suggestions they put forth. Share your plan with our office: m.ford@diospringfield.org



RATIO RISK SERVICES - 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. Our partner, Ratio Risk Services, is here to help you during any phase of your assessment. If you have questions or concerns or need additional resources, please contact Ratio Risk Services at 617-833-0811 or email info@ratorisk.com.

Date: _____

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.

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.

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.

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.

Assess during daylight and evening hours, when facilities are empty and when activities are in full swing.

Invite local first responders to accompany you on a walk through.

Look for potential risks or hazards that could result in injury.

Pay extra attention to church relics, sacred vessels and vestments. Extra security measures should be taken with high-value items.

Document your findings. Take pictures and videos of areas of concern.

Have a plan in place to address areas of concern. Who will be responsible for making sure the issue is addressed?

Contact the Office of Risk Management if you need assistance.

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 plates to prevent tools and plastic cards from releasing the bolt.
- Exterior doors with panic push-bars should be equipped with 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 _____
- EMT _____
- Parish Administrator _____
- Office of Risk Management _____

NOTES

Date: _____

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:

LOCATION OF AEDs:

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	
Location of surveillance cameras, field of view, monitoring positions, and remote access capabilities	
Security alarm system	

APPENDIX C: CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE KIT

Among the recommended items in the Critical Incident Response Kit (CIRK) are floor plans; 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"> • Fire alarm • Utilities • Sprinkler system • Cable television 		
Keys and/or codes		
Master schedule		
Clergy and staff contact information		
Contact List <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Emergency phone numbers • Volunteer and parish council contact numbers • Diocesan contact 		
First Aid Kit		
Miscellaneous Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pens/pencils • Notepad • Tape • Flashlight • Batteries • Name tags • Paper towels • Laptops • Candy • Toiletries 		

The Archdiocese of Boston and Ratio Risk Services assume no liability arising out of the use or application of this information. This guide is not intended to be a substitute for live training. This information should not supersede directives provided and information by local first responders.

APPENDIX D: BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

If possible, notify another staff member to call law enforcement while you are on phone with perpetrator.

Date: _____ Time Received: _____ Phone#/Extension Called: _____

Exact Words of Caller _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

EXACT WORDING OF RESPONSE:

When will/is the bomb going to explode? _____

Where is the bomb right now? _____

More than one bomb? How many/where? _____

What kind of bomb is it? _____

What does the bomb look like? _____

What is your name? _____

Instructions or directives made by the caller: _____

DESCRIPTION OF CALLERS VOICE:

GENDER: Male Female **AGE:** Young Middle-Age Older

WAS THERE AN ACCENT: Yes No If yes, what kind of accent? _____

DID THE VOICE SOUND FAMILIAR: Yes No If yes, whom did it sound like? _____

WAS THERE A SPEECH PATTERN OR ABNORMALITY LIKE A LISP, STUTTER, RASPY, YELLING, LAUGHTER, ETC?

Yes No If yes, describe: _____

BACKGROUND SOUNDS:

Street Noise House Noise Machinery
 PA System Motor Vehicle/Horns Animal Noise
 Music/Radio No Sound At All Other: _____

LANGUAGE:

Foul Language Well-spoken/Education Message Was Taped
 Incoherent Message Was Being Read Other: _____
 Irrational Threatening

Time Call Ended: _____ Name of Person Receiving Threat: _____

Title: _____ Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Date and Time Reported: _____

How Reported: _____

Review this page with all office staff. A copy should be available at every phone for immediate use.

APPENDIX E: EMERGENCY KIT CHECKLIST FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

This kit should be portable and readily accessible for use in an emergency. Designate an individual to keep the kit updated (change batteries, update phone numbers, etc.) Items in this kit are for emergency use only.

FORMS

- Map of Building with location of phones, AEDs, fire alarms and exits.
- Map of local streets with evacuation routes.
- Student roster including emergency contacts.
- List of students with special health concerns/medications.
- Staff roster including emergency contacts.
- Lists of cell phone numbers for pastor and relevant diocesan staff.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

SUPPLIES

- Flashlight
- First aid kit with extra gloves
- CPR disposal mask
- Battery-powered radio
- Extra batteries for radio and flashlight
- Whistle
- Ropes (ideally 3 pieces, 10' each)
- Tarp (6' x 8')
- Toilet paper and wet wipes
- Emergency blankets
- Bottles of water
- Hard candy and snacks
- Age-appropriate activities for students
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

APPENDIX F: EMERGENCY DRILLS (PAGE 1 OF 2)

FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Your safety committee should devise an action plan for religious education staff, volunteers, and students in the event an incident occurs during religious education classes. The plan should address the following:

- What circumstances would necessitate a lockdown or evacuation?
- Who determines that a lockdown or evacuation order is in place?
- How is a lockdown or evacuation order communicated to others (catechists, students, the pastor, parents)?

What is a lockdown?

A lockdown is implemented when there is an armed perpetrator approaching the campus, on campus, or in the school. Lockdown is employed to keep people away from a violent perpetrator while police engage the suspect. Once a lockdown procedure is in place, no one is allowed to leave until the situation has been resolved.

What is an evacuation?

An evacuation is a procedure used when students must be removed from the premises to a safe location on the premises or nearby property. A fire drill is the most common type of evacuation. As part of the planning procedures, a safe evacuation area should be identified ahead of time and communicated to staff and volunteers.

Practicing Lockdown and Evacuation Drills

Children in grades kindergarten through high school will already have experience practicing lockdown, evacuation and fire drills in public school as these drills are mandated by the state. It may not be practical to conduct drills with your religious education students but, at the very least, religious education personnel and volunteers should be trained in what actions to take in the event a lockdown or evacuation becomes necessary. Children will always look for direction from their teachers; therefore, it is critical 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.

Actions to Take During a Lockdown

Because every parish's religious education program is unique, it is impossible to assign a one-size-fits-all approach to lockdown drills. Below are some general guidelines based on various environments. Please note that it is imperative that your safety and security team assess your facilities and meet with a local first responder who can advise you specifically about your situation.

Classes Meeting in Parish School

If your parish is affiliated with a school and your religious education program utilizes the school facility, plan to meet with the school principal to discuss the lockdown procedures they have in place. If possible, the faith formation leader (Director or Coordinator of Religious Education) should take part in the school's lockdown drill. 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 is preferable to have one point of entry to the building where classes are held. The entry should be monitored at all times to ensure that only religious education students, parents, staff and volunteers are 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 faith formation leader 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.

APPENDIX F: EMERGENCY DRILLS (PAGE 2 OF 2)

FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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 maintain a class sign-in sheet 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.
- 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
- 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.

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.

ACTIVE SHOOTER How to Respond

WHAT IS AN ACTIVE SHOOTER?

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

TRAINING YOUR STAFF FOR AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

To best prepare your staff for an active shooter situation, create a plan and conduct training exercises. Components of the training should include:

- Recognizing the sound of gunshots.
- Reacting quickly when gunshots are heard and/or when a shooting is witnessed.
- Calling 911.
- Practicing different scenarios, such as lockdown and evacuation.

There are many training programs offered by private companies and local police departments. The Office of Risk Management recommends conducting mock active shooter training exercises using the 4L's approach developed by Synergy 911: Locate, Lockdown, Leave, Live. The 4L approach advocates quickly determining the most reasonable way to protect your own life and then acting on it.



The Archdiocese of Boston, Ratio Risk Services, and Bree Publishing assume no liability arising out of the use or application of this information. This guide is not intended to be a substitute for live training. This information should not supersede directives provided and information by local first responders.

APPENDIX G: ACTIVE SHOOTER (PAGE 2 OF 4)

THE 4LS OF SURVIVAL™:

HOW TO RESPOND TO AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

Locate

Identify the situation, make appropriate notifications, and decide what to do based on that information.

- Warn: Make announcement on PA system. Shout out to others. Give direction. Tell people where to go. Warn people if they are in the danger zone.
- Inform: Call 911. Follow site protocols.
- Assist: Have a plan for those with special needs/physical disabilities.

Lockdown

When appropriate, initiate lockdown based upon policy and training. Your hiding place should:

- Be out of the active shooter's view.
- Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door).
- Not trap you or restrict your options for movement.

To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

- Always shut and lock the door.
- Blockade all doors in the room with heavy furniture. Consider the use of door wedges, ropes, cords, or other items to tie off the doors.
- Silence your cell phone and/or pager.
- Turn off any source of noise (i.e., radios, television).
- Hide behind large items (i.e., cabinets, desks).
- Remain quiet.
- Dial 911 to alert police to the active shooter's location.
- If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.

Leave

If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Be sure to:

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Be prepared to break a window to escape if necessary.
- Help others escape, if possible.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Once outside and in the open, run in a zigzag pattern to positions of cover (cars, trees, dumpsters).
- Call 911 when you are safe.



Live

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Yelling
- Committing to your actions

You should only consider the LIVE component when you have no other alternative. You should not leave a safe place to take matters into your own hands. Leave that job to police and public safety personnel.

Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard.

- Officers usually arrive in teams of four (4).
- Officers may wear regular patrol uniforms or external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets, and other tactical equipment.
- Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, handguns.
- Officers may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.
- Officers may shout commands, and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.



HOW TO RESPOND WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

How to react when law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets).
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling.
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating; just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises.

What to expect when law enforcement arrives:

The first officers to arrive to the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises.

Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR:

- Location of the active shooter
- Number of shooters, if more than one
- Physical description of shooter/s
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
- Number of potential victims at the location

ADDITIONAL WAYS TO PREPARE FOR AND PREVENT AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

Preparedness

- Ensure your facility has at least two evacuation routes.
- Post evacuation routes in conspicuous locations throughout your facility.
- Include local law enforcement, emergency responders, SWAT teams, K-9 teams, and bomb squads to train for an active shooter scenario at your location.

Prevention

- Foster a respectful workplace.
- Be aware of indications of workplace violence and take remedial actions accordingly.
- Encourage Mental Health First Aid courses:
www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

Indicators of Potential Violence

Individuals typically do not just “snap” but display indicators of potentially violent behavior over time. If these behaviors are recognized, they can often be managed and treated. Potentially violent behaviors may include one or more of the following (this list of behaviors is not comprehensive, nor is it intended as a mechanism for diagnosing violent tendencies):

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- If a staff member, unexplained increase in absenteeism
- Noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and hygiene
- Depression / withdrawal
- Increased severe mood swings
- Noticeably unstable, emotional responses
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
- Suicidal; comments about “putting things in order”
- Behavior which is suspect of paranoia (“everybody is against me”)
- Talk of previous incidents of violence
- Empathy with individuals committing violence
- Increase in unsolicited comments about firearms, other dangerous weapons and violent crimes





**Roman Catholic
Diocese of
Springfield**

in partnership with **RATIO**
RISK SERVICES