

**Parish Security Tactics,  
Techniques and  
Procedures (TTP)**



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- 2. [I LOVE YOU GUYS \(SRP\)](#)

[Insert Church Name] is committed to the safety and security of visitors, faculty, staff, and volunteers in its facilities. In order to support that commitment, this document addresses emergency mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery procedures relevant to various security hazards in our church communities.

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# Prevention

## Access Control

Controlling access and screening visitors at ingress and egress points is the primary tool for early detection and prevention of various security hazards during Mass times and other large events. The following procedures should be followed in order to control access and quickly deploy the appropriate emergency procedure when a threat or hazard is discovered.

1. All doors must be set in the “Locked” position or be readily locked immediately in case of emergency. In the case of electronic locks, the system should be set for all doors to be always locked. For most mechanical locking doors, they should be set in the “locked” position but propped to allow visitor access while being monitored by a volunteer.
2. Any entrance that is open for visitors to enter must be monitored by a staff member or volunteer who has the capability to rapidly secure the door if an imminent threat or hazard is identified outside of the church. When doors are already in the “locked” position then the door monitor will simply need to close the door to secure it. This is optimal in a critical incident where fine motor skills are not required to secure a door in a short period of time.
3. Once Mass begins the number of access points must be reduced to one entry point. If there is a need for a second entry point due to handicap access, then that entry point must be monitored by a staff member or volunteer who has the capability to rapidly secure the door in case of emergency. Reducing the number of access points allows security personnel to effectively deploy resources to monitor both those accessing the church after Mass starts as well as the congregation.

## Communication

Effective communication between different volunteer groups and staff members who are serving at a Mass is critical to identify threats or hazards early and then communicate those observations in order to deploy the appropriate security strategy.

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1. All volunteers and staff who are volunteering at a Mass should be on the same mass communication device (i.e. radio, cell phone).
2. All volunteers and staff members should be trained in the 6 emergency protocols and understand their roles for each emergency response.

## Identification

During a critical incident it is important for volunteers, staff members and visitors to recognize one another so that command and control can be established.

1. All staff and volunteers must have easily identifiable identification on their person so that they can be quickly identified by staff, volunteers, emergency responders and visitors for help and direction during a critical incident.
2. Security personnel include hired uniformed off duty police officers, uniformed armed security guards and volunteer Guardian Ministry members. Guardian Ministry volunteers cannot display the word "Security" anywhere on their person but should have a way to be identified as a church volunteer. Guardian Ministry members are unpaid volunteers given the authority to provide security services on church premises or other established place of worship through [SB 2065](#). Guardian Ministry members are also afforded civil immunity which extends to the church organization if they act reasonably to the preserve the lives of worshippers under [SB 694](#).

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## Preparedness

### Security Personnel

Armed security personnel are required to be present at all weekend Masses. This can be accomplished through hiring off duty police, contract security guards, the Guardian Ministry, or a combination of hired security and the Guardian Ministry. The Guardian Ministry are armed volunteers who are vetted, trained and authorized to provide security services on church property under [Texas Law](#) and the Diocese of Ft. Worth Guardian Ministry policies and procedures promulgated by the Diocese Security Department. No one may be armed and provide security services on church property unless they are an off duty police officer, hired security guard or an active member of the Diocese Guardian Ministry.

It is the primary responsibility of the Guardian Ministry and hired security personnel to deter unprovoked violence and respond to security hazards to save lives. Security personnel are tasked with protecting people, but not property. Deterrence strategies can be deployed to protect property, but using force against another for a property crime should be avoided when possible.

1. Security personnel should be positioned in advantageous positions to detect security hazards early and respond rapidly when necessary. The following positions are priorities for security personnel.
  - a. External patrols – Security personnel should be a visible deterrent to bad actors by patrolling outside of the church during Mass and large events. Special attention should focus on parking lots and ingress routes to the church. Many active shooter events occur once a church service has begun so early detection is imperative.
  - b. Interior surveillance – Security personnel should be positioned near the entrances where visitors are allowed to enter the church and near the front of the church to prevent any bad actors from entering the altar area. If there are additional resources, then security personnel should be positioned throughout the church in an L-Ambush configuration when practical. Interior personnel should be in plain
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clothing and demonstrate a discreet security posture so that guests are not distracted by security personnel and bad actors are less likely to identify them.

2. Security personnel should take an active role in leading during the various emergency protocols that may be deployed. The role of security personnel is to save lives and quickly restore order to chaos.

### **Volunteers/Staff**

All volunteers and staff play a role in the security solutions for every parish. Different roles will require different levels of involvement during a critical incident, but each volunteer and staff member act as force multipliers for security personnel.

1. Situational Awareness – All staff members and volunteers should maintain a heightened level of situational awareness where they serve in order to identify any suspicion indicators or safety hazards early.
2. Communicate – All staff members and volunteers should know who to contact if there is security hazard as well as a pre-planned method for communicating the concern to the right person to ensure a timely response.
3. Act – All staff members and volunteers should coordinate with and follow the direction of the security personnel on site to effectively deploy the correct security strategy for a given circumstance.

### **Clergy**

Clergy are the Shepherds of the flock, and all parishioners will look to them for strength and direction during a critical incident. Clergy should understand the 6 emergency responses and their corresponding actions that will be deployed by security personnel, staff and volunteers when they occur.

1. When a critical incident occurs, and visitors/parishioners are affected Clergy should then
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take a lead role in communicating with the congregation.

- a. Communicate with Security Personnel or designee to understand what emergency response is under way.
  - b. Communicate with the congregation the nature of the emergency so they know what is happening.
  - c. Communicate with the congregation a security response strategy that will support the efforts of the security personnel (i.e. Stay seated, join in prayer, move to this exit carefully).
2. In some emergency situations Clergy will also need to make a decisive action to save others' lives or their own.
- a. Clergy should understand and preplan actions to lead altar servers and other vulnerable celebrants to safety in the case of a targeted attack.
  - b. Clergy should preplan their escape to safety in emergency situations where their life is threatened.
  - c. Escape routes to consider could include exiting the building or barricading in a "safe room" like the sacristy while preparing to fight.

### **Parishioners/Visitors**

Parishioners and visitors should be provided access to the following emergency plans and expectations during the 6 emergency responses as well as a floor plan which identifies the locations of emergency exits, AED's and fire suppression equipment.

1. **LOCKDOWN** – This term is used when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. All entrances will be locked and 911 called. In most cases the Mass may continue as usual, but there may be times where staff or volunteers must communicate a security strategy such as moving to a safer location. Stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another follow the directions provided.

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2. **CONTACT** – This term is used when there is a serious security threat or hazard inside of the building (i.e. Active Shooter, or Targeted Violence). Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. The Guardian Ministry and other security personnel will be moving to the threat, so it is important to allow them to move through the space rapidly.

Parishioners and visitors should be made aware of the following lifesaving procedures for their safety in the case of an active shooter event:

- a. **AVOID** – Avoid the area and flee in the direction opposite the Active Shooter. Assist people that have been wounded or have disabilities. After fleeing a safe distance from the attack, stay behind cover in a safe location and contact 911 to inform them of your condition and location.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. **DENY** – Temporarily hide by getting low behind an object or Barricade ONLY if you cannot flee. If possible, attempt to create a hasty fight or flee option. If barricading, block the entry while preparing to fight and pre-position tools needed (cover windows, immobilize doors, etc.).<sup>1</sup>
  - c. **DEFEND** – Attack and fight if you are capable and willing. The sooner someone fights and stops the Active Shooter, the fewer victims we will have. Fight to incapacitate/cripple/stop, not to hurt or injure. Fight alone or in a team; use any means necessary.<sup>1</sup>
3. **EVACUATE** – This term is used when there is a safety hazard inside of the building such as a gas leak or fire. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. Staff or volunteers will provide direction to evacuate the building safely. Stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another evacuate the building. Stay in a designated area away from the crisis site until first responders allow you to leave. Leaving immediately in your vehicle will clog the ingress routes for first responders and impede a successful response.
  4. **SHELTER** – This term is used when there is a safety hazard outside of the building such as a

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tornado or earthquake. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. You will be provided direction by staff or volunteers on the appropriate safety strategy such as where to shelter in place. DO NOT EXIT if this protocol is called. Stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another shelter in place inside of the building.

5. **MEDICAL** – This term is used when there is a medical emergency. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. The medical team will respond to the patient with lifesaving equipment. Provide room for the medical team to work and provide any information about the patient that may be pertinent to life saving measures. Stay calm and listen to directions. If a medical team is not available, then the next capable person with medical training should take the lead in medical intervention until first responders arrive.
  
6. **CIVIL UNREST** – This term is used when there is a coordinated effort to disrupt the Mass or gathering. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. Security personnel will respond to the location to escort the agitators out of the building or a different security strategy to control the situation. Stay calm, listen to directions, and do not interact with the agitators.

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## Staff/Volunteer Emergency Response Procedures

1. **LOCKDOWN** – This term is used when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. All entrances will be locked rapidly and 911 called. Security personnel will ensure all entrances are secure and determine if any other safety strategy should be deployed. In most cases the Mass may continue as usual, but there may be times where staff or volunteers must communicate a security strategy such as moving to a safer location.
  
2. **CONTACT** – This term is used when there is a serious security threat or hazard inside of the building (i.e. Active Shooter, or Targeted Violence). Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. The Guardian Ministry and other security personnel will be moving to the location of the threat. Once the threat is neutralized security personnel will deploy the following tasks:
  - a. Scene security – determine if there is more than one threat and address it as needed.
  - b. Call 911 – A volunteer will be designated to contact 911 to get first responders enroute and provide pertinent information about the circumstances and the location.
  - c. Meet first responders – A volunteer will be designated to meet first responders in the parking lot, provide them with important information and escort them into the crisis site.
  - d. Deconfliction bands/sashes – Security personnel will deploy high visibility bands or sashes to allow first responders to rapidly identify them.
  - e. Make announcements – The priest or designee will provide the congregation with information about the incident and the appropriate safety strategy that will be deployed.

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- f. **Medical attention** – The medical team and security personnel will begin providing lifesaving medical care as soon as the scene is safe to do so.
3. **EVACUATE** – This term is used when there is a safety hazard inside of the building such as a gas leak or fire. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. Staff or volunteers will provide direction to evacuate the building safely to preplanned areas away from the crisis site. Parishioners and visitors are encouraged to stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another evacuate the building. Parishioners and visitors should stay in the designated area away from the crisis site until first responders allow them to leave. Leaving immediately in vehicles will congest the ingress routes for first responders and impede a successful response.
4. **SHELTER** – This term is used when there is a safety hazard outside of the building such as a tornado or earthquake. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. Security personnel, staff and volunteers will provide direction on the appropriate safety strategy such as where to shelter in place. Parishioners and visitors should not exit if this protocol is called. Parishioners and visitors should be encouraged to stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another shelter in place inside of the building.
5. **MEDICAL** – This term is used when there is a medical emergency. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. The medical team will respond to the patient with lifesaving equipment. Call 911 and if necessary, parishioners and visitors should be encouraged to stay calm and listen to directions. If a medical team is not available, then the next capable person with medical training should take the lead in medical intervention until first responders arrive.
6. **CIVIL UNREST** – This term is used when there is a coordinated effort to disrupt the Mass or gathering. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are

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the first to be aware of the emergency. Security personnel will respond to the location to prevent agitators from entering the premises when possible. Call 911. If agitators make it into the building and it is practical to do so, security personnel will notify them that they have been criminally trespassed and advise that they must leave the premises. Security personnel will deploy different management strategies depending on the actions of the agitators. Parishioners and visitors should be encouraged to stay calm, listen to directions, and avoid interacting with the agitators.

### **Law Enforcement Coordination**

Parish representatives should be prepared during a critical incident to meet first responders outside of the crisis site and help establish a command post. Maps, keys or other electronic access as well as access to cameras feeds should be readily available to first responders to assist with managing the critical incident.

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# Recovery

## Reunification

Reunification occurs immediately after a critical incident and is the process of accounting for people who were in a crisis site and connecting them with family members and resources.

Two (2) preplanned reunification sites should be identified. The sites should be large enough to house a large number of people such as a school or business. One site should be within walking distance if possible and the other site should be located further away from the crisis site and would require mass transit. Parish staff/volunteers should contact those site managers and discuss reunification plans so that when needed it is a smooth process. Emergency contact numbers for the site and transportation companies should be acquired in the planning phase for this recovery strategy.

## Crisis Communication

### Objectives:

- To formulate and channel accurate information to internal and external audiences during a crisis
- To ensure that affected audiences receive crisis-related information through the most efficient, expedient channels
- To take preventative steps ahead of predictable crises to avoid communication gaps during an emergency
- To create a plan that is adaptable and can be used for making necessary announcements as quickly as possible

As soon as is practical, a parish representative should contact the Diocese Communications Department to receive support during the event. Basic communication strategies are as follows:

- The parish communication representative should meet first responders at the designated parish command post. Where possible, a Parish crisis communication representative and

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designated command post should be chosen prior to experiencing a crisis to avoid confusion amidst a quickly evolving crisis event.

- Contact Diocesan Communication Department for support:
  - **John Cuccaro, Diocesan Director of Communications, 817-940-1129**
- In coordination with the Diocesan Communications Department, establish timely, concise, and clear communication for the different communication platforms available to the parish. All crisis messaging should come either directly from the Diocesan Communications Department or under strict direction from the DCD. Work with the DCD to identify key audiences for messaging (e.g., employees, parishioners, family members, neighboring entities, media, general public, etc.)
- Designate one representative to talk to the media, working under the express direction of the Diocesan Communications Department. Connect the DCD with the responding emergency agency (if any) so the Diocese may coordinate with the agency's Communications team
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that they are **not authorized** to communicate with media unless otherwise designated to do so by the Parish communication representative in cooperation with the Diocesan Communications Department. Ideally, all media inquiries should be forwarded directly to the Diocesan Communications Department
- Maintain an incident fact sheet, detailing events, times, actions, contacts (and media inquiries), and outcomes. Details from the fact sheet should be related to the Diocesan Communications Department at regular intervals throughout the crisis event timeframe
- When the critical phase of the crisis is over, coordinate with the DCD on post-crisis actions and messaging
- Conduct a forensic review of Communications activities during the crisis and recommend ways to improve Crisis Communications.

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## **Additional Security Protocols/Security Cameras/Alarms**

### **Camera Locations**

Surveillance cameras provide a twofold purpose, safety and security. Surveillance cameras can deter and detect safety issues to include abuse and accidents on parish property. Cameras also serve a security purpose by deterring and detecting criminal activity. Cameras should be installed both on the exterior and interior of the church, offices, parish hall and other buildings. Cameras should have sufficient resolution to identify what is captured on camera. External cameras should be installed in areas that capture images of each side of the building as well as the primary thoroughfares for foot traffic. Other areas where external cameras should be considered are high value/theft areas like AC Units and parking lots. Cameras should also be located near each entrance at a height that will allow for positive identification of individuals entering and exiting the door.

Interior cameras should capture high traffic areas, the sanctuary, the vestibule and areas outside of the confessionals and inside of the sacristy. The confessionals and sacristy are two areas historically where questionable interactions between priests and others have occurred. Video only recordings near the confessionals and inside of the sacristy can deter bad behavior and can protect church personnel from false accusations of impropriety or assist in the investigation of inappropriate conduct.

### **Administrative Access**

Administrative rights for access control, video systems and alarm systems should be very limited and only provided to paid staff. Volunteers often provide much needed expertise in areas of technology and security, but if they are not employees then their access to these systems must be limited in scope based on their position and role. IT companies that monitor these systems can be granted administrative rights to support the parish staff so long as a staff member also has administrative access. Records should be kept of who has various access types.

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## **Video Retention Periods**

All video system should have the capacity to record video. Retention periods for these recordings must be a minimum of 60 days. A 90-day retention period is highly recommended. Staff should be trained in how to review and save video for the purpose of investigations.

## **Alarm Code Access**

Alarm code access should be limited to staff members and a limited number of key volunteers when necessary. Alarm codes should be changed annually or when an employee with access is terminated. Parish staff should keep record of who has access codes. Administrative rights to the alarm system should only be kept by church employees.

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# Weapons Policy

## Restricting Carrying of Weapons

Only active and active retired law enforcement officers, active armed Guardian Ministry members, hired security guards, and employees who have been screened, trained and approved through the Guardian Ministry program are authorized to carry a firearm on Fort Worth Diocese property to include parishes, schools and other Diocese property.

## Signage/Notice

Portable signs restricting weapons are required when a Guardian Ministry or security guards/off duty officers are providing security for any event. This notice of restriction is designed to mitigate the risk of security personnel misidentifying a law-abiding citizen carrying a weapon. The signage should be portable so that the notice can be deployed when security is present to address the deconfliction issue, while keeping it off of the buildings and websites to avoid being viewed as a soft target by attackers who conduct surveillance. 90% of active attacks occur in gun free zones.

Portable signage displayed outside of entrances or main thoroughfares using sandwich board type signs is recommended to allow law abiding gun carriers to view the notice and comply. We found through scenario training that small signs inside of the church don't provide enough warning for gun carriers and could produce an unnecessary conflict with Guardian Ministry members.

<https://www.safetysign.com/products/13163/bilingual-texas-3006-no-concealed-carry-sandwich-board-sign>

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<https://www.safetysign.com/products/15426/bilingual-texas-3005-no-firearms-allowed-sandwich-board>

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[www.safetysign.com](http://www.safetysign.com)

<https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/billtext/html/HB01927F.htm>

### **Bilingual Signage**

30.05 – No carry by an unlicensed person

30.06 – No concealed carry by a licensed (LTC) person

30.07 – No open carry by a licensed (LTC) person

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# Business Office Security Protocols

## Access Control

During business hours all exterior entrances to business offices should remain locked. This protocol reduces the potential of staff and volunteers becoming victims of targeted violence and other concerning interactions by screening visitors before they are granted access. This security posture is a result of a rapid increase in [targeted criminal activity](#) against houses of worship over the past several years in the United States. The industry standard is that visitors are screened at the entrance using a video/doorbell camera in which the receptionist can view the visitor and communicate with them before granting access with a release mechanism at the receptionist desk or tablet. If this is not feasible, then visitors should be provided a phone number for the front desk or other designee to call before being granted access.

There are legitimate concerns of appearing unwelcoming to visitors, but security protocols like access control have become commonplace throughout our society and is often expected due to the real responsibility that entities have to protect their staff and volunteers from unprovoked violence. People will feel welcome when they are treated well by staff and volunteers and will usually understand the security protocols given the current environment and similar standards of other places in our society.

## Emergency Procedures

Business offices should adopt a common language and protocols for responding during an emergency. Business offices should utilize the [Standard Response Protocols<sup>2</sup>](#) as the basis for communicating and the actions needed to take during a critical incident in an office setting. All of our parochial schools and most public schools in the country utilize this program. There are free resources and training available on their website. The 4 basic emergency responses and corresponding actions during that emergency are as follow:

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1. **Lock Down - Lockdown** is followed by the Directive: "**Locks, Lights, Out of Sight**" and is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.
  - a. Lockdown is called when there is a threat or hazard inside of the building. From domestic disputes to intruders to an active assailant, Lockdown uses room security to protect occupants from threat.
  
2. **Secure - Secure** is followed by the Directive: "**Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors**" and is the protocol used to safeguard people within the building.
  - a. Secure is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Whether it's due to violence or criminal activity in the immediate neighborhood, or other threats outside of the building, Secure uses the safety of the physical facility to act as protection.
  
3. **Evacuate - Evacuate** may be followed by a location and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.
  - a. Evacuate is called when there is a need to move occupants from one location to another such as a fire or gas leak.
  
4. **Shelter - Shelter** and state the **Hazard** and **Safety Strategy** for group and self-protection.
  - a. Shelter is called when the need for personal protection is necessary. Training should also include spontaneous events such as tornado, earthquake or hazmat.

### **Employee Weapons Procedure**

Only employees who have been screened, trained and approved through the Guardian Ministry are allowed to carry a firearm on Diocese property while working. These employees do not have to serve in the Guardian Ministry at Masses and other events, but they must adhere to the Guardian Ministry vetting, training and policies.

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## Religious Education/ Group Security

### Access Control

Access control during religious education and other faith formation events is critical to protect all attendees including parishioners, guests, volunteers and staff. This is an area that is often overlooked in exchange for convenience.

All entrances must always remain locked in buildings where these meetings take place. In order to welcome guests, the group leader should appoint someone to monitor the door before the event begins to allow guests in. This procedure is done so that the door monitor can rapidly shut the locked door if there is a threat or hazard outside. During the event or class if a guest arrives there should be instructions provided for them to contact the door monitor or other designee to be granted access.

Volunteers or staff who lead these events must be made aware of the protocols so that they understand the expectations. A progressive and constructive accountability model should be used for these protocols because they are so essential in keeping everyone safe. If protocols are not followed and doors are left unlocked or propped, then the leader of that event will receive a warning and mentorship. On the second offense the group will no longer be allowed to meet on church or school property.

### Emergency Procedures

Religious education, faith formation groups and other activities on church property should adopt a common language and protocols for responding during an emergency. These groups should utilize the [Standard Response Protocols<sup>2</sup>](#) as the basis for communicating and the actions needed to take during a critical incident in an office setting. All of our parochial schools and most public schools in the country utilize this program. There are free resources and training available on their website. The 4 basic emergency responses and corresponding actions during that emergency are as follow:

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  - Secure is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Whether it's due to violence or criminal activity in the immediate neighborhood, or other threats outside of the building, Secure uses the safety of the physical facility to act as protection.
  
3. **Evacuate - Evacuate** may be followed by a location and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.
  - Evacuate is called when there is a need to move occupants from one location to another such as a fire or gas leak.
  
4. **Shelter - Shelter** and state the **Hazard** and **Safety Strategy** for group and self-protection.
  - Shelter is called when the need for personal protection is necessary. Training should also include spontaneous events such as tornado, earthquake or hazmat.

### **Security Personnel**

When there are large numbers of people on campus for religious education, faith formation or other meetings outside of Mass, armed security should be deployed. If there are not enough Guardian Ministry members to cover these events and hired security is not feasible then recruiting volunteers from these groups to go through the Guardian Ministry vetting and training should be a priority so that there is always someone capable of defending these groups of people nearby while attending church events.

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The rule of thumb for armed security coverage:

- 1 armed security personnel for every 50 people.
- 2 armed security personnel for every 100 people.
- Etc.

## Outdoor Event Security

Periodically parishes and schools plan large outdoor events like festivals, processions and other community events. This section is to help guide staff, volunteers and visitors on security protocols and emergency procedures.

### Security Personnel

When there are large numbers of people on campus for large events like festivals, processions and other outdoor community events outside of Mass, armed security should be deployed. Uniformed police officers or security companies should be considered for primary security duties. The Guardian Ministry can augment police and security personnel for wider coverage if available.

The rule of thumb for armed security coverage:

- 1 armed security personnel for every 50 people.
- 2 armed security personnel for every 100 people.
- Etc.

### Medical Personnel

The most common emergency is a medical event. Parishes and schools should prepare for this eventuality by designating a volunteer from the parish medical team or nurse from the school to lead during medical emergencies. Lifesaving equipment like AED's and mass casualty kits as well as supplies to treat minor injuries should be on hand for these events. In some cases, EMT's can be hired and staged on site to respond to medical emergencies.

### Emergency Response Procedures

Security personnel and other volunteers and staff members should use the Mass emergency protocols for large outdoor events which are adapted for the outside space.

1. **LOCKDOWN** – This term is used when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building.

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Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. Visitors should be escorted to an indoor facility and all entrances will be locked rapidly and 911 called. Security personnel will ensure all entrances are secure and determine if any other safety strategy should be deployed.

2. **CONTACT** – This term is used when there is a serious security threat or hazard inside of the building (i.e. Active Shooter, or Targeted Violence). Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. The Guardian Ministry and other security personnel will be moving to the location of the threat. Once the threat is neutralized security personnel will deploy the following tasks:

- a. Scene security – determine if there is more than one threat and address it as needed.
- b. Call 911 – A volunteer will be designated to contact 911 to get first responders enroute and provide pertinent information about the circumstances and the location.
- c. Meet first responders – A volunteer will be designated to meet first responders in the parking lot, provide them with important information and escort them into the crisis site.
- d. Deconfliction bands/sashes – Security personnel will deploy high visibility bands or sashes to allow first responders to rapidly identify them.
- e. Make announcements – The priest of designee will provide the congregation with information about the incident and the appropriate safety strategy that will be deployed.
- f. Medical attention – The medical team and security personnel will begin providing lifesaving medical care as soon as the scene is safe to do so.

3. **EVACUATE** – This term is used when there is a safety hazard near the outdoor event such as a gas leak or fire. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. Staff or volunteers will provide direction

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to evacuate the area safely to preplanned areas away from the crisis site. Parishioners and visitors are encouraged to stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another evacuate the building. Parishioners and visitors should stay in the designated area away from the crisis site until first responders allow them to leave. Leaving immediately in vehicles will clog up the ingress routes for first responders and impede a successful response.

4. **SHELTER** – This term is used when there is a safety hazard outside of the building such as a tornado or earthquake. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if they are the first to be aware of the emergency. Security personnel, staff and volunteers will escort visitors inside and provide direction on the appropriate safety strategy such as where to shelter in place. Parishioners and visitors should not exit if this protocol is called. Parishioners and visitors should be encouraged to stay calm, listen to directions, and help one another shelter in place inside of the building.
5. **MEDICAL** – This term is used when there is a medical emergency. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. The medical team will respond to the patient with lifesaving equipment. Call 911 and if necessary, parishioners and visitors should be encouraged to stay calm and listen to directions. If a medical team is not available, then the next capable person with medical training should take the lead in medical intervention.
6. **CIVIL UNREST** – This term is used when there is a coordinated effort to disrupt the Mass or gathering. Parishioners and visitors should alert staff or volunteers immediately if you are the first to be aware of the emergency. Security personnel will respond to the location to prevent agitators from entering the premises when possible. Call 911. If agitators make it into the building and it is practical to do so, security personnel will notify them that they have been criminally trespassed and advise that they must leave the premises. Security personnel will deploy different management strategies depending on the actions of the agitators. Parishioners and visitors should be encouraged to stay calm, listen to directions, and avoid interacting with the agitators.

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# Pre School-Security Protocols

## Access Control

During business hours all exterior entrances to preschool buildings should remain locked. This protocol reduces the potential of staff and volunteers becoming victims of targeted violence and other concerning interactions by screening visitors before they are granted access. This security posture is a result of a rapid increase in [targeted criminal activity](#) against houses of worship and schools over the past several years in the United States. The industry standard is that visitors are screened at the entrance using a video/doorbell camera in which the receptionist or staff member can view the visitor and communicate with them before granting access with a release mechanism at the receptionist desk or tablet. If this is not feasible, then visitors should be provided a phone number for the front desk or other designee to call before being granted access.

There are legitimate concerns of appearing unwelcoming to visitors, but security protocols like access control have become commonplace throughout our society and is often expected due to the real responsibility that entities have to protect their staff and students from unprovoked violence. People will feel welcome when they are treated well by staff and volunteers and will usually understand the security protocols given the current environment and similar standards of other places in our society.

## Emergency Procedures

Pre-Schools should adopt a common language and protocols for responding during an emergency. Pre-Schools should utilize the [Standard Response Protocols<sup>2</sup>](#) as the basis for communicating and the actions needed to take during a critical incident in an office setting. All of our parochial schools and most public schools in the country utilize this program. There are free resources and training available on their website. The 4 basic emergency responses and corresponding actions during that emergency are as follow:

1. **Lock Down - Lockdown** is followed by the Directive: "**Locks, Lights, Out of Sight**" and is the

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protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.

- a. Lockdown is called when there is a threat or hazard inside of the building. From domestic disputes to intruders to an active assailant, Lockdown uses room security to protect occupants from threat.
2. **Secure - Secure** is followed by the Directive: "**Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors**" and is the protocol used to safeguard people within the building.
    - a. Secure is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Whether it's due to violence or criminal activity in the immediate neighborhood, or other threats outside of the building, Secure uses the safety of the physical facility to act as protection.
  3. **Evacuate - Evacuate** may be followed by a location and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.
    - a. Evacuate is called when there is a need to move occupants from one location to another such as a fire or gas leak.
  4. **Shelter - Shelter** and state the **Hazard** and **Safety Strategy** for group and self-protection.
    - a. Shelter is called when the need for personal protection is necessary. Training should also include spontaneous events such as tornado, earthquake or hazmat.

### **Pre School-Security Personnel**

It is highly recommended when feasible to employ armed security personnel for preschool hours of operations. This can be in the form of off duty police officers or level III uniformed armed security guard companies. These personnel would be responsible for ensuring that security protocols are followed like access control procedures, deter criminal activity through an active presence and have the capability to respond to threats when necessary.

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## Employee Weapons Procedure

Only employees who have been screened, trained and approved through the Guardian Ministry are allowed to carry a firearm on Diocese property while working. These employees do not have to serve in the Guardian Ministry at Masses and other events, but they must adhere to the Guardian Ministry vetting, training and policies.

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