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NAACP

SPARTANBURG BRANCH #5550

Security Recommendations for Churches and Houses of Worship

- Poll your membership to determine if you have any members who are current or retired Law Enforcement or Military and work with them to establish a security detail. Once a security detail has been established, have one or two members of that detail keep watch on the doors during the hours of service, and have one person near the front of the Church who can secure the Pastor and Senior Leadership. Also have one of the members of that security detail keep watch on the parking lot during church services.
- Poll your membership and identify any CPR/First Aid certified members you may have.
- Work with Church members and members of the local community to establish a Church/Neighborhood watch. Ensure that persons on watch periodically visit and inspect the church grounds, parking lot, and building interior once or twice a night.
- Work with the local Police Department and develop a relationship with the Post Officer to ensure that the Church and its grounds are on the patrol route for area Officers.
- Have the person who typically arrives first at the Church drive through and around the parking lot to see if anything looks out of place or whether it may have been damaged or tampered with over the previous evening. Have the person who unlocks the Church to do a quick walk through of the building and record if anything is out of place from the night before.
- Review your Church website to ensure that it does not include physical details such as floor plans or overhead photos that could be used by persons planning a hostile act.
- If possible, consider the installation of a camera system. Ensure that any system purchased or installed has at least two feeds with one that can reliably accessed from a location outside of the church building at all times. This way, if an incident or accident takes place that damages the Church, the feed will still be accessible to assist with the investigation. High Definition Indoor/Outdoor camera systems are commercially available in the \$250 to \$450 price range.
- If possible, consider the installation of a motion activated lighting system. Outdoor security lighting systems are commercially available in the \$100 to \$200 price range.

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Tips when considering a security camera system

Before purchasing a security or camera system, first conduct a security risk analysis of your House of Worship to ensure that you have a clear understanding what your needs are.

Observe and consider the areas where your Church is most vulnerable in order to find a system that reduces that risk.

Know if your camera captures clear discernible images in low light situations and from various distances.

Give special attention to the placement of all camera equipment, noting each camera's position and what physical area it actually captures.

Security Checklist For Churches and Houses of Worship

- o Do you have an emergency plan in case of a major emergency?
- o Do you have staff or volunteers who are prepared to respond to a medical emergency?
- o Do you have someone monitor your church parking lot during services?
- o Do you maintain shrubbery around your church to deter criminal activity facility?
- o Do you have bushes or shrubbery around the church that might provide a place of concealment?
- o Is your outside and interior lighting adequate?
- o Do you have emergency and back-up lighting?
- o Are all doors and windows secured when building is empty?
- o Is there a protocol established with your staff in case of a violent person entering the church?
- o Does your church have a Security Team or Detail?
- o Have you contacted your local law enforcement office and ensured your church is on the area patrol route?

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