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# CHURCH SAFETY TEAM

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Workbook

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# Introduction

The primary purpose of this workbook is to assist church safety teams in developing and refining their emergency preparedness and response protocols. By equipping your team with the knowledge and tools outlined in this guide, you can enhance the safety of your congregation. While this workbook provides comprehensive guidance on many common safety scenarios, it is important to recognize that not all situations or scenarios can be fully anticipated or planned for. Emergency situations can be unpredictable, and unique challenges may arise that are not specifically covered in this workbook or the accompanying class.

## Goals of the Workbook

1. **Gap Analysis and Enhancement of Safety Protocols:** The workbook is designed to help you identify any gaps or overlooked areas in your current safety plan. Through a series of guided assessments and checklists, you'll pinpoint weaknesses and receive guidance on establishing robust safety measures, from equipment maintenance to emergency response procedures.
2. **Prepare for Emergencies:** Enable your team to effectively manage a variety of emergency scenarios, ensuring a swift and organized response that minimizes risk and protects all members of your church community.
3. **Promote Team Collaboration:** Foster a culture of safety that involves every team member, enhancing communication and cooperation within your safety team and the wider church community.
4. **Continuous Improvement:** Encourage ongoing assessment and refinement of safety practices to adapt to changing circumstances and new challenges.

This workbook is designed not only as a tool for setting up new safety measures but also as a resource for auditing and improving existing practices within your church.

## How to Use This Workbook

1. **Team Organization:** Start by reviewing your team's structure and communication strategies. Assign roles and ensure everyone understands their responsibilities.
2. **Safety Equipment and Identification:** Inventory and map out the location of all safety equipment. Ensure that all team members can quickly access and use the equipment in an emergency.

3. **Emergency Procedures:** Delve into specific procedures for various emergency scenarios, including fires, lockdowns, and medical emergencies. Regularly update and practice these procedures.
4. **Checklists and Templates:** Throughout the workbook, use the provided checklists and templates to make notes, plan improvements, and track equipment maintenance.
5. **Feedback Loops:** After each section, reflect on what has been learned and identify areas for improvement. Use the feedback forms to collect and incorporate feedback from your team.
6. A scheduled team meeting should be used to discuss findings from the workbook, track progress on set goals, and adapt strategies as needed.

### **Regular Updates and Continuous Improvement**

This workbook is a living document that should be regularly updated to reflect new best practices, changes in church layout, or shifts in team membership. Continuous improvement ensures that the safety team remains effective and prepared for any situation.



# Section 1: Team Organization

**Overview:** This section focuses on effectively utilizing a volunteer-driven safety team by strategically positioning team members throughout the church. Each position will have defined responsibilities and necessary equipment.

**Objective:** To ensure each team member knows their specific responsibilities and the equipment they manage, enhancing the overall effectiveness and coordination of the safety team.

## 1.1 Position Mapping

**Position Overview:** This section is designed to help you effectively utilize the church's physical layout by assigning specific responsibilities to each volunteer based on their stationing. Each position is assigned clear, manageable tasks tailored to its location to ensure comprehensive coverage and quick responses to incidents.

**Mapping Diagram:** Include a diagram of the church layout here. Use this visual tool to mark key locations where team members will be stationed. These should cover all main areas including entrances, children's areas, and any other critical points that require monitoring or rapid emergency response. If available, a fire evacuation map can be used on the following page.

### Building Map

**Mark Positions:** Clearly indicate each position on the map.

**Label:** Provide labels for each position (e.g., "Main Entrance", "North Hallway", "Children's Wing").

**Key:** Create a key that denotes each position with specific symbols or colors. See Appendix C.

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## 1.2 Station Descriptions and Responsibilities

### Position Description Sheets

For each position marked on the mapping diagram, fill out the following template to clarify the responsibilities and equipment necessary for the volunteer stationed there.

#### Template for Each Station

- Station Name: [Name of the location, e.g., Main Entrance]
- Location Description: [A brief description of the area, noting any specific features relevant to safety responsibilities.]
- Assigned Responsibilities:
  - Monitor area for unauthorized access or unusual activities.
  - Assist in emergency evacuation if required.
    - In the event of an evacuation, relocate to parking lot Position A, and prepare to receive churchgoers.
  - This station is closest to the AED which is located at the Main Hall Station. In the event of a medical emergency, this station will be responsible for retrieving the AED and bringing it to the location of the emergency.
- Equipment Assigned:
  - Radio for communication with other team members.
  - Green vest with "Safety" label for use in an emergency.
  - [Any additional equipment specific to the station, e.g., First Aid kit]
- Additional Notes:
  - This station is also responsible for ensuring that the south emergency exit doors are accessible at all times.

## 1.3 Equipment Responsibility

### Equipment Checklists

This part of the workbook includes a checklist that serves as an inventory management tool. It helps the team leader ensure that every piece of safety equipment is assigned to a specific station, and it details the maintenance requirements for each item to keep everything in operational order. See Appendix B.

## Structure of the Checklist

- **Equipment List:** Start with a comprehensive list of all equipment that your safety team might need. This can include communication devices, medical supplies like AEDs and first aid kits, fire safety tools like extinguishers, and any other relevant safety items.
- **Station Assignment:** For each item on the equipment list, specify which station it will be assigned to. This ensures that all areas of the church are equipped according to the potential risks and requirements of that specific location.
- **Responsibility Assignment:** Next to each station assignment, indicate which role is responsible for that piece of equipment. This makes someone specifically accountable for ensuring the equipment is present, functional, and accessible.
- **Maintenance Schedule:** Include a column for maintenance schedules, which is critical for equipment like AEDs and fire extinguishers that require regular checks. This schedule should align with the manufacturer's recommendations and any regulatory requirements.
  - Weekly Checks:
    - Radios and communication devices
    - First Aid Kits
  - Monthly Checks:
    - AED's
    - Fire Extinguishers
  - Quarterly Checks:
    - Emergency lighting
    - Evacuation route markers

## Example Entry in the Equipment Checklist

Equipment	Station	Date Checked	Maintenance Due
AED	Main Entrance	01/01/2024	07/01/2024
Fire Extinguisher	Children's Classroom 1	01/01/2024	01/07/2025
First Aid Kit	Main Office	01/01/2024	03/30/2026

## Instructions for Use

- **Regular Reviews:** This checklist should be reviewed at least semi-annually, or more frequently if needed, to ensure all equipment is in place, functional, and has been recently maintained.
- **Update As Needed:** Whenever there are changes in the team, updates in equipment, or after any incident, revisit this checklist to make necessary updates. This might involve reassigning responsibilities or updating maintenance dates.
- **Accessibility:** Make sure that this section of the workbook is easily accessible to all team members, perhaps by maintaining a digital copy that can be quickly updated and shared.

The idea is to create a system where the management of equipment is not only proactive but also preventive, ensuring that in the event of an emergency, all tools and devices are ready, and the team members know exactly where they are and how to use them.

## 1.5 Regular Review and Adjustment Framework

This framework is designed to guide the team leader in making informed adjustments to the safety team's station assignments and equipment responsibilities. Regular reviews ensure the team's setup remains effective and responsive to the dynamic environment of the church.

### Steps for Making Adjustments

#### Step 1: Collect Feedback

- **Method:** Use feedback forms, post-event debriefs, and regular team meetings to gather input from all team members.
- **Focus Areas:** Ask specific questions about the adequacy of current station assignments, effectiveness of the equipment, and any challenges faced during emergencies or drills.

#### Step 2: Assess Changes in Church Layout or Usage

- **Physical Changes:** Periodically review any changes to the church's physical layout, such as construction, renovation, or repurposing of spaces, which might affect safety protocols.

- **Usage Changes:** Consider how changes in the usage of the church space (e.g., new activities, increased congregation size) might impact safety needs.

### Step 3: Review Team Availability and Skills

- **Availability:** Update the team schedule to reflect any changes in availability or new persons joining the team.
- **Skills Update:** Incorporate any new skills or certifications that team members have acquired which may influence their station assignments or responsibilities.

### Step 4: Adjust Station Assignments and Equipment Responsibilities

- **Adjustment Worksheet:** Use an adjustment worksheet to reallocate resources and responsibilities. This worksheet should include:
  - Current Assignment: What is currently in place.
  - Proposed Changes: Suggested modifications based on feedback, layout changes, or volunteer updates.
  - Rationale: Reasons for each change, ensuring they align with improved safety and efficiency.
  - Implementation Plan: Steps to enact the changes, including timelines and any required training.

### Step 5: Implement and Communicate Changes

- **Implementation:** Follow the plan laid out in the adjustment worksheet to make the necessary changes to station assignments and equipment responsibilities.
- **Communication:** Ensure that all team members are informed of the changes. Use team meetings, emails, or a dedicated communication app to disseminate updates effectively.

### Step 6: Monitor and Evaluate

- **Monitoring:** Once changes are implemented, monitor how effectively the new setup addresses the issues identified.
- **Evaluation:** Use subsequent feedback sessions and drills to evaluate the impact of the changes and make further adjustments as needed.

This framework provides a systematic approach for adapting the safety team's structure and operations to ensure optimal responsiveness and effectiveness, leveraging ongoing feedback and evolving circumstances within the church community.

## Adjustment Worksheet Sample

### Current Assignment

Station Name	Equipment Assigned	Responsibilities
Main Entrance	Radio, Incident Clipboard	Monitor entries and exits
Children's Area	First Aid Kit, AED	Oversee child safety

### Proposed Changes

Station Name	New Equipment Assigned	Revised Responsibilities	Change Reason
Main Entrance	Radio, Incident Clipboard, Megaphone	Monitor entries and exits, direct congregation in emergencies.	Enhanced emergency communication.
Children's Area	First Aid Kit, AED, Emergency Light	Oversee child safety, ensure visibility during power outages.	Increase safety measures in low-light conditions.

### Rationale for Changes

- **Main Entrance:**
  - **Change:** Addition of a megaphone to existing equipment.
  - **Reason:** Enhances the ability to communicate effectively during large gatherings or emergencies when ambient noise levels are high.
- **Children's Area:**
  - **Change:** Addition of emergency lighting.
  - **Reason:** Provides essential lighting during power outages, ensuring the area is safely navigable and enhancing the ability to respond to incidents in low-light conditions.

### Implementation Plan

- **Steps to Implement Changes:**
  - Place orders for the new equipment (megaphone, emergency light) if not currently in inventory.
  - Install emergency lighting in the children's area and train relevant volunteers on how to activate and maintain it.

- Provide a training session on the use of the megaphone for volunteers at the main entrance.
- Update the emergency preparedness manual to include these changes and ensure all volunteers are familiar with the new equipment and procedures.
- **Timeline:**
  - Complete installation and training by [insert date].
  - Conduct a drill utilizing the new equipment within one month of installation to ensure functionality and familiarity.

**Verification by Team Leader**

- **Name:** [Team Leader's Name]
- **Date:** [Date of Filling Out the Worksheet]
- **Signature:** [Team Leader's Signature]

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# Section 2: Emergency Procedures

## Overview

This section provides actions and protocols for various emergencies. More importantly, it includes guided questions to assess current preparedness and assist in developing or updating emergency protocols based on the team's responses.

## Objective

To ensure all team members are not only familiar with emergency procedures but are also actively involved in verifying and improving readiness for different scenarios.

## Actions and Protocols with Guided Questions

### 2.1 Fire Emergency Procedures

- **Guided Questions:**
  - Q: Do we have pre-determined assembly areas in the event of an evacuation?
  - Q: Where are the fire alarms located in the building?
  - Q: Where are the fire extinguishers, and are they regularly inspected?
  - Q: What are the evacuation procedures for the childcare area?
    - Who is responsible for ensuring that the childcare area is clear?
    - What safety or protection measures are in place for the children, once evacuated?
    - What are the reunification procedures for guardians and children?
- **Actions and Protocols:**
  - Assembly Areas: Review assembly areas with the team and elders regularly. Ensure that routes to the assembly areas are clear of obstructions and easily accessible.
  - Fire Alarm Checks: Conduct monthly checks of all fire alarms and ensure that they are in working order.
  - Fire Extinguisher Maintenance: Conduct quarterly checks of all fire extinguishers to ensure maintenance schedule is to date.
  - Review evacuation procedures for the childcare areas with team members.

- If necessary, assign one position the responsibility of ensuring that the childcare area is clear, once evacuated, if safe to do so.
- Review positions or postings for the area around the assembly area designated for childcare in the event of an evacuation.
- Work with childcare providers to establish reunification procedures for children and guardians, in the event of an evacuation.

## 2.2 Medical Emergency Procedures

- **Guided Questions:**

- Q: Where is the nearest AED located relative to all regular stations?
- Q: Is there a list of team members who are certified in CPR/First Aid/AED?
- Q: How quickly can emergency medical supplies be accessed?
- Q: What station is designated to contact emergency services and relay the necessary information?
  - Physical Address
  - Location of patient within the address
  - Patient Approximate age
  - Patient Gender
  - Patient Signs and Symptoms
  - Aid or Assistance being Rendered (e.g.: CPR in progress)

- **Actions and Protocols:**

- AED Locations: Ensure all team members know the locations of AEDs. Map these locations in the workbook and at station points. Ensure that each station understands their area of responsibility in reference to AED retrieval and deployment.
- Training Registry: Maintain an up-to-date list of trained personnel accessible to all team members. Review and update the list semi-annually.
- Emergency Medical Equipment: Ensure that adequate medical equipment is available and deployable.
- Communication: Designate one station to contact emergency services and relay the proper information.

## 2.3 Lockdown Procedures

- **Guided Questions:**

- Q: Is there a lockdown protocol?

- Are there capabilities in place to “harden” the childcare area as well as the main auditorium or sanctuary, including window coverings?
    - Any other areas of refuge that should be considered?
  - Q: Are all entrances and exits secure or equipped with security features?
  - Q: Is there a communications/alarm system in place with a panic button?
- **Actions and Protocols:**
  - Lockdown Protocol Review: Annually review and drill lockdown procedures with all team members. Ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear and understood. Document all training and exercises.
  - Security Audit: Conduct a bi-annual security audit of all entrances and exits to ensure that they are safe, accessible, and that all security devices or equipment are present and in working order. Ensure that all necessary equipment is accounted for and functional.
  - Communications Systems Check: Test all communications systems, including any panic buttons, regularly.

## 2.4 Active Aggressor Response

- **Overview:**
  - Active aggressor indicates involvement in activity engaged in killing, attempting to kill, or causing serious harm to people in a confined and populated area. This section will give general considerations to take when faced with a situation like this and provide general guidance on how to effectively reduce harm and promote safety.
- **Guided Questions:**
  - Q: Is there an established code word to communicate the presence of an aggressor without causing panic?
  - Q: Are all staff members trained in the “Run, Hide, Fight” protocol?
  - Q: What is the procedure to communicate with local law enforcement quickly and effectively during such an incident?
- **Actions and Protocols:**
  - Run, Hide, Fight: Ensure that all staff members, at a minimum, are trained in the “Run, Hide, Fight” protocol.
  - Communication: Use designated communication tools to alert law enforcement and team members discreetly during an incident.
  - Training: Conduct regular training and drills to simulate active aggressors.

## 2.5 Exterior and Interior Protest Activities

- **Guided Questions:**

- Q: Is there a protocol for rapid decision-making when protests appear imminent? Does the pastoral staff wish to engage with protestors or would they rather them escorted away from the congregation?
- Q: What is the protocol for the safety team during a protest? Keeping in mind that primary areas of responsibility will still need to remain covered and prepared for additional protestors.
- Q: At what point during a protest should law enforcement be contacted?

- **Actions and Protocols**

- Monitoring and Preparation: Train staff members to recognize the signs of an imminent protest as well as communication and intercept techniques.
- Securing Property: Implement measures such as lock down procedures to prevent unauthorized access to church premises.
- Communication: Maintain a clear and direct line of communication with all safety team members. Implement a notification system to alert congregants of the situation without causing panic or inducing any action from the church goers.

## 2.6 Natural Disaster Preparedness (e.g., Tornado, Flood)

- **Guided Questions:**

- Q: Are there designated "Safe Areas," and are they well-defined and equipped?
- Q: Are weather alerts monitored during all church activities?
- Q: Are there emergency kits in the designated "Safe Areas?"

- **Actions and Protocols:**

- Safe area Setup: Clearly mark and equip all designated safe areas with necessary supplies. Identify these locations on the workbook map.
- Weather Monitoring: Implement a system to monitor and communicate severe weather alerts during all church activities.
- Emergency Kit Maintenance: Regularly check and replenish emergency kits. A list of suggested equipment can be found in Appendix D.

## 2.7 Post-Incident Response

- **Guided Questions:**

- What is the protocol to debrief and learn from an incident?
- What support services are available for team members and attendees following an incident?
- Who will communicate with stakeholders and media, following an incident?
- **Actions and Protocols**
  - Debriefing: Conduct structured debriefing sessions with all involved personnel to discuss what happened, what was done well, and areas for improvement. This is 100% a learning activity without judgement.
  - Support Services: Provide access to staff and attendees to assist with coping following an incident.
  - Communications: Designate one staff member and one alternate as the single point of contact for all stakeholders and media inquiries.

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# Section 3: Training and Drills

## Overview

This section is dedicated to outlining the structured training programs and regular drills necessary to keep the church safety team proficient and ready to respond to emergencies effectively. The focus is on building confidence, enhancing skills, and ensuring that all procedures are second nature to the team.

## Objective

To establish a regular training schedule that covers all critical emergency procedures and to conduct drills that simulate a variety of scenarios, helping the team to refine their response strategies and improve coordination.

### 3.1 Training Programs

- **First Aid and CPR:** Basic and advanced techniques, including how to handle choking, small wounds, and cardiac emergencies.
- **AED Use:** Operation of Automated External Defibrillators, with hands-on practice on training units.
- **Emergency Evacuation:** Procedures for safely evacuating the church, considering different scenarios like fires, natural disasters, or security threats.
- **Handling Aggressive Behavior:** Techniques for de-escalating aggressive situations, managing protests, and dealing with potential threats.
- **Emergency Response Tactics:** Specific actions for unique emergencies detailed in Section 2, such as lockdowns, utility failures, and chemical threats.

### 3.2 Training Schedule

- **Annual Calendar:** Plan and distribute a calendar at the beginning of the year that details:
  - Scheduled Training Sessions.
  - Drill Schedule.
  - Bi-annual refresher courses for certifications such as CPR and First Aid.
- **Orientation Sessions:** Mandatory introductory training for all new safety team members, covering:
  - Basic safety procedures.



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