



Church Safety Assessment

A structured walk-through tool for church leadership

By Justin James, M.Div
Owner, Hilltop Systems

Church safety is not about fear. It is about preparation, stewardship, and caring well for the people entrusted to us.

Hilltop Systems, LLC
hilltopsystems.net
(214) 558-1678
Texas DPS License #B25166401

Church Safety Assessment

Executive Summary for Pastors & Church Leadership

Church safety is not about fear. It is about preparation, stewardship, and caring well for the people entrusted to us.

Purpose of This Assessment

This assessment provides a structured, respectful framework to help church leadership review safety practices, identify strengths, and address gaps responsibly—while keeping ministry at the center.

What This Assessment Covers

Physical security, leadership planning, building access, children's safety, training, communication systems, life safety readiness, cybersecurity, and incident response.

How to Use This Assessment

Leadership teams are encouraged to complete this assessment together during a guided walk-through. Each section is scored to support clarity, prioritization, and ongoing improvement.

Our Commitment

Hilltop Systems serves churches with care, integrity, and respect for ministry environments. We listen first, recommend thoughtfully, and support long-term stewardship.

Security Cameras & Monitoring

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Camera coverage at entrances and exits | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Children's areas, hallways, and parking areas covered | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Cameras are operational and properly labeled | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Quick access to video on mobile devices | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Secure mobile access for authorized leaders | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Minimum 30-day video retention on local NVR | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Quick access to share video evidence | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Camera access permissions defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Leadership & Safety Planning

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Designated safety leader identified | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Safety roles and responsibilities defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Written safety policies in place | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Legal counsel identified and protocols reviewed | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Insurance carrier informed of safety systems | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Emergency decision authority established | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Safety plan reviewed annually | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Scoring: 0 = Not in place | 1 = Partial | 2 = Needs improvement | 3 = Fully in place



Building & Access Control

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Public and restricted entrances clearly defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Non-essential doors secured during services | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Children's and office areas properly restricted | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Emergency exits marked and accessible | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Exterior lighting adequate and functional | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Alarm & Emergency Systems

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Alarm system installed and operational | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Sensors tested on a regular schedule | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Emergency contact list current | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| After-hours response procedures defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Children's & Youth Ministry Safety

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Secure check-in and check-out procedures | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Restricted access to children's areas | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Volunteer background check policy in place | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Camera coverage in hallways and entry points | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Scoring: 0 = Not in place | 1 = Partial | 2 = Needs improvement | 3 = Fully in place



Audio, Video & Communication

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Clear sanctuary audio for announcements and emergencies | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Visual displays usable for emergency messaging | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Paging or internal communication system available | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Reliable Wi-Fi for staff and safety teams | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Training & Awareness

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Safety team training completed | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Ushers and greeters trained on procedures | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Staff trained on emergency response | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Certified firearm training completed (if applicable) | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Refresher training scheduled | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Firearm-related training or discussion, if applicable, is intended solely for awareness and coordination purposes. Hilltop Systems does not provide legal advice, law enforcement services, or tactical instruction. Any firearm use or carry must comply with applicable state and local laws, church policies, and insurance requirements, and should be conducted only by properly trained and authorized individuals.

Scoring: 0 = Not in place | 1 = Partial | 2 = Needs improvement | 3 = Fully in place



Life Safety & Emergency Preparedness

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Fire alarm system operational | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Fire extinguishers inspected and accessible | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Evacuation routes posted | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Severe weather or shelter procedures defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| AED available and maintained | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Privacy, Ethics & Child Protection

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Camera placement avoids sensitive areas | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Access rules for recorded video defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Child-related footage handled with appropriate care | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Data retention and deletion practices followed | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Scoring: 0 = Not in place | 1 = Partial | 2 = Needs improvement | 3 = Fully in place



Medical Response & First Aid

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Medical response plan documented | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Designated medical responders identified | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| First aid kits stocked and accessible | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Incident reporting process defined | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Cybersecurity & Network Security

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Dedicated firewall installed | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Network segmentation in place | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Staff and guest Wi-Fi separated | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Firmware and security updates maintained | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Data backups regularly tested | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

Incident Response & Continuous Improvement

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Incident documentation process in place | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Post-incident review conducted | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Communication plan following incidents | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Lessons learned applied to future planning | Score ____ | Notes _____ |
| Qualified vendors vetted and insured | Score ____ | Notes _____ |

This assessment is provided as a general planning and discussion tool and does not constitute legal, medical, or insurance advice.

Scoring: 0 = Not in place | 1 = Partial | 2 = Needs improvement | 3 = Fully in place



Final Safety Score

Church Safety Score: _____ / 168

Next Steps

- Review assessment results with church leadership and identify priority areas.
- Address low-scoring items internally or with qualified professionals.
- Schedule follow-up reviews to track progress and maintain readiness.

Recommended Timeline

- **30 Days:** Address immediate safety gaps and policy clarifications.
- **60 Days:** Complete training, system improvements, and documentation updates.
- **90 Days:** Conduct a follow-up review and adjust long-term safety plans.