




# 5 Ways to Improve the Safety and Security of Your Place of Worship or Community Spaces

 English Español

Release Date  
April 14, 2022

*Director of the DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Marcus Coleman and Senior Advisor to FEMA's Preparedness Grants Division Mark S. Silveira discuss five ways to improve the safety and security of your place of worship or community spaces.*

Many people spend time in churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, gurdwaras or other places of worship and public spaces. People should feel safe when they gather to express their faith or serve their community.

As we continue to learn from faith and community leaders on how to improve the safety and security of these spaces, we identified five ways your community can get started today.

## 1. Take Preparedness One Step at a Time, Year Round

Whether you are preparing for disasters or keeping your space safe from acts of violence, it is important to be [ready](#) at any moment.

There are many ways you can protect your space from acts of violence. To begin, we recommend watching this recorded webinar where several leaders provide a multi-faith perspective on "[preventing acts of targeted violence and protecting the safety and security of places of worship through faith and community based approaches in the U.S. and Europe](#)."

Other ways to prepare can include creating a plan that helps people know what to do in the event of an unforeseen incident. This means taking trainings like [Until Help Arrives](#) and completing a plan for how you will [communicate with loved ones](#) in case of an emergency. An important step everyone can take is creating and practicing a plan. During an incident, it helps to know how to contact one another and reconnect family and community members if separated.

## 2. Know How to Respond to Threats

If you know that man-made incidents or threats are possible in your safe space, it's important to know how to respond to them..

Contact your local first responders for recommendations on trainings such as what to do in case of an [active shooter](#).

The [Mitigating Attacks on Houses of Worship Security Guide](#) also offers low-cost to no-cost measures to mitigate against attacks for places of worship.

Use the [Houses of Worship Security Self-Assessment](#) to help determine any weaknesses in your building and find ways to improve physical safety and security enhancements for the building and the people it shelters. Additionally, community-based non-profits such as the [Organizations Preparing for Emergency Needs \(OPEN\)](#) list resources that can help identify specific actions for your unique situation.

## 3. Learn More About Resources Available to You

Although there are some low to no-cost ways to prepare, additional resources may require funding. Often your organization may not have enough funds to implement needed safety and security measures. However, there are grants available that can help connect you to different resources that will help fund these projects.

On FEMA's [Preparedness Grants page](#), there are resources such as the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#), [case studies](#) and [informational bulletins](#). You can get tips and advice on the federal government grants process at [Grants.gov Community Blog – Connecting the grant community](#) to #LearnGrants.

#### 4. Consider the Nonprofit Security Grant Program

One option to assist your efforts is the [Nonprofit Security Grant Program](#), which provides funding support to nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship, that are at high risk of terrorist attack. This funding can help your organization implement physical security enhancements and activities.

These grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations to fund activities such as:

- Safety and security planning, training and exercises
- Contract Security Guards
- Access/Entry Controls
- Close Circuit Security Cameras
- External Lighting
- Security Fences/Gates and Bollards

Before applying, it's recommended to review all previous year materials at [Nonprofit Security Grant Program | FEMA.gov](#).

#### 5. Always Ask for Help

There are many federal partners that want to support you at the federal, state, local, tribal and territorial level. Many of these partners are looking for opportunities to provide you with the resources and support you need. Collaborating with law enforcement or using your Department of Homeland Security [Protective Security Advisor](#) can also make a big difference.

The [DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships](#) is another federal entity that helps faith and community leaders improve the safety and security of their facilities. It connects organizations to the resources they need to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. It also recognizes the important role your organization has in emergency response, and the ways that it can help protect the whole community and help them on the road to recovery.

The work you do today helps to protect not just your community, but the entire country. Start preparing now to keep your place of worship or community space safe and secure.

If you'd like to learn more about additional considerations for your place of worship, please visit [FEMA.gov/faith](#) for more information.

#### Tags:

- [All](#)
- [Active Shooter](#)
- [Faith Based Communities](#)
- [Faith-based Community Resources for Emergency Managers](#)
- [Safe Room](#)
- [Safety & Security](#)
- [We Are FEMA](#)

Last updated April 14, 2022

[Return to top](#)

---

**Disasters & Assistance**

---

**Grants**

---

**Floods & Maps**

---

**Emergency Management**

---

**About**

---

**Work With Us**



FEMA



[Contact FEMA](#)



FEMA.gov

An official website of the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#).

[Accessibility](#)

[Accountability](#)

[Careers](#)

[Civil Rights](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[FOIA](#)

[Glossary](#)

[No FEAR Act](#)

[Plug-Ins](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Report Disaster Fraud](#)

[Website Information](#)

[DHS.gov](#)

[USA.gov](#)

[Inspector General](#)

## National Terrorism Advisory System