### Example security plan for a large church

#### 1. Security team

* **Structure:**
  + **Head of security:** Oversees the entire security program and liaises with law enforcement.
  + **Team leads:** Manage specific areas (e.g., parking lot, sanctuary, children’s ministry).
  + **Security volunteers:** Assigned to designated zones during services and events.
  + **Medical response team:** Composed of trained medical professionals or volunteers with certifications (CPR, first aid, etc.).
* **Staffing:**
  + A mix of volunteers and, if possible, professional security personnel for high-traffic events.
  + Designate clear roles and responsibilities for each team member.
* **Shift coverage:**
  + Make sure there is a visible security presence during all services, events, and weekdays (for administrative staff and visitors).

#### 2. Emergency procedures

* **Fire evacuation:**
  + Create a detailed evacuation map and post it in prominent locations.
  + Use the PA system to guide evacuations during emergencies.
  + Assign security team members to assist in each zone and ensure exits are clear.
  + Assign team members to assist congregants with mobility issues.
* **Medical emergency:**
  + First aid kits and AED devices should be placed strategically throughout the facility.
  + There should be a medical team on standby during all large gatherings.
  + There should be a designated person who calls 911 while another provides on-site care.
* **Active shooter/violent threat:**
  + Train staff and the congregation in the "Run, Hide, Fight" strategy.
  + Install panic buttons or silent alarm systems in strategic areas.
  + Partner with local law enforcement to conduct active shooter drills annually.
  + Designate safe rooms with locking mechanisms and communication tools.
* **Weather emergency:**
  + Designate shelter areas (e.g., basements or windowless rooms).
  + Equip areas with emergency supplies (water, flashlights, battery-powered radios).
  + Announce weather alerts via the PA system and text notification system.
  + Communicate procedures to the congregation.
  + Assign team members to assist congregants, including those with mobility challenges.

#### 3. Access control

* **During services:**
  + Utilize a check-in process for staff and volunteers.
  + Lock all doors except main entrances during services.
  + Station security personnel at all open entrances and exits.
* **Visitor management:**
  + Provide guest badges for weekday visitors.
  + Install an intercom or buzzer system for after-hours access.
* **Key management:**
  + Limit access to church keys and maintain a key log.
  + Consider electronic locks with audit trails.

#### 4. Surveillance and technology

* **Cameras:**
  + Install high-definition cameras covering entrances, hallways, parking lots, sanctuary, and children’s areas.
  + Monitor cameras in real time using a central security station.
* **Access control:**
  + Use electronic keycard systems for sensitive areas.
  + Restrict access to offices, finance rooms, and storage areas.
* **Lighting:**
  + Maintain bright lighting in parking lots and building exteriors.
  + Use motion-activated lights in lesser-used areas.
* **Alarm systems:**
  + Install alarms for fire, unauthorized access, and panic alerts.
  + Connect systems to local law enforcement or monitoring services.

#### 5. Communication plan

* **Internal communication:**
  + Equip the security team with two-way radios or secure communication apps.
  + Develop an emergency code system for discreet alerts (e.g., "Code Blue" for medical emergencies).
* **Congregation notification:**
  + Use a text alert system to communicate emergencies or evacuations.
  + Regularly update congregants on safety policies and procedures.

#### 6. Training

* **Security team:**
  + Conduct monthly training sessions covering conflict de-escalation, emergency, evacuation protocols, and active shooter response.
  + Provide advanced training for professional security staff.
* **Church staff and volunteers:**
  + Conduct biannual safety workshops for all staff and ministry leaders.
  + Train children’s ministry workers in emergency procedures.
* **Congregation:**
  + Offer annual safety awareness seminars to educate members on situational awareness and emergency responses.
  + Consider inviting law enforcement and fire safety officers to give talks or seminars and provide additional guidance.

#### 7. Incident Reporting

* **Maintain a secure incident log to record:**
  + Date, time, and location of the incident.
  + Names of involved parties.
  + Detailed descriptions of the event and actions taken.
* **Review incidents quarterly** to identify trends and improve your policies and procedures.

#### 8. Child and youth safety

* **Background checks:**
  + Mandatory background checks for all staff and volunteers working with children and youth.
* **Check-in/check-out system:**
  + Use a digital check-in system with printed labels for parents and children.
  + Only allow authorized individuals to pick up children.
* **Monitoring:**
  + Security personnel stationed near children’s ministry areas.
  + Cameras should be installed in hallways and entrances to children’s areas.

#### 9. Parking lot and perimeter security

* **Parking lot patrol:**
  + Assign team members or hire security guards to monitor parking areas during services.
  + Use golf carts or vehicles for larger lots.
* **Traffic management:**
  + Designate staff to direct traffic and assist with parking.
  + Use cones or barricades to guide vehicles safely.

#### 10. Budget considerations

* **Allocations:**
  + **Professional security personnel:** $30 – $50 per hour (contract basis).
  + **Surveillance equipment:** $5,000 – $10,000 for high-definition cameras and monitoring systems.
  + **Emergency supplies:** $200 – $500 annually for restocking.
* **Fundraising/grants:**
  + Apply for safety grants for places of worship.
  + Organize fundraisers to support security needs.

#### 11. Review and update

* Conduct annual risk assessments and reviews of the security plan.
* Adjust policies based on feedback, incidents, or changes in congregation size or facility layout.
* Coordinate periodic audits with external security consultants or law enforcement.