### 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.