

Safety Planning

Worksheet 1: Basic Starter Questions for Your Congregation

Getting started on developing a comprehensive safety plan can feel overwhelming. This worksheet offers congregations one way of getting started by identifying several key areas that can serve as starting points for doing this work. The worksheet presents 9 questions and is intended for use as a point of reference for your congregation's leadership and/or safety committee.

1. Who will serve on a **safety committee**? (Remember to include people from various subgroups and demographics in your congregation.)
2. What are your **evacuation routes** from the sanctuary and other gathering places, like classrooms? Where are your **evacuation meet-up sites** outside the building? Are you having someone at the beginning of all services and events provide words of welcome that include information about how to exit the building in case of evacuation, and that identify any members in the room who are willing to assist anyone who has any urgent needs?
3. Which room(s) will you use as places to **shelter in place** or have people go into **lockdown**? Do you have kits with water, snacks, and other necessities in those rooms? How will you communicate this information to your staff and members? (Remember to factor in the needs of people with mobility challenges, and people with special medical needs like diabetes.)
4. Do you have an **AED** on site? Do you have **First Aid Kits**? Do you have a **Stop the Bleed** Kit? If not, who will take responsibility for putting plans in motion to acquire as many of these life-saving resources as possible?
5. Do you have volunteer **greeters** or **ushers** who station themselves at entrances during the times your members gather? What are they instructed to do in case they observe behaviors of concern? Have they received

instruction and training in your congregation's anti-bias / DEI Jewish values and pledged to uphold those values as they greet people?

6. Has your entire **staff received instruction** and basic training on key safety procedures, including:
 - a. Evacuation
 - b. Shelter in Place / Lockdown
 - c. DEI values and anti-bias training
 - d. Location of AED and First Aid resources

7. Have you **communicated** about your safety plan and key pieces of information about your congregation (e.g. when it meets) **with local law enforcement**? Have you included in your communication with them that your members and guests are multi-racial, include people with disabilities, people in casual or formal dress, people who may not speak English, etc., and that it's important to the congregation that the local police know about the diversity of the congregation? Do you have a relationship with one or more officers in particular? What are their names and contact info? Who will take responsibility for calling them once every six months just to keep the relationship active and keep the contact up to date?

8. Have you **reviewed your website** to make sure you are not providing information that could be useful to someone wishing to cause harm to the community, whether in person or online (e.g. maps or drawing of the interior of your building)? Are you making sure not to provide direct links to Zoom meetings that don't require pre-registration on your website? On your website, are you taking care to only list the personal contact and address information of your members, and especially your leaders, behind some kind of password protected membership area?

9. Are you using a **locked entrance system**? In other words, maintaining all entrance doors to your meeting place in a closed and locked state at all times. Members use a keyless entry system, such as a keypad or electronic fobs. Visitors and guests use an intercom to request entry. If you decide to implement such a plan but have not yet, what next steps will you take?