



HOUSES OF WORSHIP EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN SELF-ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Developing or updating an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is a vital step in ensuring that your house of worship is prepared to protect your members, staff, and community during times of crisis. Prior to beginning the planning process, it is important to take time for self-assessment. The following tools are designed to help your institution evaluate its current level of preparedness, identify strengths, and recognize areas where improvements are needed.

Completing these assessments will give your leadership team a clearer picture of existing resources and capabilities, as well as potential gaps. These tools will help guide the development or revision of an EOP that is realistic, effective, and tailored to your house of worship's unique needs.

In addition to these self-assessments, houses of worship are encouraged to:

- Contact your insurance carrier. Your carrier may have tools, including risk assessments, available as well. Upon completion of the insurance assessment, confirm your coverage and request a policy review. Insurance considerations are an essential component of preparedness and recovery.
- Consult with your denominational disaster preparedness office or leadership (if applicable) for additional guidance, resources, and expectations that may support your planning process.
- Form a preparedness team to evaluate these assessments. This group will likely also be responsible for creating or updating your emergency operations plan.
- Contact your local fire department to arrange a walk through.

By utilizing these resources, your place of worship will be better positioned to develop a comprehensive emergency operations plan. For your convenience, a customizable Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is accessible through the ReadyTN Faith section of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency's Ready to Recover website:

<https://www.tn.gov/tema/prepare/ready-to-recover.html>

For monthly updates, resources, tips, and other valuable tools to assist your house of worship in fostering a resilient community, contact: **TEMA.ExternalAffairs@tn.gov**



FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Assessment Date	Facility Name	Facility Address(ES)

SECTION A: ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Criteria	Decription/Comments
Facility Capacity <i>Total including all buildings on campus</i>	
Facility Campus Type <i>Single building, one-story building(s), multi-story, etc.</i>	
Type of Building Materials <i>Construction materials: brick, siding, wood, etc.</i>	
Total Number of Buildings	
Names of Each Building on Campus	
Total Number of Floors <i>Each building</i>	
Approximate Total Square Footage <i>Each building and total</i>	
Year of Construction <i>Each building</i>	
Number of Rooms of Each Building	
Number of Exits	
Type of Surrounding Community <i>Urban, suburban, rural</i>	

FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

ARE THE FOLLOWING PIECES OF EQUIPMENT AND CAMPUS LOCATIONS
CHECKED ON A REGULAR BASIS?

Criteria	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Fire/Life Safety Systems <i>(i.e., fire pump, fire panel, alarm system) & Life Systems (AED)</i>				
Does your House of Worship have an AED machine? If so, do you have people trained to use it? Who are they?				
Are all chemicals properly stored, labeled, and in their original containers?				
HVAC				
Fire Suppression				
Fire Extinguisher				
Smoke/Heat Detectors				
Generators				
Security Alarms				
Kitchen				
Playground				

FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Criteria	Decription/Comments
Total Number of Members	
Number of Staff Members	
Number of People with Disabilities	
Average Number of Visitors Daily	
Names and credentials of members who work in public safety <i>Law enforcement, fire, EMS</i>	
Local Emergency Management Agency Contact Information	

SECTION B: SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS/RISK ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Decription/Comments
What would you consider the number one risk to member safety? <i>Insert applicable day-to-day risks, natural hazards, and human caused hazards.</i>	
What would you consider the number one risk to staff safety? <i>Insert applicable day-to-day risks, natural hazards, and human caused hazards.</i>	
What types of day-to-day emergencies have occurred at this facility within the last 5 years? <i>Fires, power outages, calls to 911, missing children, etc.</i>	
What types of natural disasters have occurred within the city, county, and the surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 years?	

FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Criteria	Decription/Comments
What types of technological disasters have occurred within the city, county, and surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 years?	
What types of human caused disasters have occurred in the city, county, and surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 yearss?	

SECTION C: VISITOR, VOLUNTEER, CONTRACTOR PROTOCOL

Criteria	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Is there a visitor log book or computerized visitor login system in the main office?				
Describe the visitor sign in policy and procedures.				
Are visitors and vendors escorted on campus?				
Do outside contractors/vendors/janitorial personnel check in?				
Are safety and security plans in place and/ or updated annually?				
Are emergency phone numbers posted on or near all establishment facility telephones?				

FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Criteria	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Does the establishment have an automated voicemail system that would be able to relay any messages to members inquiring about activities or incidents going on at the establishment? Is this voicemail updated as needed to reflect changes in hours or emergencies? i.e. inclement weather closings.				
Has an emergency preparedness kit been established? <i>Including, but not limited to: emergency contact lists, medical considerations list, flashlights, first aid supplies, radios, religious items needed for worship off site, etc.</i>				
Does the establishment have an emergency management team? How often do they meet?				
Have all members of the Emergency Management Team received a copy of the emergency procedures manual?				
Have members been notified of what to do if an emergency occurs while the establishment is in session?				
Are copies of emergency procedures available on site and off site, and easily accessible?				

FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION E: EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Criteria	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Are escape site maps maintained and visible showing exits, fire extinguishers, AEDs/first aid kits, etc?				
Are evacuation drills performed annually?				
Has the fire department participated in any drills at the facility?				
Have the evacuation assembly points been established, both on and off the property and communicated/posted?				
Have transportation needs been addressed for any occupants with special mobile needs to be relocated to the off-site assembly point?				
Are ramps and exits accessible for those with mobility needs?				
Is emergency signage visible, illuminated, and multilingual if needed?				
How far from the property are the primary assembly points?				
Does the facility have an adequate system to track members (especially children) evacuating from the facility?				
Does the organization have any mutual assistance agreements with other organizations?				



HOUSE OF WORSHIP SECURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency provides houses of worship an online tool to guide personnel at houses of worship through a security-focused self-assessment to understand potential vulnerabilities and identify options for consideration in mitigating those vulnerabilities. This self-assessment is a first step in building an effective security program; it is not intended to be an in-depth security assessment. After completing this process and addressing preliminary findings, houses of worship personnel may consider pursuing more detailed security assessments to explore specific issues in greater detail.

To complete the security self-assessment, please visit:
www.cisa.gov/houses-worship-self-assessment or scan the QR code.



FINANCIAL RESILIENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT

USE THIS CHECKLIST TO EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS AND IDENTIFY GAPS. MARK YES, NO, OR NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (NI) FOR EACH ITEM.

Preparation & Planning	Yes	No	NI	Notes/Comments
We have a written financial policies manual that outlines budgeting, spending, cash handling, and donor-restricted funds.				
We maintain a secure, centralized location (onsite and offsite) for all critical financial/legal documents.				
Copies of documents are stored off-site (flash drive, cloud storage, or paper).				

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Preparation & Planning	Yes	No	NI	Notes/Comments
We have established a reserve fund equal to 3–6 months of operating expenses.				
A crisis budget is in place that prioritizes essential expenses and identifies non-essential ones for reduction in emergencies.				
Operations & Oversight	Yes	No	NI	Notes/Comments
We use fund accounting practices to ensure transparent use of donations.				
We have proper separation of duties so that no one person has sole control over financial tasks and it is noted in our financial policies.				
Quarterly financial reviews are conducted. <i>Reports, reconciliations, budget comparisons.</i>				
We conduct internal audits or finance committee reviews regularly.				
We use accounting/management software to streamline bookkeeping and access records remotely in emergencies.				
We maintain transparency with our congregation about financial status during challenges.				
We seek professional guidance (accountant, advisor, consultant) when needed.				
We have written benevolence program policies for providing financial assistance. <i>i.e., discretionary funds</i>				
We actively manage debt and seek advice when refinancing or restructuring.				

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Resources & External Support	Yes	No	NI	Notes/Comments
We know how to access templates and resources from our faith leadership bodies. <i>Councils, dioceses, conventions</i>				
We are familiar with Nonprofit/Religious organization financial policies & guidelines.				
We understand the Public Assistance process in the event of recovery and maintain the required documentation to apply for aid if needed: • IRS Tax Exemption Status Letter • State Tax Exemption Status • Articles of Association/By-Laws/Charter • Legal Responsibility				

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE RESOURCES

Resources	What it Offers & Web Link
Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) – FEMA / Operation HOPE	A fillable toolkit (PDF) to gather essential financial, legal, and contact information in one place. www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_effak-toolkit.pdf
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA)	Free online state resources to help prepare in recovery. www.tn.gov/tema
Nonprofit Ready	Free online courses & certificate programs in nonprofit finance, budgeting, accounting, financial management. www.nonprofitready.org/nonprofit-finance-courses

REFER TO FEMA HOUSES OF WORSHIP QUICK FACT SHEET AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT FOR MORE INFORMATION.



FACILITY & MEMBER SNAPSHOT

THIS SNAPSHOT WILL PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR PHYSICAL BUILDING AND THE PEOPLE WITHIN IT, ENABLING THE IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIFIC VULNERABILITIES, RESOURCE NEEDS, AND POTENTIAL DANGERS RELATED TO THE SIZE AND TYPE OF THEIR CONGREGATION, STRUCTURE, AND TYPICAL ACTIVITIES.

Section A: Contact Information	
Name of Establishment	
Phone Number	
Email	
Facility Address	
Facility Coordinator	
Head of Establishment	
Website Address	

Section B: Administrators & Positions		
Name:	Name:	Name:
Position:	Position:	Position:
Name:	Name:	Name:
Position:	Position:	Position:

FACILITY & MEMBER SNAPSHOT

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION FOR EACH LOCATION AND BUILDING YOU HAVE. AN ADDITIONAL COPY OF THIS PAGE CAN BE FOUND ON OUR READYTN FAITH WEBPAGE.

Section C: Facility Information		
<u>Size and Type of Building</u>	<u>Members & Staff</u>	<u>Rooms</u>
Number of Buildings	Number of Children/Youth	Number of Interior Rooms
Number of Floors	Number of Adults	Number of Miscellaneous Rooms
Number of Exits	Number of Staff	Number of Kitchens
Type of Structure	Number of Individuals with Disabilities	Number of Bathrooms
Approximate Square Footage	Number in attendance for the largest meetings of the year	Number of Rooms Total
Maximum Capacity	Number of public safety personnel	Number of Elevators
Additional Information	Number of members present during the week days (average)	Is there an AED on campus and if so, who is trained to use it?

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. IS THE FACILITY USED BY ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT?
2. HOW OFTEN IS THE FACILITY USED BY NON-MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT?
3. IS THE FACILITY ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?



COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT

A communications assessment is vital for a house of worship's emergency preparedness to ensure clear, rapid dissemination of critical information to members, staff, and emergency services during an incident. It identifies communication weaknesses and helps develop redundant systems, such as text alerts or public address systems, to overcome potential failures in cell service or the internet. This proactive step ensures timely safety instructions, coordinates response efforts with emergency personnel, and helps provide support to vulnerable members, ultimately saving lives and reducing injury.

Section 1: Internal Communication Methods

How do you normally communicate with members? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Phone tree ☐ Email lists/newsletters ☐ Text messaging system ☐ Social media (list: _____) ☐ Website/App
☐ Verbal announcements ☐ Other: _____

Do you have a communications coordinator/team? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How often is contact information updated? ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually ☐ As needed ☐ Unsure

Section 2: Emergency -Specific Communication

Do you have a plan to notify members in an emergency? ☐ Written ☐ Informal ☐ None

How quickly can you reach members? ☐ 15 min ☐ 1 hr ☐ Several hrs ☐ Unsure

Primary emergency communication method: _____

Do you have backup methods? ☐ Yes (list) _____ ☐ No

Section 3: External Communication

Who communicates with emergency agencies? _____

Who communicates with families/caregivers? _____

Who communicates with media/public? _____

Do you have a designated spokesperson? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you share information with other organizations? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 4: Technology and Tools

Do you have access to (check all):

- ☐ Mass notification system ☐ Radios ☐ PA system ☐ Satellite phones ☐ None

Is website/social media updated quickly during emergencies? ☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No

Is your Google business profile current and does it feature current contact information?

☐ Yes ☐ No

COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT

Section 5: Accessibility & Inclusion

Do you have non-English speaking members? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you provide communication in multiple languages? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How do you reach elderly members?

How do you reach members with disabilities?

How do you reach members without internet?

Section 6: Gaps & Needs

What challenges have you faced during past emergencies?

What tools and/or training would help improve communication?

What obstacles or challenges might you encounter when trying to develop a comprehensive communications plan?



INSURANCE ASSESSMENT

An insurance assessment is a vital part of a house of worship's emergency preparedness self-assessment because it ensures the organization has adequate financial protection and coverage for potential losses from disasters, incidents, or attacks. This assessment helps identify unique risks and vulnerabilities, leading to tailored insurance plans that provide funds for recovery, crisis response, counseling, and repairs, thereby safeguarding the facility and supporting the congregation's long-term well-being and resilience.

Section 1: General Information

Insurance Provider: _____ Insurance Agent: _____
Policy Number: _____ Policy Renewal Date: _____
Insurance Contact Information:
Address, City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail Contact: _____
Website: _____

House of Worship Point of Contact: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Section 2: Property & Facility Coverage

Do you have property insurance that covers the physical building(s)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Coverage Limit: \$ _____
Does the policy cover the following (mark all that apply):
☐ Fire & Smoke Damage ☐ Flooding? ☐ Earthquake ☐ Wind/Tornado ☐ Vandalism & Theft
☐ Sewer/Drain Backup ☐ Cybersecurity ☐ Terrorist Attack/Active Shooter
Is coverage Replacement Cost or Actual Cash Value? ☐ Replacement ☐ Actual Cash Value
Are historic or sacred items/artifacts covered? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 3: Liability Coverage

Do you have general liability insurance for injuries on church property? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Coverage Limit: \$ _____
Do you have pastoral/professional liability coverage (counseling, clergy duties)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you have or is a "full restoration policy" available? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you have event liability coverage for weddings, festivals, or large gatherings? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you require outside groups renting space to provide Certificate of Liability (COL)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If so, do you keep COLs on file? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you conduct a follow-up for the renewal of the Certificate of Liability (COL) each year if an organization continues to meet on-site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 4: Vehicle & Transportation Coverage

Does the house of worship own vehicles? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes:

- Are they covered under auto liability insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Are they 15 passengers or less vehicles*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

** Federal and most state regulations require a CDL only for vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver.*

INSURANCE ASSESSMENT

Section 5: Disaster & Business Interruption

Do you have business interruption insurance to cover loss of income during closure? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Does your policy cover temporary relocation expenses for services/ministries? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 6: Cyber & Records Protection

Do you have cyber liability insurance for online giving platforms, membership data, or live streaming?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Is your church management software included in coverage? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Are your records, including your member and donor database, backed up and covered (data restoration)?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Is damage to computers and hardware included in coverage? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Is your network protected from ransomware, and does your insurance cover extortion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 7: Insurance & Emergency Management

Do you have a copy of the insurance policy stored off-site and digitally? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Is insurance contact information included in your Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you review insurance coverage annually with leadership/finance committee? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you have up to date pictures and/or video with a detailed inventory of your facility and contents?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you ensure that your insurance carrier is informed of any changes or additions regarding your facility, staff, or purchased items? ☐ Yes ☐ No

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS:

- Identify gaps in coverage (flood, cyber, liability, etc.)
- Update coverage limits to reflect current property values
- Ensure policy aligns with disaster risks in your region
- Schedule annual review with insurance agent and leadership
- Include insurance details in the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

ADDITIONAL INSURANCE RESOURCES:

- **Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance** - www.tn.gov/commerce.html
- **National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)** - www.tn.gov/tema/nfip-national-flood-insurance-program.html

