

## **CAIR Community Security and Safety Tips: Immediate Steps to Protect Your Mosque or Religious Institution**

CAIR has developed these “Community Security and Safety Tips” to better equip you and your community with the immediate steps necessary to safeguard your mosque or religious institution against violence or vandalism. In pursuing better security, it is important to remember that these steps are only a starting point and that you should plan for the long-term by seeking the expertise of security professionals in the public or private sector.

### **Mosque & Houses of Worship Security & Safety Tips:**

1. **Report Threats:** Immediately document and report all threats, suspicious activities, packages or persons to the police. Do not make any attempts to confront threatening persons or touch suspicious packages.
2. **Post Emergency Contact Information and Floor Plans in Public Places:** Post emergency phone numbers (911), including numbers of local police and fire departments, the bomb squad (if permitted), poison control, and religious community points of contact. Post floor plans and evacuation routes, including the location of an evacuation site.
3. **Know Your Local Emergency Responders:** Make an appointment to have someone from your local police department tour your center and make suggestions on improving mosque security. At that meeting, request additional police patrols in the vicinity of your center, with special attention to nighttime hours and during prayers. Keep local law enforcement informed about any upcoming events.
4. **Limit and Observe Access:** Limit the number of public access points (in compliance with fire codes) and be sure that doors are solid-core and equipped with dead bolts. Post observers at entrance points to monitor all those entering.
5. **Install Alarms and Cameras:** Install fire (smoke and heat) and security alarm systems that are connected to local police and fire departments. Make sure all access points are observed by security cameras that have remote off-site backup.
6. **Keep Outside Areas Clean and Visible:** Remove potential fire hazards, such as trash and debris and trim shrubs and vines to reduce areas of concealment. Install perimeter floodlights to cover the outside grounds and parking lot. Also ensure that all interior spaces visible from the outside are well lit.
7. **Plan for the Long-Term:** Establish a security committee to work with local law enforcement with the goal of developing long-term security plans, threat assessments, crisis plans, trainings, and drills. Annually hold safety trainings and evacuation drills for all staff, volunteers, and attendees.
8. **Get Help:** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), along with most local law enforcement agencies, provides tools and resources to support enhanced community engagement, infrastructure protection and the development of threat assessments and emergency response plans. These services are offered free of charge to all mosques and places of worship. For more information, contact:
  - a. **Community Partnerships:** DHS Center for Faith-based & Neighborhood Partnerships, seeks to enhance participation between faith-based and community organizations in agency programs. Phone: 202-646-3487, Email: [infofbc@dhs.gov](mailto:infofbc@dhs.gov)
  - b. **Infrastructure Protection:** DHS National Infrastructure Coordinating Center, with protective security advisors in all 50 states, provides free infrastructure assessments, analysis, and information about possible threats. Phone: 202-282-9201 or Email: [nicc@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:nicc@hq.dhs.gov)
  - c. **Training Courses:** DHS Homeland Security Information Network, made up of a growing network of communities, provides risk mitigation training courses. Website: <http://www.dhs.gov/hsin> Email: [hsin.outreach@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:hsin.outreach@hq.dhs.gov)

For additional information, contact CAIR National at (202) 488-8787, or via email at [info@cair.com](mailto:info@cair.com)

To contact the nearest CAIR chapter, visit <http://www.cair.com/chapters.aspx>