Gov. Phil Murphy | Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver | Dir. Jared Maples

NJOHSP

Infrastructure Protection Resource Sheet

Religious Facilities

Religious facilities serve millions of people of all faiths and denominations throughout the United States. These facilities are generally open-access public assembly venues, and terrorists have successfully targeted them in the past.

Threats of Most Concern to Religious Facilities Include:

- Improvised explosive devices
- Arson or incendiary attack
- Small-arms attack
- Assassination or kidnapping

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activity Include:

- Suspicious persons wearing bulky clothing that may conceal explosives or weapons
- Suspicious or illegally parked vehicles near buildings or where crowds gather
- Unattended packages such as backpacks that could contain explosives
- Unexpected or unfamiliar delivery or maintenance vehicles

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Surveillance Include:

- Persons using or carrying camera or other observation equipment in or near the facility over an extended period
- Persons discovered with facility maps, photos, or diagrams with critical assets highlighted or listing of personnel
- Persons loitering in the same area over a multiple-day period with no reasonable explanation

Considerations for Law Enforcement Include:

- Prepare mentally and physically for attacks at religious facilities that could result in mass casualties
- Be aware of tactical challenges of limited ingress, egress, low visibility, and potential for mass panic
- Be cognizant of the potential for multiple shooters or a barricaded suspect with hostages

Protective Measures Include:

- Develop plans for security and emergency response
- Establish regular communications with local law enforcement
- Conduct regular emergency response exercises with employees
- Incorporate security awareness and response procedures into congregation training
- Control access to the facility and its restricted areas
- Install and regularly test an emergency communication system
- Take threats seriously and encourage congregation to report any threat or suspicious situation

Incident Response

Alert law enforcement immediately by calling 9-1-1

Connect.

Visit njohsp.gov to connect with NJOHSP, find resources available, and maintain awareness of threat information.

Prepare.

Visit njohsp.gov/resources to learn about planning resources for your organization.

Train.

Visit njohsp.gov/programs to learn about training and exercises for your organization.

Report Suspicious Activity.

Dial 1-866-4-SAFE-NJ or e-mail tips@njohsp.gov to report suspicious activity in New Jersey.

Visit njohsp.gov/report to learn more about suspicious activity reporting.

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