***(YOUR CHURCH NAME)***

***SAFETY & SECURITY PROGRAM***

***Policies and Procedures Manual***

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I. (YOUR CHURCH NAME) MEMBER SAFETY HANDBOOK

1. PURPOSE: The purpose of the (YOUR CHURCH NAME) Safety & Security Program threefold:

The first is to provide a secure place of worship where members and visitors may comfortably worship with the assurance that all reasonable measures are being taken to insure their safety from external threats.

The second is to provide a safe place of worship where hazards and unsafe conditions are identified and repaired, removed, or mitigated to the point that they no longer present a hazard.

The third is to develop, maintain, and continuously update a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan that outlines the process by which (YOUR CHURCH NAME) will respond to hazardous or threatening conditions or situations.

2. METHOD: The method by which (YOUR CHURCH NAME) will accomplish this program is be to establish a Safety and Security team with two functional areas. The first functional area, prevention, is comprised of all operations intended to reduce or eliminate risks and hazards before they occur such as safety inspections, entry point surveillance and screening, safety education and training, and the presentation of a visible security force. The second functional area, response, is comprised of all operations taken after an event or situation to mitigate effects and recover from the event. The Security team will operate under the direction of the Security Director and under the authority of the Business Manager.

3. END STATE: The desired end state for this program is (YOUR CHURCH NAME) secure from external threats and unsafe physical conditions, a trained team established and performing duties with minimal negative impact on (YOUR CHURCH NAME) activities, a published Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that is approved the Business Administrator and Executive Pastor, and internal review procedures established to insure continuous evaluation and refining of the program to meet the most likely hazards and threats.

4. AUTHORITY: The (YOUR CHURCH NAME) Safety & Security program derive its authority from the approval of the Senior Pastor with counsel from the Deacon body and the Security committee all acting in accordance with Mississippi HB 786, known and cited as the “Mississippi Church Protection Act”, enacted by the Legislature of the State of Mississippi during the regular session of 2016, approved by Governor Phil Bryant with an effective date: 4/15/2016 which states, in part, “The governing body of any church or place of worship may establish a security program by which designated members are authorized to carry firearms for the protection of the congregation of the church or place of worship, including resisting any unlawful attempt to commit a violent felony upon a member or other attendee in the church or place of worship or on the immediate premises thereof. A church or other place of worship may establish a security program that meets the requirements of subsection (2)(b) of this section, and a member of the security program shall be immune from civil liability for any action taken by a member of the security program if the action in question occurs during the reasonable exercise of and within the course and scope of the member’s official duties as a member of the security program for the church or place of worship.”

5. SECURITY TEAM

A. Oversight

1. The Church Security Program shall be formed upon written approval by the Executive Pastor.

2. Day to Day operations will be under the supervision of the (YOUR CHURCH NAME) Security Director.

3. Security Committee will perform an annual review of the Safety & Security Program to include the published procedures of this program.

4. In accordance with the Mississippi Church Protection Act SECTION 1(2)(b)(ii), the names of the members designated by the church or place of worship to serve in the security program must be spread upon the minutes of the body or otherwise noted in writing at the time of the member’s designation if the body does not maintain minutes, and this written record must be made available to law enforcement upon request during the course of investigation after an incident in which a member used a firearm while acting as a member of the security program.

B. Personnel

1. All security personnel shall be subject to a law enforcement background check.

2. All security personnel shall be twenty-one years of age or older.

3. All security personnel shall be members of the church.

4. Security personnel may be relieved of duty at any time, with or without reason, by the Director of Security.

5. All security personnel performing duties in an armed capacity must possess a firearms permit issued under Section 45-9-101 of the Mississippi Code and have completed an instructional course in the safe handling and use of firearms as described in Section 97-37-7.

6. Any member of the Church Security Program may resign his/her position at any time either verbally or in writing to the church leadership.

7. The Security Director may, in his discretion, dismiss any member of the Church Security Program, with or without reason, at any time. The Board’s decision to terminate a member’s involvement in the Church Security Program will be conveyed to the member, in writing, at the most convenient time available after such determination is made.

6. TRAINING

A. The purpose of the Church Security Program training requirements is to:

1. Ensure that security personnel have the skills and knowledge needed to maintain a safe environment for themselves, as well as church members and visitors.

2. Ensure compliance with state law.

3. Develop a professional staff of security personnel.

4. Ensure proficiency and efficiency in duty-related skills.

5. Reduce the likelihood of violent acts and intruders on church property through the development of effective preventive strategies.

6. Ensure a fast and effective response to emergencies on church property in an effort to preserve life and safeguard property.

7. Reduce liability for security personnel and the church as a whole.

B. Training Tenets

1. First and foremost is that all training will remain focused on the fact that the security team is protecting God’s House and given all due respect and reverence.

2. Whenever possible, members should train together to build cohesion, standardize knowledge and skills, and improve efficiency.

3. Training should be progressively challenging to aid in skill development and increased knowledge.

4. Training should be practical and applicable to members’ duties.

C. Initial Training

1. All security personnel are required to successfully complete an approved enhanced concealed carry training course from an authorized instructor prior to being approved for duty in an armed capacity.

2. All security personnel are required to successfully complete a mandatory training session with regards to the approved Safety & Security Procedures manual and Emergency Action Plan.

3. All security personnel are required to successfully complete medical training that includes basic first aid, CPR, and AED operation and maintain certification from a reputable organization whose purpose is to provide such training and certification.

D. Annual Continuation Training – SEE ANNEX G (TRAINING PROGRAM)

E. Firearms Training

1. Personnel performing armed security duties will qualify bi-annually with 4 to 8 months between qualifications with the weapon(s) they carry during the performance of their duties.

2. Qualification standards (See Annex E. WEAPONS QUALIFICATION STANDARDS) will be based on time and accuracy. During qualification, firearms will be presented from concealment, as carried by security personnel during the performance of their duties to engage targets at ranges commensurate with tactical probabilities within the Church building.

3. Qualification shall be conducted by a firearms instructor or by the Church Security Director.

F. All training will be documented and maintained as a matter of Church record.

7. TEAM COMPOSITION

A. The Security Team will be led and supervised by the Church Security Director.

B. Additional membership will be comprised of Church members and augmented, on a case-by-case basis, by off-duty law enforcement officers hired for special events.

C. A pool of volunteers will be maintained so that members can perform duties on a rotational basis and not be required to perform duties each week.

D. Teams will be tailored to support each type of service and will be comprised of a designated team leader and additional members. The optimal team configurations are:

1. Sunday Morning

a. Four members will monitor each of the 4 entries and maintain a communications hub.

b. One member will always be posted at the entrance to the Children’s/Day Care wing. Two members will be posted at the South and main entrances, and the Team leader will maintain a communications and video surveillance hub.

2. Sunday Evening

a. Three members will provide security during night services.

b. One member will be posted at the entrance to the Children’s/Day Care wing. A second will be posted in proximity to the main entrance, and the Team Leader will maintain a communications and video surveillance hub.

3. Wednesday Evening

a. Three members will maintain security.

b. One member will be posted at the entrance to the Children’s/Day Care wing. A second will be posted in proximity to the main service, and the Team Leader will maintain a communications and video surveillance hub.

4. Special Events. During special events the teams will be configured as required for the event.

8. TEAM DUTIES

A. Director of Security

1. The Director has overall responsibility for the planning, development, and execution of the safety and security programs. Specific duties include:

a. Establishing and maintaining the policy manual and emergency action plan.

b. Supervising Security Team personnel

c. Ensuring compliance with this policy manual, state law, and applicable safety guidelines.

d. Managing Security program training for staff, team members, and congregation.

e. Serving as the safety and security advisor to the senior staff

f. Forecasting funding and equipment requirements and coordinating for those resources through the appropriate committees.

g. Coordinating with local law enforcement agencies for training, threat awareness, safety, and information pertaining to the Church security program.

h. Representing the Safety and Security Program during Church meetings and to the general membership.

i. Conducting monthly safety surveys.

j. Coordinating manpower requirements, solicit volunteers and schedule Security Team members for each service.

k. Maintaining liaison with local first responders

2. The Director will serve as the Security Team Leader during Church services and events.

B. Security Team Leader:

1. The Security Team leader is normally the Security Director. In the Director’s absence a Team leader will be identified to perform Team Leader duties.

2. Security Team Leader duties include:

a. Ensuring the Church building is swept for unauthorized persons and unidentified packages before services.

b. Assigning Security Teams members to specific stations. In the event that manpower is insufficient to cover all entries, the Team Leader will prioritize based on available manpower.

c. Manning the communications and video surveillance hub.

1. Communicating threats/hazards to the audio-visual booth

2. Making initial contact with first responders via telephone

3. Coordinating Security Team Responses via radio

4. Monitoring conditions during threatening weather.

5. Initiating responses as required in accordance with the emergency action plan.

6. Lead pre-service meeting

7. Verifying the function and issuing radios to members.

C. Exterior Security (Security Walkers) will:

1. Monitor the flow of traffic onto and around church property.

2. Serve as a visual deterrent

3. Monitor parked vehicles and church assets from theft or vandalism by patrolling the parking area and grounds.

4. Report and respond to unusual and/or suspicious behavior IAW established policies and procedures. Communicate concerns and/or the need for emergency assistance through established hierarchy.

5. For armed personnel, intervene in violent incidents that pose an imminent physical threat to themselves, church members, and visitors IAW the Mississippi Church Protection Act.

D. Interior Security will:

1. Monitor entry and exit points into church facilities for unusual and/or suspicious behavior.

2. Monitor interior areas and corridors where church members and visitors may be present and/or travel.

3. Report, respond to, and investigate unusual and/or suspicious behavior occurring inside church facilities IAW established policies and procedures. Communicate concerns and/or the need for emergency assistance through established hierarchy.

4. Intervene in violent incidents that pose an imminent physical threat to themselves, church members, and visitors IAW the Mississippi Church Protection Act.

E. Meetings

1. Prior to each service, Security Team Members will participate in a pre-service meeting in order to:

a. Discuss and organize the day’s duties and responsibilities.

b. Organize equipment and conduct pre-service checks.

c. Share any pertinent information necessary for the successful conduct of duties.

d. To brief personnel about special circumstances that might not have been addressed through normal church communications.

2. After each service, Security Team Members will participate in a post-service meeting in order to:

a. Debrief personnel about the day’s events and activities.

b. Secure equipment and ensure accountability.

c. Secure church assets and premises.

d. Review upcoming duty schedule(s).

9. EQUIPMENT

A. Firearms. Approved Security Team Members may carry a personally owned,

concealed handgun of choice that meets the following requirements:

1. Minimum caliber of semi-automatic pistols will be .380 and revolvers .38 caliber.

2. Firearms should be from a reputable manufacture with an acceptable safety and dependability record.

3. Capable of being carried concealed.

4. Accompanied with at least one spare loaded magazine or one spare loaded speed-loader carried in an appropriate concealed manner.

5. Handguns will be carried in a holster whose design is at the discretion of the wearer in order to confirm to his or her individual preference and comfort. The holster will be capable of retaining the handgun unless deliberately drawn by the user.

B. Ammunition. Authorized personnel will carry ammunition designed for defensive use, of a soft point or hollow point design, and should be original commercial manufacture (no reloads).

C. Flashlights. During evening services and night time events, all members will either carry on their person or have immediate access to a working handheld flashlight designed for defensive use with a handgun. Security walkers will have a flashlight suitable for patrol and for directing traffic. A flashlight traffic wand is recommended.

D. Communications Equipment

1. Each team member will be equipped with a handheld radio capable of allowing immediate and open communications throughout the church property.

2. Team members should maintain cell phones as a back-up means of communication within the group and for emergency calls for assistance.

3. Operable landline telephones will be used as the primary means of communicating with external agencies (i.e., 911) as using cell phones may not be feasible (i.e., during bomb threats or inclement weather, etc.). Landline telephones should be labelled with calling instructions if the phone system requires an outside line to be selected or a certain method of dialing, such as pressing the “#” key prior to dialing, that information should prominently displayed on the phone.

E. Video Surveillance. The Security Team will be equipped with Tablets capable of monitoring server based surveillance cameras. As a minimum one tablet will be used by the Security Team Leader with additional ones as required for special events.

F. Safety Vests / Sashes

1. All members will have a reflective safety vest of a design approved by the Security Director.

2. Security Walkers and members assigned to exterior duties in and around parking areas wear should wear reflective vests at all times to maximize their safety, maximize visibility to potential trespassers, and insure visibility to persons who may need assistance.

3. During emergencies all members will wear the reflective vest to identify themselves as Church Security.

G. Metal Detector Wands. Metal detector wands may be used by the Church Security Team to aid in discretely screening people during periods of high pedestrian traffic associated with special events, screening bags, and screening suspicious packages.

10. DRESS CODE

A. All members will dress in a professional manner in attire appropriate for duties as a Church Security Team Member and consistent with church guidelines for volunteer staff.

B. Members will dress in a manner that maintains total concealment of handguns at all times.

C. At the discretion of the Senior Pastor, the Security Team Members may dress is duty specific attire, such as shirts or jackets with “Security” logo on the attire.

11. SAFETY SURVEYS

A. The Security Director, or designated representative, will conduct a

monthly safety survey in accordance with NFPA Life Safety Code and OSHA standards as outlined in Annex F (SAFETY SURVEY).

B. The Safety & Security Director will maintain a Hazards Log and will record all deficiencies noted during safety surveys on the hazard log. All deficiencies will be reported to the Business Administrator for correction.

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