

Instead of various groups spending time dealing with each of the key risk management issues individually over an extended period of time, the most effective way to begin and maintain a risk management program in your church setting is to look at risk management from a comprehensive approach. By forming a quality safety and security team, the chances of maintaining a safe and secure environment increase dramatically. The following recommendations are general guidelines. To learn more about forming a risk management team, please contact the GuideOne Center for Risk Management.

How the Risk Management Team Should be Structured

- Your team should include between three and eight members. They may include current or former law enforcement officers; current or former military personnel; those who have a background in insurance, claims or risk management; facility managers, and others who feel strongly about a proactive risk management program.
- The team should be endorsed and officially formed by action of the church's administrative body. Once established, they should meet at least on a quarterly basis.
- All ongoing activities, new ministries, special events, and building upgrades and construction should be filtered through the committee.
- Regular activity reports should be given to the church staff and administrative body.

How the Team Should Organize

- **Educate:** The team should obtain resources and seek training to become informed on key elements and responses of church risk management. The team should then educate the church board and staff members.
- **Plan and Respond:** As a team, begin developing a security plan that includes initial congregational education, inspections, activity protocols, and policies.
- **Train and Inform Others:** Begin a congregation-wide educational program on safety, security, and risk issues. Speak to small groups, key committees, and other members to keep them informed and receive their input on key safety issues and implementation.
- **Follow Through:** Develop a strategy for slowly phasing in a risk management program, as well as the ongoing monitoring, and an educational emphasis. The goal is to integrate safety and security measures into the daily life of the congregation without compromising the church's ministry.

