

Safety Team Development

Purpose and size of a Safety Team

Safety Team members collaborate to develop a culture of awareness and preparedness in the event of a critical incident amongst the parish or school communities. Critical incidents range from medical events (i.e. sprained ankles to cardiac events) to disturbances, to building systems failures (i.e. water main breaks or blackouts), to violent actions against the parish and/or school.

The number of safety team members is best kept to a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 7 people, depending on the size of your parish and/or school or apostolate. For parishes with schools, the team should be comprised of members who represent both the parish and the school to avoid the silo effect.

Who Should Be Members of the Team?

Safety Teams include parish clergy, staff, parishioners and if a school is part of the parish, administrators, staff, faculty, students and family members. This team should be provided with the latitude to make decisions for the development and maintenance of the policies and procedures regarding safety and security of the parish and school. At the very least, the team should include: a member of clergy, parish staff, head of maintenance, IT, a parishioner, and if a school is associated with the parish, principal or vice principal, faculty member, nurse or counselor, and a parent.

A local law enforcement agency member should also be included on this team. This person could likely already be a parishioner or parent of a student.

Typical tasks of the team, but not limited to:

- Development of and annual review of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
- Determine the required training for all members of the parish/school community
- Develop a schedule, carry out, and evaluate emergency drills throughout the year (e.g. fire drills, lockdown, etc.).
- Ensure preventative maintenance requirements are taking place in a timely manner when safety aspects of the infrastructure are identified (e.g. broken locks, non-working lights, camera outages, network or firewall lapses).
- Audit current safety and security practices to see if they are being followed.
- Participate with site assessments on regular intervals.
- Develop recovery plans