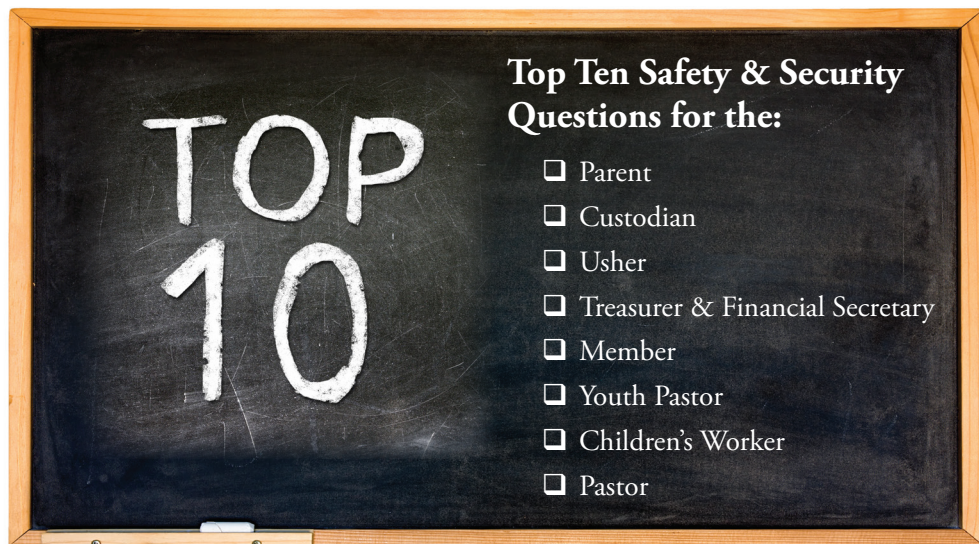




Top Ten Safety and Security Questions

PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE



PARENT – Ten Questions Every Parent Should Be Asking Their Church About Their Children's Safety and Security

1. Do we have policies and procedures in writing addressing the hiring/selection, training and supervision of employees and volunteers working with our children and youth?
2. Does everyone working with children and youth fill out an application?
3. Are references checked on all volunteers and employees working with our children and youth?
4. Do new visitors and members have to wait a period of time (six months recommended) before we allow them to care for and interact with, our children and youth?
5. Are criminal background and sexual predator screens completed on everyone employed or volunteering in our organization, who may have any direct or indirect contact with children and youth?
6. Do we strictly adhere to the rule that no one adult should ever be alone with a child?
7. Do we have safe and recommended adult/child ratios for all activities?
8. Do we have a clear child check-in and check-out procedure in classrooms where only designated people are permitted?
9. Do we have a policy that states that no minor should care for children in a church-related activity without the direct supervision of an adult?
10. Do we have a clearly stated and posted sexual misconduct reporting procedure that meets our state required guidelines?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.



Ministry Protection Memo

"MPM" is a series on various topics relative to Church and safety. Send your comments and interests to AME Zion's Director of Ministry Protection.

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*"If you answered
"no" to any of these
questions, corrective
action is highly
recommended."*



CUSTODIAN – Ten Questions Every Custodian Should Be Asking About Their Church's Safety and Security

1. Are the stairways and hallways well-lit to prevent falls?
2. Do I place warning cones out when I mop or wax the floor?
3. Are there mops, buckets, rags and cones easily accessible to others when I am not in the church?
4. Are all paints, thinners and other flammables locked up, ventilated and well marked?
5. Do I check for slip, trip and fall hazards both inside and outside?
6. Are my tools and equipment inspected regularly and in good working order?
7. Do I use safe, appropriate ladders for any job that I need to reach heights?
8. Do I utilize the buddy system when climbing or doing any potentially dangerous jobs?
9. Do we have a clearly defined system for me and others to report hazards and get them corrected quickly?
10. Do I do a walk-around visual inspection of every room at the end of every day?

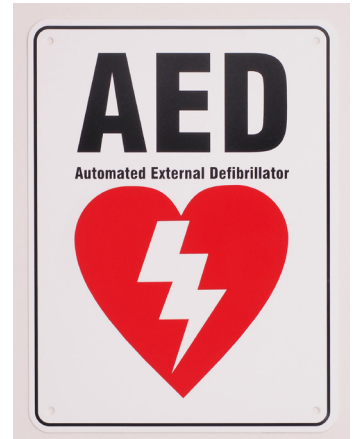
If you answered "no" to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.

USHER – Ten Questions Every Usher Should Be Asking About Church Safety and Security

1. Before anyone arrives, has the parking area been inspected for hazards (cracks, debris, ice/snow, etc.)?
2. Before anyone arrives, have the entry areas been inspected for hazards (steps in disrepair, loose railings, ice/snow, carpets and entry pads, lighting, etc.)?

3. Before anyone arrives, have the halls and worship areas been inspected for any hazards (loose or wrinkled carpet, wet floors, debris, electrical concerns, etc.)?
4. As people arrive, am I watching for suspicious people who may be there to do harm or something other than worship?
5. Do I have a way to communicate with other ushers or people in other places in the church should there be an emergency?
6. Do I know where, and how to use the fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, defibrillators and access to outside phones in case of an emergency?
7. Have I been trained on how to administer CPR and use the defibrillator?
8. Once the service starts, am I or other ushers walking the other areas of the building for security issues?
9. If there were an act of violence, robbery or emergency, would I know exactly how to respond and how to assist others in staying safe?
10. Once the service is over, do I make sure everyone exits the facility safely and have I inspected for hazards before I leave?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.



TREASURER & FINANCIAL SECRETARY – Ten Questions Every Treasurer & Financial Secretary Should Be Asking About Church Safety and Security

1. Do I make sure that there are always at least two unrelated adults with the money from the time of the collection to the time of deposit?
2. Do I make sure the counters always reconcile the offering and sign off on the counters sheet?

3. Do I make sure that money is always locked up in a safe or behind at least two locks?
4. Do I ensure that when the money is taken to the bank for deposit that at least two people take it and that they follow safe practices?
5. Do we keep petty cash locked up and reconciled with receipts?
6. Are we using signed, authorized vouchers to make purchases?
7. Do we have adequate separation between ushers, counters, financial secretary and treasurer?
8. Do we conduct regular, documented audits of all accounts?
9. Are those people handling money bonded?
10. Is there a written policy for the handling of funds?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.



MEMBER –Ten Questions Every Member Should Be Asking About Church Safety and Security

1. Do I always lock my car in the parking lot?
2. After dark, do I enter and exit the church building with another person?
3. Do I always look around for suspicious people before exiting my car in the church parking lot?
4. Do I keep my purse and valuables with me or locked up while in the building?
5. Do I keep my keys with me and remember never to leave them in my coat pocket hanging on the coat rack?
6. Do I know where all emergency exits are located in case of an emergency?
7. Do I always do physical duties at church with another person present?
8. Do I always lock the facility when I am last to leave?
9. Do I always keep the church keys secure?
10. Do I report hazards or suspicious and dangerous activities when I see them?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.



YOUTH PASTOR –Ten Questions Every Youth Pastor Should Be Asking About Church Safety and Security

1. Have we completed reference, background and sexual predator screens on all youth workers?
2. Do all volunteers have to attend church for at least six months before they can work with minors?
3. Do all of the youth workers, including me, always adhere to the “never-alone-with-a-minor” (or two-adult) rule?
4. Do we have all participants in risky activities and trips complete a “Consent to Treat Form” and a “Permission Slip?”
5. Do we always have sufficient supervision (ratios) in all activities?
6. Do we complete MVR screens those who drive youth on trips and to activities?
7. Do we adequately train participants and leaders in any risky or physical or physical activities?
8. Is all equipment and activity area inspected prior to any activity?
9. Are all youth and workers aware of the reporting rules and procedures for your state?
10. Is safety more important to me than being popular?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.

CHILDREN’S WORKER –Ten Questions Every Children’s Worker Should Be Asking About Church Safety and Security

1. Do we complete a reference, background and sexual predator screen on all children’s workers?
2. Do all volunteers have to attend church for at least six months before they can work with children?
3. Do we train all volunteers and employees who work with children?



4. Do all of the children's workers, including me, always adhere to the "never-alone-with-a-minor" (or two-adult) rule?
5. Do we always have sufficient supervision (ratios) in all activities?
6. Do we inspect the nursery and children's area each week for hazards, which includes documentation?
7. Is someone responsible for inspecting and documenting the inspection of indoor and outdoor equipment?
8. Are all "tip hazards" secured?
9. Are all children's workers aware of the reporting rules and procedures for your state?
10. Are we doing everything we possibly can to protect the children of our church?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.

PASTOR –Ten Questions Every Pastor Should Be Asking About Church Safety and Security

1. Have I appointed a person or committee to oversee all safety, security and risk management issues for the church?
2. Have we allocated funds to educate our team and members and implement adequate safeguards?
3. Is our church facility, members and personnel secure at all times?
4. Do we have written policies and procedures for safety, security, risk management and personnel (paid and volunteer)?
5. Is someone responsible to routinely inspect the facility and document the inspection?
6. Do we screen (background, reference, and sexual predator) all staff and volunteers that have contact with minors?
7. Do we have an emergency response plan for all emergencies and have they been tested?
8. Has the staff been trained on their role in regards to emergencies, allegations, sexual misconduct and harassment and hazardous activities?
9. Do I recognize that by not having safety, security and risk management practices and procedures in place I am putting the entire ministry of the church at risk?
10. Am I willing to commit the time, energy and resources necessary to make sure I am a good steward of the people, property and resources God has entrusted to my care?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, corrective action is highly recommended.

The Ministry Protection Memo (MPM) series is offered as an educational tool in support of AME Zion property and casualty insurance program to help you develop loss control procedures to suit your specific needs. With these publications, AME Zion does not seek to establish a particular standard of care or to promote legal advice. We encourage church leaders to consult with competent attorneys with regard to their specific loss control need. AME Zion encourages reproduction and distribution of this MPM within the AME Zion denomination.