



# HOW TO CONDUCT AN ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILL

A guide to plan, conduct, and evaluate an active shooter drill at your church



[safetysabbath.org](http://safetysabbath.org)



**Mass shootings are on the rise, and churches are not immune. The best strategy for addressing the danger and potential chaos is awareness and preparation.**

Active shooter drills educate your church members on how to behave proactively. They can be assured that they have an effective plan in place and can respond in the best way possible.

Here's what your church gains:

- An up-to-date, realistic response plan prepared for future acts of violence
- A working relationship with local first responders
- A reputation for caring and protecting its members and visitors
- A sense of peace from being ready



# Before the Drill

## Here is your planning checklist:

○ Create a **emergency response team**.

This team might include several people from local law enforcement or individuals with military and medical training. Designate duties for your crisis team members, including:

- Calling 911 and directing first responders when they arrive
- Directing congregants on exactly what to do during an active shooter situation
- Assisting limited mobility congregants and children to hide or escape
- Distracting and disarming an active shooter (as a last resort)

○ **Discuss your plans for the drill** and receive approval from your pastor, church board, and safety committee. They may have ways to improve it.

○ Perform a risk assessment of your facility using **Church Inspection Form** available from Adventist Risk Management, Inc. (ARM).



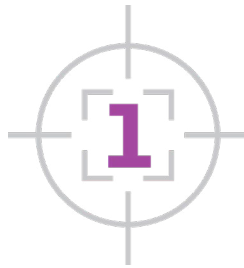
○ **Designate one of your church leaders to meet with the police** and review their strategy for responding to a shooting in your building.

○ **Appoint individuals to observe** the drill and report back any problems they see.

○ **Prepare the congregation** for the drill by sharing the **Run, Hide, Fight** method.



# On the Day of the Drill



## ALERT FIRST RESPONDERS

Alert local law enforcement and medical teams about the date and time of your non-emergency drill. Check in with your designated crisis response team on the day of the drill. Be sure everyone is prepared to handle their portion of the drill.

Law Enforcement Contact	Medical Team Contact	Date and Time of Drill
NAME	NAME	DATE
NUMBER	NUMBER	TIME



## REVIEW SAFETY TACTICS WITH CONGREGATION

Introduce your congregation to a crisis team member who will guide them in the event of an actual situation. ARM recommends against having an active shooter actor as it could incite panic. Emphasize the point of the simulation is to give the congregation a place to anticipate potential threats and practice evacuating the building in a controlled manner.

Share these **Run, Hide, Fight** tactics and key principles, outlined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation:



### RUN

- Be aware of all possible exits, including windows and emergency exits.
- Quickly and cautiously flee in a direction away from the attacker.
- Don't stop until you are sure you have reached a safe location.



### HIDE

- If there is no safe escape route, find a good hiding place.
- Lock and barricade the door(s) and anything that can provide shelter, including pews, furniture, organs, or pianos, etc.
- Silence cell phones.
- Have a personal defense plan ready.



## FIGHT

- Fight only as a last resort.
- Use available objects as improvised weapons.
- Ambush the attacker with teamwork and the element of surprise.



## EXECUTE THE DRILL

At the appointed time, have a designated person from the crisis response team walk to the front and announce the drill to the congregation. Have the observer record the time elapsed and take notes. After the evacuation is completed, allow congregants to reenter the building and thank them for their participation. This is a good time to assure all participants of your congregation's commitment to keeping all worshippers safe.



# After the Drill

Emergency situations can happen at any time, so it is important to identify weaknesses, implement changes, and track progress with your crisis response team.

Be prepared. Complete the following checklist after the drill.

- Ask for feedback from the congregation and those who assisted with the drill.



- After reviewing all notes, revise your emergency response plan as needed.
- Set the date for the next drill. When you begin to have drills, it is best to schedule three or four additional drills in the first year. After the congregation is comfortable with the procedure, yearly drills are sufficient.



# Church Emergency Planning Resources



At Adventist Risk Management, Inc., our ministry is to protect your ministry. Use the resources online at [AdventistRisk.org](http://AdventistRisk.org) and those below to help protect your facility and those under your care.

- [Church Inspection Form](#)
- [Emergency Response Team Roles](#)
- Visit [adventistrisk.org/solutions](http://adventistrisk.org/solutions) for more [Emergency Planning Resources](#)



Adventist Risk Management,® Inc. (ARM) is invested in the safety and success of your ministry. We provide risk management resources to help you protect the people and physical assets at the heart of your ministry. Our ministry is to **protect** your ministry. Learn more at [AdventistRisk.org/About-Us](http://AdventistRisk.org/About-Us). #ARMcares

## REPORT YOUR CLAIM RIGHT AWAY

1.888.951.4276 • [CLAIMS@ADVENTISTRISK.ORG](mailto:CLAIMS@ADVENTISTRISK.ORG)

## STAY INFORMED

[ADVENTISTRISK.ORG/SOLUTIONS](http://ADVENTISTRISK.ORG/SOLUTIONS)



This material is fact based general information and should not, under any circumstances, be considered specific legal advice regarding a particular matter or subject. Please consult your local attorney or risk manager if you would like to discuss how a local jurisdiction deals with any specific circumstances you may be facing.