

SECURE KEY AREAS |



Controlling access to your church is one of your first lines of defense. According to Brotherhood Mutual's *The Church Safety & Security Guidebook*, a good plan should outline how you will secure various areas of your church, as identified by a thorough assessment.

When it comes to controlling access, be sure to consider all aspects of your ministry.

Here are a few key areas to think about:

ENTRANCES

Your plan should outline what doors will be locked and when, as well as who is charged with this task. Best practices include limiting the number of keys or access codes and documenting everyone who receives one.

CHILDREN'S AREA

If your children's area has multiple entrances, consider keeping all doors except the main entrance locked. Have consistent check-in/check-out procedures to help make sure that children leave with only the appropriate adults. Consider limiting access to children by having parents and visitors stay behind a barrier.

OFFICES

In addition to securing financial records, be sure to lock up any sensitive and confidential member information. Address how your staff could be personally vulnerable, especially during the week or in the evening. Consider using a viewing window or intercom to identify visitors before allowing them to enter the office area.

OFFERINGS

Protecting the offering is essential. Important measures include having a secure place to count offerings, rotating money counters and making regular deposits. Solid financial controls not only protect the church from theft but also protect the people entrusted with handling church funds.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

Your church facilities may be used for a variety of activities throughout the week. Your plan should address who will staff these events, who will open and close the facility and what areas participants will be allowed to access.

EVALUATING YOUR ACCESS POINTS |

Do a walk-through of your entire facility to evaluate key areas and how you can control access. Also, consider these questions:

		YES	NEEDS ATTENTION
1	Do we keep a record of everyone who has a key or security code to the building and use a system for tracking keys or changing codes as volunteers/employees leave the organization?		
2	Do we leave as few entrance doors as possible unlocked at any time, and do we ensure that all entrances and doors are locked after every activity and at the end of each day?		
3	Do we use a secure location for counting the offering, and do we make regular deposits to limit cash on the premises?		
4	Do we have procedures in place for limiting and/or monitoring access to the office for safety of staff, records and other valuables?		
5	Do we have proper access restrictions in place — secure doors, sign-in/out procedures, etc. — for specific ministries (nursery, senior care, food pantries, etc.)?		
6	Do we have a church representative open the church building for guests, monitor events and secure the building when they leave, rather than give guests full access to the building?		
7	Do we keep landscaping trimmed to minimize hiding places and make sure doors and windows are clearly visible from a distance?		
8	Do all the windows lock, and do we check them regularly?		
9	Do we have proper internal and external lighting, including emergency lights with backup power sources?		
10	Have we asked outside organizations (police, fire department, ambulance service, utility company) to visit our property and recommend safety and security improvements?		

List provided by Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company.

WANT MORE HELP WITH YOUR CHURCH'S SAFETY & SECURITY MINISTRY?

Brotherhood Mutual's *The Church Safety & Security Guidebook* features:

- ▶ A step-by-step instruction manual
- ▶ Over 20 checklists, sample policies and training scenarios
- ▶ A comprehensive sample plan
- ▶ And much more!

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