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धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः



Hindu Mandir Executive Conference

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HMEC Hindu Temple Security Guidelines



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Hindu Temple Security Guidelines



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PREFACE

Hindu Mandir Executives' Conference (HMEC) is a Vishwa Hindu Parishad America (World Hindu Council) initiative. Over the years, HMEC has provided useful services to the Hindu Temples in North America region by organizing Executive conferences, providing benchmarking / networking / camaraderie opportunities and by publishing useful information.

Recent vandalism at the Louisville, Kentucky BAPS temple, built on previous history of such activities in other parts of the United States heightened our concerns about security needs of our devotees and temples. We commissioned a team of experts to develop temple security guidelines. We are proud to present the work of this team, based on exhaustive research of work done by the Homeland Security, leading Hindu temples and other religious organizations,

We encourage individual temple leaders to take a look at their individual surroundings and resolve to develop plans appropriate for their local situations.

Sanjay Mehta

General Secretary

Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) of America

FOREWORD

Back in September 1976, when the Hindu Society of North Carolina was established, life was simpler. Since then, from a handful of families participating at that time, the HSNC temple has become an anchor for the Hindu community in the Triangle area of North Carolina. Weekly, thousands of devotees of different ages take advantage of services offered by the Society - be it daily Aartis, special poojas, discourses by distinguished visiting scholars, youth camps, Om Squad or cultural activities like Garba during Navaratri. The sprawling campus also offers a playground for children, quarters for priests and a cultural hall that can be used for major gatherings.

At the same time, our external world has also become complex since then. Domestic terrorism and hate crimes have been growing at an alarming rate. With this backdrop, it behooves us, the temple leaders, to take precautions to protect our devotees, visitors and our assets.

I applaud Hindu Mandir Executive's Conference, an initiative of Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (World Hindu Council), for having the foresight to develop these Temple Safety and Security guidelines. I urge my fellow temple leaders and devotees to take a serious look at this work and take steps towards preventing unfortunate incidents.

Hari Om!

Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma

Founding Trustee - Hindu Society of North Carolina

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is a large body of knowledge available on this topic, generated by federal, state and local governments, religious institutions representing different faiths and specific plans developed by many Hindu temples. We want to acknowledge the significant influence of publications and internal documents from the following organizations in developing these guidelines.

- a. Anti Defamation League (ADL) (Jewish)
- b. Sikh Dharma International
- c. Hindu American Foundation
- d. Hindu Society of Minnesota (HSMN) - Minneapolis
- e. Hindu Temple of Central Indiana (HTCI) - Indianapolis
- f. International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) Detroit
- g. North Carolina Baptist Church (Name not disclosed)
- h. Department of Homeland Security (Raleigh Durham, NC)

Rather than recreating their work, in many instances, we have borrowed from their work.

We want to sincerely thank Captain Jerry McCormic (Operations Commander) at Cary, North Carolina Police Department as well as FBI Special Agent Scott Bennett of FBI Charlotte, North Carolina Division- Fusion Center for their expert and professional guidance in developing these guidelines.

The HMEC Executive Sponsors (Abhay Ashtana, Sant Gupta, Ami Patel and Sanjay Mehta) played a crucial role in launching this project, providing critical resources, opening doors and weighing in on the content and the format of this book.

Without the dedication, expertise and contributions of the Editorial Board, this publication would not have been possible.

Finally, our thanks to Mrs. Asha and Mr. Adish Jain for their financial support in publishing this book.

Bharat Vedak
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INTRODUCTION

Hindu temples are making significant contributions to the local Hindu communities and the communities at large across the United States. They are providing services to the Hindu community in every aspect of their needs. In addition to providing a meeting place to fulfill religious and spiritual needs of the Hindu community, they provide a place to celebrate religious events or learn from visiting Gurus. Bal-vihars and Sunday schools run by temples are on an average attended by 100+ children ranging ages from 4 to 18, helping create a strong foundation for their religious and spiritual journey. They also work with the community at large towards making their community a better place to live.

With a large number of devotees attending temple functions, it's imperative for the temple leadership to ensure safety of the devotees attending the events as well as protecting the investments in the facilities. In addition to dealing with normal emergencies caused by medical, fire or weather issues, temple leaders may also face unique challenges, like hostility from fringe elements; hate crimes and violence. This guide was created by the Hindu Mandir Executive Conference to serve as a resource for temple leaders, enabling them to deal with these challenges, and maintain a vibrant, active, and secure temple community.

The following security guidelines are designed to help you begin the process of thinking about security for your temple and devotees. However, it is by no means an exhaustive treatment on the subject of security. Moreover, it is not a security plan for your temple. Rather, it is a series of **security considerations**. The set of facts and circumstances unique to every temple will dictate what you choose to implement. You know your temple and the local environment, you know its finances and you know what security measures devotees will accept. Thus you must evaluate these measures in light of your temple's needs. You must bear in mind that not every item on a list is applicable to your temple and that not everything applicable to your temple is on these lists.

One way to use these guidelines is as a starting point for a conversation between the temple leadership, selected members the temple staff, a few progressive devotees and a security professional who can assess your temple firsthand.

DEVELOPING A SAFETY PLAN

A sound security plan will leave a temple better able to thwart and, if necessary, recover from a security breach. The best way to protect your temple is to prepare for and prevent an incident's occurrence in the first place. A sound security plan is often as much a management issue as it is a technical one. It involves motivating and educating all staff, leaders and devotees to understand the need for security and to create and implement a coherent security plan.



Steps involved in developing a Safety plan for a temple are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Seven Step Process to develop Temple Security Guidelines

Step #	Description	Responsibility
1	Create an organizational culture of safety	Leadership, employees, sevadars & devotees
2	Community outreach	Leadership
3	Threat and hazard analysis	Leadership, employees
4	Prioritize threats/hazards	Leadership, employees
5	Develop action plans to address top threats/hazards	Leadership, employees
6	Implement plan - Train leadership, employees, sevadars and devotees	Leadership, employees
7	Review and update threat analysis and action plans periodically	Leadership

1. Organizational Culture:

As Hindu Society of Minnesota (HSMN) Safety and Security Committee Guidelines succinctly state, "Safety and Security Responsibility belongs to **everyone**"

- ❖ Become familiar with the Emergency Response Documents
- ❖ See something Say something
- ❖ Volunteer and train to be the first responder - CPR, Use of AED
- ❖ Follow safe practices and discipline at the temple.

Gurdwara Safety and Security guidelines, developed by Sikh Dharma International amplify these thoughts further:

- ❖ Make safety and security part of the culture of the Gurdwara, involving staff, sevadars, and sangat.
- ❖ Designate a member of the staff to serve as Security Manager, responsible for the security protocol of the Gurdwara. Support the Security Manager in enlisting and training volunteers to act as Security Sevadars.
- ❖ Have Security Sevadars present during events to monitor activities in the Devan Hall, Langar Hall, parking lots, and all sangat areas. The Security Sevadars are responsible to respond to security incidents and to make contact with emergency services when needed.

As the Anti Defamation League (ADL) emphasizes, when planning or participating in events, everyone-ranging from the Board President to the custodial staff - must think security.

Devotees should:

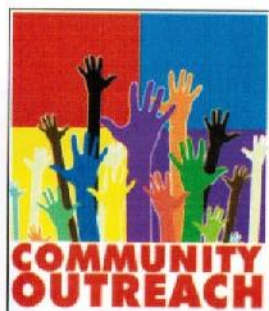
- ❖ Be watchful, ready, and willing to report suspicious activity;
- ❖ Know their building - report anything out of place, missing, or that does not appear to belong
- ❖ Actively cooperate with security directions and procedures
- ❖ Share ideas and suggestions about security and safety
- ❖ Help create a culture that is both secure and welcoming
- ❖ Support the board and professionals as they make the decision to create and implement an effective security plan.



2. Proactive community outreach - Engaging the Community

A temple primarily serves a religious function, but also exists as a community entity. As such, one of the most vital roles of a temple leader is to maintain strong relations with the local community. Community engagement and outreach is critical for all temples. Temples must seek to maintain a connection with the communities that they stand in, including with local residents and interfaith leaders. Temples can maintain such connections through:

- ❖ Keeping temple events open to individuals of all faiths and traditions. Make services welcoming to people of all faiths and help strangers to comply with our customs such as covering their heads and removing their shoes
- ❖ Encouraging local community members to attend temple events
- ❖ Being respectful of local noise, trash, traffic, and other impositions and nuisance ordinances
- ❖ Maintaining a tradition of seva or service in the local community



Working with Other Religious Bodies

- ❖ Reach out to other temples, churches, mosques, and synagogues to learn from their security protocols.
- ❖ Create a relationship with these entities to share information and helpful tips

Engaging Elected Officials

In all engagement with elected officials, temples must remain in compliance with the restriction on political activity by 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. As such, temples must refrain from:

- ❖ Endorsing political candidates
- ❖ Spending money on political campaigns
- ❖ Lobbying in state or federal initiatives

Nevertheless, temples can permissibly engage elected officials by:

- ❖ Inviting them and/or their representatives to temple functions and events.
- ❖ Participating among faith-based advisory councils set up by the officials

Proactive Relationships with Law Enforcement

Maintaining a secure temple environment involves developing a strong relationship with law enforcement. To engage with local law enforcement, temples should engage in the following steps:

- ❖ Identify your local law enforcement agency.
- ❖ Connect with your local law enforcement agency BEFORE an incident occurs
- ❖ Ask the agency to conduct a visit of the temple to evaluate the overall security.

- ❖ Ask law enforcement officials to give on-site presentations on how to deal with emergencies and hate crimes.
- ❖ Invite law enforcement to temple events and functions.
- ❖ Attend any seminars and trainings on preventing hate crimes offered by the agency.

Additionally, temples can also engage with their local U.S. Attorney's office, the F.B.I. and the Homeland Security offices.



3. Threat / Hazzard analysis:

THREAT

Professionals and leadership should assess the risks and realities of the temple to develop a security plan. You may wish to consult with your local law enforcement authorities and/or hire a professional security firm for assistance in this process, if necessary. Risk assessment is a critical step in the overall process as the perceived level of the risk, will dictate the complexity and the cost of the security plan.

Identifying Potential Threats:

This step is best done in a group setting. A group of temple leaders, employees and progressive devotees, perhaps with assistance or facilitation by a security professional should ask relevant questions. The following questions help assess the local environment and potential threats.

- What does the news tell you about the current national and international climate?
- What do police tell you about the local climate?
- What do your devotees tell you about how secure they feel?
- What does social media tell you about the current climate?
- Is there something about your building or your staff that would attract vandalism or a terrorist attack, such as high-profile programs, high-profile members or an extremely visible building?

- Are you at risk from collateral damage from an attack on a high-risk neighbor (e.g., political offices, controversial corporate offices, family planning clinics)?
- Are you at risk from employees or other "insiders"?
- Is your temple readily identifiable? The issue of signage is one to be decided by your leadership.
- Are there weather emergencies to be aware of based on local climate and topography of your temple compound?

Having addressed these and other similar questions, the group should brainstorm potential treats/hazards.

4. Prioritize Threats / Hazards - Identify Targets for Protection -

A brainstorming session can identify many threats/hazards, which cannot be realistically addressed in a security plan. These threats need to be boiled down to a critical few to identify what you need to protect (e.g. people, property and data) and what makes those things vulnerable. There are a number of tools available to rank order these hazards, using a weighted matrix. They generally involve identifying the probability and severity of these hazards and multiplying the two to come up with an overall score.

Potential Problem Analysis methodology by Kepner Tregoe used extensively by major corporations over the years offers simple, user friendly template and process.



5. Develop action plans to address top threats / hazards:

- a. Risk Reduction - Identify the most appropriate measures to reduce your risk, recognizing that you can never completely eliminate all risks. For example, an appropriate initial step might be to replace or re-key your locks to gain control over who has access to your building
- b. Facility design and protection considerations - Physical security starts with a rather simple basic premise: those who do not belong on your institution's property should be excluded from your institution. This may happen in three (often interrelated) ways:

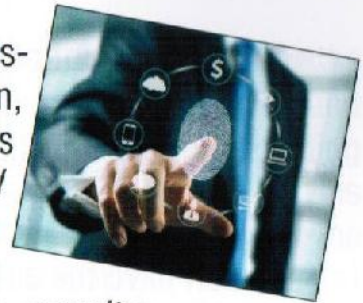
ACTION PLAN			
Who	What	When	How

- ❖ When those who do not belong are identified, stopped and denied admission by a person.
- ❖ When those who do not belong are denied admission by a physical device, such as a locked door.
- ❖ When those who do not belong are denied admission because they decide that your institution is too difficult to enter and thus they do not even try.

Here are some methods of excluding those who do not belong:

- ❖ Access Control - manual or electronic
- ❖ Key Control and Locks - Exterior and interior rooms.

- ❖ Protective Devices and Alarms- Intrusion detectors, fire detection, alarm systems and cameras connected to a closed-circuit TV (CCTV) system can be an important (and sometimes costly) part of an institution's security system. CCTV coverage may also be useful as such systems permit surveillance of exterior exits and interior halls by one trained security officer at a master console. However, even the most sophisticated and costly devices are limited by the human factors involved. The best CCTV system will be ineffective if it is not properly monitored or if those tasked with monitoring the cameras are overworked, poorly trained, tired or distracted.



- ❖ Appropriate windows and doors
- ❖ Fencing and Gates
- ❖ Protective Lighting - Ensure that all areas of the outside perimeter are lighted, or can be lighted, at night.
- ❖ General Deterrence - Alerting intruders about the video surveillance systems is also important. According to the ISKCON Temple of Detroit, "We also have signs around the outer temple walls and parking area saying that we use video surveillance for anyone who walks into the temple. This is true, and certainly makes anyone hesitate to do anything criminal. "



c. Command, Control, and Communications:

In any emergency, firm lines of command, control, and communications are essential.

- ❖ It is vital that a decision maker be identified, that this person have the authority to act, and that the decisions can be effectively communicated to those who need to know them.
- ❖ It is also important to recognize that a designated decision maker may be unavailable during an emergency. Thus, it is important to be able to quickly ascertain who is in charge at any given moment. Consider having a "succession" list in the event of an absence, even a temporary one.

d. Flexibility:

You should create plans that deal with the varied uses of your buildings. Week days, high traffic events (such as the High Holidays) and days when the facility is not used all create different security circumstances. (See below the excerpt of the plan developed by Hindu Temple of Central Indiana (HTCI) for Kumbaabhishekam):



The HTCI Kumbabhishekam Planning Committee (KPC) is also the on-site Event Operations Committee (EOC) that will guide and direct the event while it is in progress from June 3rd to June 7th 2015.

The KPC is well aware and cognizant of the responsibilities of dealing with the general public and natural forces associated with Indiana weather including severe wind, rain, thunderstorms and tornados. This committee has taken many steps to help understand the safety needs of the committee, temple workers (volunteers) and our invited public. These steps include: Training by officers of the Marion County Sheriff's Department on emergency management, conducting drills on safety procedures, CPR training, and review of FEMA recommended procedures.

Business Recovery - Planning should include business recovery strategy and a review of insurance. Such business recovery plans may include off-site data storage (including vendor, membership lists, and other sensitive information) and plans for emergency corporate governance, etc. An unsecured computer system may leave members, donors and staff open to personal harassment and financial difficulties and be an embarrassment for your temple. Your institution can be crippled by a computer attack before you even know what has happened.

6. Implement the Plan

Accountability - The Security Manager:

Designate a member of your staff as security manager who would be accountable for implementing, reviewing, and regularly updating the plan. Make sure everyone is trained to implement the plan - especially those who will be on the front lines of using the plan and those who know your building best: your maintenance personnel.

Training Is Critical. Conducting community and staff training, drills and role-playing and regular refresher exercises is critical.

(Example: Hindu Society of Minnesota safety plan)

Dealing with active incidents:

Crisis management is the art of making decisions to head off or mitigate the effects of such an event, often while the event itself is unfolding. This often means making decisions about your temple's and devotees' future while you are under stress and while you lack key pieces of information.

Consistent with the overall philosophy of these guidelines, the key to being able to manage a crisis is doing as much planning as practical before a crisis starts in order to best position you and your institution to respond to and mitigate such a situation.

- ❖ Medical
- ❖ Fire
- ❖ Weather
- ❖ Phone, mail Threats
- ❖ Active shooter

Documents from the Minneapolis HSMN and Indianapolis HTCI temples show excellent examples of planning for and dealing with all these emergencies. NC Baptist Church Security Plan shows excellent examples defined procedures and job descriptions. These documents are available for review on the following website - www.hmec.info/home/publications

The DHS Active Shooter Planning Guide and Template are great tools to help the Temple Safety and Security Teams. The tools may be used as an all-hazards approach as well as the active shooter element.

- ❖ The active shooter emergency action plan template and an active shooter planning guide when used in conjunction with each other, provide a step-by-step planning process and hyperlinked access to additional information that the Temple security/planning team(s) may wish to leverage.
- ❖ The active shooter planning guide provides links to video and other information that your teams may wish to consider as they navigate the planning process. It is somewhat structured yet flexible enough that you can break it up into manageable pieces, over time.

- ❖ The active shooter planning template is a fillable companion to the Guide. Your team can follow the Guide while simultaneously discussing the suggested discussion points and record pertinent information into the template. Because the template is fillable, there is no need to re-create or transfer information from one document to another and when you're done, the plan is done (except for the training piece). The entire DHS Active Shooter Planning Suite website has a myriad of information that your team(s) may find useful. The website language include translated languages like; Arabic, Chinese, English, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Urdu).

7. Review and update threat analysis and action plans periodically:

The environment that the Temple operates in constantly changes with demographic, economic and political changes. Also technologies available for detection and avoidance of the hazards also change rapidly. Therefore, no analyses and action plans can be effective forever. They need to be periodically reviewed and updated. HMEC recommends reviews and updates every 2-3 years.

Hate Crimes:

Hate crimes can be directed against individuals, groups, and both real and personal property. Hate crimes can take many forms including:

- ❖ Anti-Individual/Group
 - Physical assault/battery
 - Verbal harassment/threats
- ❖ Anti-Property
 - Vandalism
 - Graffiti
 - Trespassing

The key factor in identifying a hate crime is the fact that the perpetrator was motivated, in part or in whole, by the victim's actual or perceived characteristic.

Useful Links and Websites

Current at the date of publication

- ❖ HMEC Website with temple plans
(<http://www.hmec.info/home/publications>)
- Anti Defamation League (ADL) Guidelines (Jewish)
- Gurdwara Safety_and_Security
- HAF Temple_Safety_and_Security flyer
- Minneapolis Hindu Society of Minnesota (HSMN) Emergency Response Documents
- Indianapolis Hindu Temple of Central Indiana (HTCI) Emergency Plan
- HTCI Safety Training
- HTCI Safety Power Point
- ISKON Detroit response
- Minneapolis HSMN Temple Safety e mail
- North Carolina Baptist Church Security Plan (Name not disclosed)
- Department of Homeland Security Protective Security Advisor guidance to Triangle Area Hindu Temples (Raleigh Durham, NC)
- ❖ Active Shooter Abbreviated:
<https://www.dhs.gov/emergency-actionplanning->

- ❖ Trailer - This video combines state-of-threat awareness with state-of-practice solutions that will empower you to build resilience for your community, organization, family, and home.
- ❖ Active Shooter Plan: <https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooteremergency-action-plan-video> - This video guides viewers through important considerations of EAP development utilizing the firsthand perspectives of active shooter survivors, first responder personnel, and other subject matter experts who share their unique insight
- ❖ Options For Consideration for Active Shooter: <https://www.dhs.gov/options-consideration-activeshooter-preparedness-video> - This video demonstrates possible actions to take if confronted with an active shooter scenario and shows how to assist authorities once law enforcement arrives.
- ❖ RUN. HIDE. FIGHT.® Surviving an Active Shooter Event
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0>
- ❖ DHS See Something Say Something Campaign:
<https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-saysomething>
- ❖ FEMA has resources located at;
<https://www.fema.gov/faith-resources>

- 
- ❖ FEMA's Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship;
https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1919-25045-2833/developing_eops_for_houses_of_worship_final.pdf
 - ❖ Church Mutual Insurance Company developed a safety checklist for Houses of Worship- It may have some items and thing that the Temples may be interested in leveraging:
https://www.churchmutual.com/media/pdf/Self_Inspection_Checklist.pdf
 - ❖ The Unitarian Universalist Association put together a great easy to follow framework for Active Shooter (or any other hazard for that matter);
<https://www.uua.org/safe/buildings/active-shooter>
 - ❖ <http://www.kepner-tregoe.com/linkservid/C8339742-D8F6-9A77-4011D16AA6D2D37A/showMeta/0/> This site provides details for prioritizing security threats and boiling them down to a critical few that you can act on.
 - ❖ <https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooterpreparedness>
 - ❖ <https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-resourcestranslated>

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