



GREETER/USHER TRAINING PROGRAM

The Secure Community Network (SCN) has created a program based on nationally recognized best practices to assist houses of worship with implementing a layered security program. One component is a Greeter/Usher program that will create a capability to assist both professional armed security personnel as well as community members with recognizing suspicious activity, reacting to and assisting with de-escalating minor disruptions, providing communication during critical incidents, and activating emergency action plans.

This overview may assist communities with implementation and serve as a quick reference guide for communities that have undergone Greeter/Usher training.

GREETER



SCN defines a Greeter as “a member of the community that has been trained in the basic competencies of a safety program: observation of suspicious activity and indicators, emergency action plans for communication and facility lockdown, reporting and civilian response. The Greeter serves as a member of a facility security team in the exterior perimeters (entrances, parking lot). The Greeter is trained to recognize and take action on particular, identifiable as well as articulable, suspicious activity.”

USHER



SCN defines an Usher as “a member of the community that has received the same training as the greeter but serves as a member of a facility security team in the inner perimeters (lobby, worship service). The Usher will act as an additional level of observation for suspicious indicators and/or other activity inside the facility.”

GUIDANCE



Be prepared, be informed:

- Prior to the beginning of any event, confirm who is scheduled to serve as a greeter/usher and when they will arrive/depart.
- A greeter/usher coordinator should maintain team contact information and confirm accountability with respect to the positions and posts to which they will be assigned.
- Ensure the entire team is briefed on any relevant or critical information. This may include threats targeting the Jewish community or events taking place locally, nationally or internationally relating to the Jewish community or houses of worship.
- Participate in active and ongoing information sharing with security and/or law enforcement.



Emergency plans review:

- Review all emergency procedures so that any response is consistent with the emergency plans of the facility. This includes but is not limited to; evacuation, lockout, lockdown, active threat, medical, natural disasters, emergency contact list, designated areas or rooms within the facility that can be used in the event of an emergency.
- Test and drill these procedures to make sure they are practical and functional.
- If these procedures do not exist, develop clear instruction until a more comprehensive plan is developed.



Physical walkthrough and assessment:

- Conduct a physical walkthrough of the property and building, to familiarize yourself with the facility and remove any obstacles from any emergency routes.
- Identify any immediate deficiencies or vulnerabilities, including vandalism or damage to the facility, that may prevent or delay the building from opening its doors and operations.
- Report and document the findings to the relevant parties as well as law enforcement, if necessary.



Coordination and planning:

- Coordinate with a contracted security services provider and/or law enforcement. This allows for enhancing clarity of roles and responsibilities before, during, and after an incident. Failing to coordinate may result in confusion, chaos and an inability to respond effectively to any incident, small or large.
- Make sure that you have a written plan in place that allows you to carry out your responsibilities while other parties carry out their duties collaboratively.
- Know the time and distance from your local fire houses, hospitals, and police stations.



Crisis Communications:

- Communication is critical before, during and following any event.
- Be able to communicate effectively and clearly under stress and have a clear goal in mind.
- All equipment (e.g. 2-way radios, panic buttons, flashlights, access control devices, AEDs, Stop the Bleed kits, etc.) must be in good working order and fully charged before commencing duties.



- Make sure that you are well-versed in the proper protocol and language, including codes if used, and identify dead zones within the facility that may interfere with communication.
- Practice a few emergency scenarios that require immediate communication via radios or phones. Some scenarios to simulate should include active threat/shooter, unruly individual, medical emergency, suspicious person

Have a clear script of what to say and how to communicate with 911, as your description will be critical to a timely and effective response.

Testing Emergency Systems:

- It is important to test any alarms and security systems prior to your events.
- Make sure you contact your service provider as well as police, fire, and medical responders to ensure that your equipment is in good working order.
- Ensure there is a clear understanding of the average/expected response time by police and first responders in the event of an emergency.

Greeters and ushers should be identifiable by first responders when they arrive on scene as you will be receiving them and assisting them with access if necessary. Consider having reflective vests as it significantly increases visibility.

Policies, procedures, and the law:

- Remember that as a greeter/usher, you represent the institution and its policies.
- Be well-versed in policies relating to safety and security.
- Have an understanding of the law in matters such as trespassing, assault, and responsibilities during a medical emergency.

Planned scenarios:

- The best way to achieve readiness for an emergency situation is through clearly defined protocols and procedures and, more importantly, training.
- Practice different types of scenarios, including emergencies, and identify the best way to respond and manage incidents.
- This should include how to position yourself in different situations so you are prepared and can respond quickly. Different positions should be tested to ensure they are applicable regardless of the scenario.
- Invite police to assist with these drills. This will allow them to give recommendations and critical feedback, as well as gain a better understanding of your response protocol, so they or you can make necessary adjustments.



Contact SCN for Training
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