



## **NYPD Security Tips for Houses of Worship During COVID-19 Closures – As of 4/17/20**

With Houses of Worship temporarily closed, it is a good time to review your security. Here are a few tips to safeguard your House of Worship:

**Perimeter Security:** Use judicious placement of signage, landscaping, fencing, or other amenities that denote ownership and control access. Make sure mail and packages are not piling up outside.

**Security Gates/Locks:** All gates when closed should be secured with heavy duty padlocks with hardened steel shackles. All fencing should be in good repair.

**Climbing Aids:** Check your property for items that can be used as climbing aids such as ladders, pallets and garbage cans. Make sure that anything found is locked up or promptly removed.

**Protective Lighting:** Adequate lighting is necessary for safe operations and can aid in crime prevention. It is helpful to security personnel and police to detect unauthorized or suspicious persons. Good lighting creates the image of a well-maintained and supervised property. Ensure all entrances are well-lit and there is adequate interior lighting.

**Windows:** Protect accessible windows with locks, security films, grilles, or bars.

**Roof openings:** Openings such as skylights and ventilators should be secured and alarmed.

**Video Surveillance Systems (VSS):** Make sure you have a VSS installed which will permit remote viewing of a situation, condition or activity, either immediately, as the condition occurs or after a delay, when it is recorded.

**-Cameras:** Make sure all cameras are functioning, are well positioned and views are unobstructed. Construction, scaffolding and the addition of signage can often obstruct views of existing cameras.

**-Digital Video Recorder (DVR):** A DVR is essential in that it saves video images which are essential to determine how a condition occurred and for evidence when a crime has taken place. Check that the time is accurate on your DVR. Your DVR should be capable of recording 24/7 and storing videos for a minimum of 60 days.

**Alarm Systems:** If you don't already have one, install an alarm. Test existing alarms with your central station provider and update emergency contact lists.

**Doors and Locks:** Make sure doors and door frames are of adequate construction, commercial grade locks are installed, functioning properly, and have edge guards to prevent prying. Exposed hinges require non-removable pins.

**Safes:** Change the combination of any safes, especially if employees have moved on. Safes should be alarmed, located in alarmed rooms and in view of security cameras.

*Note: When installing any security devices, please ensure compliance with local, state, and national fire and life safety codes.*

**Graffiti:** All forms of vandalism will be investigated as a possible hate crime. The Crime Prevention Division recommends immediately reporting the graffiti to the police. Record the graffiti with a picture and do not touch anything until after the police have investigated.

**Hate Crime/Bias Incidents:** All hate crimes are serious incidents and are treated as such by the New York City Police Department. Crimes that are motivated by hate are vigorously investigated by the NYPD Hate Crime Task Force. Follow them on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/NYPDHateCrimes> to keep abreast of current hate crime and bias incident related news.

**The NYPD's Clergy Outreach Unit** fosters positive police-community relations by establishing communication with community leaders, dispelling rumors, disseminating accurate information and by forming liaisons with members of the clergy. For more information, call (646) 610-4043 to speak with NYPD Clergy Outreach Unit personnel.

Your local precinct Crime Prevention Officer is available to assist with tips for securing your premises. Visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/bureaus/patrol/precincts-landing.page> to find the name, email address and phone number for yours.

 Follow the NYPD Crime Prevention Division on Twitter for up to the minute information [@NYPDCPD](https://twitter.com/NYPDCPD)

Best regards,

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