
Security Recommendations For the High Holidays

Good security isn't only about cameras or locks. It's about people being aware of what's going on around them. It's about careful planning. It's about building relationships with your local police. It requires a commitment from an institution's management and constituency to make security a part of an institution's culture. Make security part of your culture year-round, and be especially vigilant in preparing staff and lay leaders and members for the High Holidays.

- Advise local law enforcement of High Holy Day schedules and special events. In particular, communicate with the police commander of the jurisdiction in which your institution is located.
- Ensure that ushers understand that they play a critical role in security matters (even where there is security staff), as they are often used to control access to the sanctuary and are in a position to spot trouble early.
- Ensure that ushers are familiar with suspicious activity indicators, and encourage them to promptly report anything suspicious to the police or security personnel. Review [ADL's Guide to Detecting Surveillance at Jewish Institutions](#).
- Encourage staff, leadership, and constituents to trust their instincts if they come across someone or something suspicious.
- Establish procedures for controlling access to your facility. A facility should have as few entry points as possible (ideally one), so that no one is able to enter your facility without being greeted and observed. Be sure to obey all fire codes and ensure adequate routes for exiting the building.

- If your institution has hired a police officer or security guard, provide them with specific instructions and identify someone to be their primary contact if they have questions (such as an usher captain).
 - Pre-event publicity for upcoming events should be reviewed in light of security. Potential gains in audience numbers must be weighed against the security concerns created through different types of publicity.
 - Ensure that existing safety devices (video cameras, lights, walkie talkies, etc.) are in good working condition.
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This checklist is compiled from ADL's comprehensive security manual [Protecting Your Jewish Institution](#). Please also contact your [regional ADL office](#) for year-round security awareness training or to sign up to receive ADL's security bulletins and alerts.