

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES & PROCEDURES



"But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat."  
Nehemiah 4:9

## Southern Mutual Church Insurance Company



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## CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This is a “model” or “sample” policy. It does not cover every issue that you may want to consider in the development of such a policy. Nor does it reflect the law of each and every state. You are encouraged to adapt, revise, and change these policies and procedures to meet your own unique circumstances, state laws, or other factors. It is very important that the policies you adopt and implement comply with applicable federal and state laws. All laws are subject to change from time to time by action of state legislatures, Congress, and state and federal courts. Therefore, you should develop and periodically review your policy with the assistance of persons knowledgeable in these laws. Southern Mutual Church Insurance Company is not engaged in giving legal or professional advice or services by providing this model policy. You are encouraged to consult with your own legal counsel and local law enforcement before adopting any church security policies and procedures.

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## PURPOSE

The policies and procedures discussed here are meant to provide direction and purpose to allow church leadership and members to exercise good judgment in the daily operation of the church and promote the efficient use of resources in the congregation. Policies explain what and why things are done. Procedures explain how things are done. Policies and procedures are not meant to be restrictive, but to offer parameters within which we may all work together to provide a safe, yet welcoming, church campus.

## CHURCH SECURITY COMMITTEE

A Church Security Committee needs to be formed and members of the committee should be represented from the following:

- Pastoral Staff
- Elders/Deacons/Trustees
- General Membership Volunteers

The volunteers from the general membership should be led by an appointed Security Committee Chair. When possible, the Committee Chair should be an active/retired law enforcement officer or member of the military with experience in providing security to buildings where large numbers of people congregate. Comprehensive training on securing the unique needs of a church campus should be provided to the Committee Chair.

The committee members should include at least two members trained in medical/trauma first response. Other good options include church members who are active/retired law enforcement, military, doctor, EMS/Paramedic, nurse, etc., as well as volunteers from other backgrounds. The committee will be tasked with forming the policies and procedures the church will follow concerning security during all church services and functions on campus. Anyone who is not an active, commissioned law enforcement officer or anyone who does not have a valid state-issued permit/license that includes a federal background check, should be subjected to a background check prior to serving on the committee.

### *Committee Checklist*

- Institute a policy on the carry of concealed firearms on church property.
- Complete a full Security Assessment with local law enforcement or trained security consultant.
- Use the Security Assessment to form the policies and procedures contained in this document.
- Provide training to all committee members who will be actively providing security during worship services and all other church functions.
- Purchase/install any equipment deemed necessary (cameras, radios, medical/trauma kits).
- Inform the entire congregation of their role and expected actions in the event of an incident.
- Meet regularly to discuss Incident Reports, changes to policies, changes to procedures, etc.
- Train regularly together.
- Institute weekly security updates via email on church, and surrounding community, issues (with immediate updates when significant events occur).
- Institute monthly building checks to ensure locks/cameras are in working order, medical/trauma kits are fully stocked, and committee volunteers are still active participants.

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## CONCEALED FIREARM POLICY

[NOTE: These are generic sample policies/procedures that should be customized to meet the requirements set forth by your church leadership, as well as to be in compliance with all applicable state and Federal laws.]

Church Security Committee Members who are active/retired Law Enforcement Officers may carry a concealed firearm on church premises at any time.

Church Security Committee Members with a valid state-issued permit/license may carry a concealed firearm on church premises while actively providing security pursuant to their duties as a committee member, if allowed by state law. At all other times, these members should adhere to the policy for the general membership.

At no time is any person other than an active duty, uniformed law enforcement officer allowed to openly carry a firearm on church premises.

[NOTE: Your committee should decide which policy below is allowed by state law and is the one they desire to implement. The language should be changed to reflect the desires of your church.]

General members of the congregation who have a valid state-issued permit/license to carry a concealed firearm on church premises must first obtain the permission of church leadership [NOTE: You may want to more narrowly define "church leadership" to be a specific group (Elders/Deacons/Trustees) or person (Pastor)] by submitting the request in writing and include a copy of their permit/license to be kept on file with the Church Security Committee. If permission is granted, the member may carry a concealed firearm on church premises at any time.

General members of the congregation and visitors are not granted permission to carry a concealed firearm on church premises at any time.

If your church decides to allow Security Committee members to carry a firearm while on duty at a service or meeting, it is highly recommended you adopt the policy of mandatory firearms training, both on an individual level and as a team. All training should be documented and filed with the Security Committee Chair. Training should include, but is not limited to, these areas:

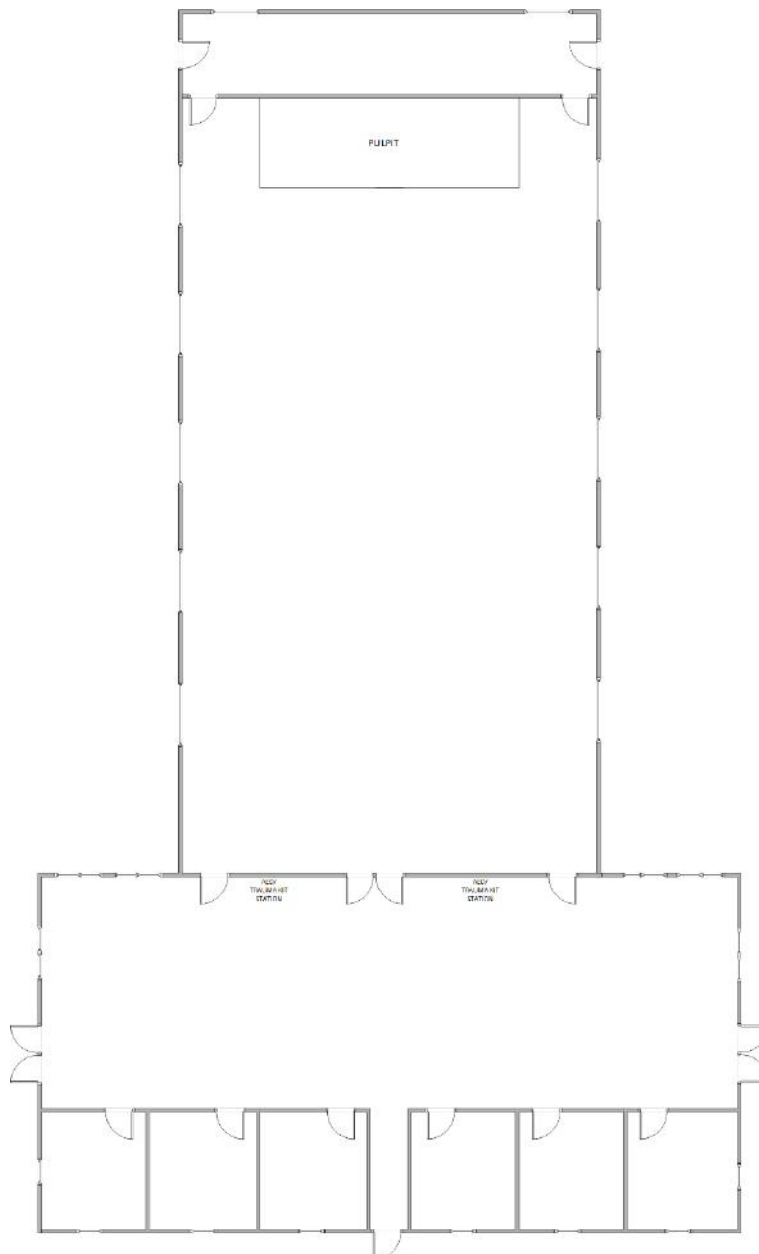
- Firearms Safety Rules
- Weapons handling in and around crowds
- Movement, platform, and weapons handling principles
- Situational Awareness
- Scenario-based Exercises

[For information on recommended training companies, please visit the Church Security Resources page at our website, [www.smcins.com](http://www.smcins.com).]

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## CHURCH CAMPUS MAPS—SECURITY STATIONS/EVACUATION ROUTES/MEDICAL STATIONS

[NOTE: Upon completion of a campus-wide security assessment, you should include a map(s) of all buildings, including the location of all exterior doors and windows that can be accessed from the outside. You should mark on the map all locations/areas to be assigned a stationary Security Committee Member during worship services/events as suggested by the assessment. A second map showing Evacuation Routes should also be included, showing the route of evacuation for each area of your campus, as well as rendezvous points for each group of people in attendance (nursery, children, youth, adults, senior adults). The Evacuation Route map(s) should be prominently displayed in every room and each staff member/teacher/volunteer should receive training on how to properly evacuate their area of responsibility. Maps should also include the locations of all fire extinguishers, medical/trauma kits, and AEDs.]



# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## SECURITY COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

[This should be expanded to include specific recommendations based on your Security Assessment.]

### ***Before an Emergency—PREVENTION***

Each member of the Security Committee should be properly trained in recognizing suspicious behavior, communicating with problematic individuals, and reporting to First Responders. The goal is to prepare the members to see behaviors that indicate malintent and to anticipate potential problems before they occur. This can be accomplished by developing a “Welcome Policy” for Committee Members, training them to greet visitors with a handshake, but also using that opportunity to pay attention to small details such as nervousness, irrational behavior, and unusual clothing or bags that could conceal weapons.

Prior to each service/event, the Committee Chair will designate one Committee Member as the Security Leader for that service/event, unless the Chair will serve as the Security Leader. The Security Leader will then assign each Committee Member to their designated area of responsibility.

The Committee Member should use their training to scan the area for potential problems, as well as for medical issues that could arise. In the event of an emergency, the Committee Member should communicate the nature of the emergency to the Security Leader.

### ***During an Emergency—RESPONSE***

In the event of an Active Shooter Emergency, each Committee Member on duty should immediately use their training to neutralize the threat if possible or begin the process of evacuating the congregation per the evacuation guidelines.

In the event of a Medical Emergency, the Committee Member should first report the emergency to the Security Leader, then respond to the level of their training and/or certifications.

### ***After an Emergency—RECOVERY***

After a threat has been neutralized, each Committee Member should be prepared to assist First Responders as they arrive, as well as to deploy Trauma Kits to any severely injured persons prior to the arrival of First Responders.

It is not the responsibility of the Committee Member to respond to members of the media and all inquiries by the media should be directed to [insert designated church spokesperson here].

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## SECURITY LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

[This should be expanded to include specific recommendations based on your Security Assessment.]

### ***Before an Emergency—PREVENTION***

The Security Leader should never be assigned one area of responsibility during a service/event, which will allow them to freely monitor all areas of the church campus as needed.

Prior to each service/event, the Security Leader will assign a Committee Member to each area of responsibility as designated in the assessment. The Security Leader should monitor all communications among Committee Members and respond to any issues that arise. The Security Leader should also be responsible for communicating with the Pastoral Staff.

### ***During an Emergency—RESPONSE***

In the event of an emergency, the Security Leader should be the one to initiate a call to 9-1-1 and give the details on the type of emergency to the 9-1-1 Operator. The Security Leader should make contact with First Responders as they arrive and direct them to the scene of the emergency.

In the event of an Active Shooter emergency, the Security Leader should, depending on the location of the intruder, initiate an immediate evacuation of the congregation per the Evacuation Procedures or initiate a lockdown/shelter in place response. *The guiding principle should be:* Is it more dangerous out there? Shelter in place. Is it more dangerous in here? Evacuate.

### ***After an Emergency—RECOVERY***

After a threat has been neutralized, the Security Leader should continue to assist and direct First Responders as they assess the situation.

It is not the responsibility of the Security Leader to respond to members of the media and all inquiries by the media should be directed to [insert designated church spokesperson here].

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## SHELTER/LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

[NOTE: These are generic sample policies/procedures that should be customized to meet the requirements of your Security Assessment.]

The designated Security Leader should be the one to determine the need to begin the Shelter/Lockdown procedures. The Security Leader should call out a simple command over the communication system giving the general location of the intruder and the lockdown command. For example, if an intruder had been detected in the main foyer, the command should be issued as “INTRUDER-MAIN FOYER. INTRUDER-MAIN FOYER. LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN.”

[Avoid the use of “code words”, such as “CODE RED”. Use concise words everyone can understand, even if they have not had training, and are easily understood under the pressure of an emergency.]

Once the command for lockdown has been given, each Security Member should quickly move through the hallways of their designated area of responsibility shouting out “LOCKDOWN! LOCKDOWN! LOCKDOWN!” making sure that each occupied room has heard the command and begins to lockdown their room. If there are people in the hallways, the Security Member should be prepared to direct them to the nearest safe room or exit.

Any Elder/Deacon/Trustee who is not a part of the Security Committee should be well trained in the Shelter/Lockdown/Evacuation procedures and should immediately move to the areas where the most vulnerable are located (Nursery/Children/Elderly) to help with lockdown and/or evacuation.

## TIPS FOR SHELTERING IN PLACE

- If possible, lock the door and use desks or other items to create a barricade.
- Turn off all lights and maintain silence.
- While barricading the door, start looking for possible weapons to use against the intruder in case of entry into your room. These do not have to be typical weapons; anything can be used such as a fire extinguisher, broom/mop, lamp, scissors, pen/pencil, etc.
- If an inward opening door does not lock, find something to jam under the door as a doorstop.
- If an outward opening door does not lock, use string, electrical cords, belts, or anything you can find to wrap around the doorknob and then attach to a desk or chairs being used as a barricade.
- Put as many objects from the room between you and the door/windows as possible.
- If the intruder makes entry into the room, be prepared to use any and all means to disarm and neutralize them as they are entering the room.



# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## EVACUATION PROCEDURES

[NOTE: These are generic sample policies/procedures that should be customized to meet the requirements of your Security Assessment.]

The entire church membership should be made aware of the Evacuation Procedures they need to follow should an evacuation be initiated. The procedures should be reviewed with the membership at a minimum on an annual basis. A copy of the Evacuation Procedures and maps should be given to all new members when they join the church, as well as to frequent attendees who have not joined the church.

Evacuation Maps should be located near doors in every classroom, meeting room, office, and building. All pastoral staff, office staff, elders, deacons, trustees, teachers, and volunteers should be required to attend special training on the Evacuation Procedures at a minimum on an annual basis.

The Security Assessment should divide the church campus into zones and determine the optimal route to exit the building, as well as a designated rendezvous point to be used by each evacuation zone. Training should include walking through a “mock” evacuation.

Once the designated Security Leader has determined to initiate an evacuation during a worship service, there should be clear verbal communication or a prearranged signal to the pastoral staff on the pulpit/stage that an evacuation has been called for. The most senior pastor should immediately address the congregation to calmly let them know that there is a situation making evacuation necessary, then direct them to their designated exits per the Security Assessment. The pastor should remind them to proceed directly, but calmly, to their designated rendezvous point. Parents should also be reminded that their children are safe and being evacuated by church staff and volunteers and they should NOT try to make their way to the nursery or classroom to retrieve their child, but that once the evacuation is complete, they will be reunited with their children at the pre-arranged rendezvous point as quickly as possible. If an evacuation rendezvous point has been determined to be unsafe, a member of the Security Committee on duty should lead that group to an alternate location.

## TIPS TO REMEMBER DURING AN EVACUATION

- Remain calm and encourage all being evacuated to remain calm and orderly.
- Follow all instructions given as you evacuate.
- Do NOT return for personal items (coats, purses, etc.) until the “All Clear” has been given.
- In a multi-story building, use stairwells for evacuation, keeping as far to the right as possible.
- Parents of children/youth in other areas of the church campus should be reminded they are NOT to go directly to the room where they left their children, but should instead go to the designated rendezvous point to be reunited with their children.

# CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

[If you have a medical professional in your congregation and they are willing to serve on the Security Committee, it is recommended you ask them to oversee the creation of the Medical Emergency Procedures section of this manual, reporting directly to the Security Committee Chair.]

The Security Committee should actively seek out members of the church who are in the medical profession (doctors/nurses/EMT/paramedic) to serve on the Security Committee. For a larger congregation, this could be set up as a Sub-committee. All medical professionals serving on the Committee should provide documentation of their level of education/training to the Security Committee Chair to be kept on file and submit to a background check to include the governing body in their field.

The Medical Sub-committee should determine, based on the average attendance to all services, the number, type, and location of all medical/trauma kits, supplies, and equipment. The Sub-committee should also be responsible for frequent inspections and resupply of all medical/trauma kits, supplies, and equipment. At a minimum, the church should have in place in every building on the campus, the following:

- First Aid Kit (small bandages, rolled gauze, alcohol wipes, etc.) for minor wounds
- Bleeding Control/Trauma Kit (tourniquets, pressure bandages, chest seals, etc.)
- AED Equipment

Each member of the Security Committee who is not a member of the medical profession should be encouraged to receive training in CPR, bleeding control (including the use and application of tourniquets), and the use of AED equipment. Documentation of this training should be provided to the Security Committee Chair and kept on file.

[For information on recommended medical training and supply companies, please visit the Church Security Resources page at our website, [www.smcins.com](http://www.smcins.com).]

In the event of a medical emergency, the first Security Committee member on scene should immediately communicate the nature of the emergency and need for an ambulance to the Security Leader, who should then initiate the call to 9-1-1. This will allow the Security Leader to coordinate with the 9-1-1 operator and First Responders while the Security Committee member on scene provides care for the patient to the level of their training. The Security Leader will meet the First Responders and direct them to the scene of the medical emergency. All communication radios should have the church street address taped to their back in the event the address needs to be communicated to the 9-1-1 operator.

A Security Committee member not directly involved in the care of the patient should gather all pertinent information on the patient, as well as from any witnesses, to be used in submitting an Incident Report to the Security Leader (see sample Incident Report at the end of this manual).

## **CHURCH SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **KEY/ALARM CODE POLICY**

The Security Committee Chair should be the sole person to maintain custody of all church keys and alarm codes, if applicable, as well as to evaluate all key/alarm code requests. A list of all staff, members, and volunteers with keys and access to the alarm codes should be maintained by the Security Committee Chair and that list should be available to the Security Committee members on duty. A periodic audit of who is in possession of church keys/alarm codes should be conducted by the Security Committee, including determining each keyholder's membership and volunteer status. If a change in status is found, the Security Committee Chair is responsible for retrieving the church key from the person. If the periodic audit determines that enough people with the alarm code no longer need access to the code, the Chair should initiate a change in the alarm code and distribute the new code to those who need access.

# SECURITY VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME/ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you attended our church?

\_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS

Single  Married  Separated  Divorced  Widowed

OCCUPATION & EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL

\_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Have you ever served on a Church Security Team?  Yes  No If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever served in the Military?  Yes  No If yes, which branch? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been arrested, convicted of, or pleaded guilty of a crime?  Yes  No

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been treated for a psychiatric disorder?  Yes  No

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a state-issued Concealed Weapon Permit?  Yes  No If yes, provide a copy of the permit with this form.

List any service times you are not available to serve on a regular basis \_\_\_\_\_

## REFERENCES

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

LENGTH OF TIME KNOWN \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

LENGTH OF TIME KNOWN \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

LENGTH OF TIME KNOWN \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL

\_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR BACKGROUND CHECK**

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

As part of the church's procedure for verifying the information provided by me on this form or evaluating me for employment purposes, I understand the church may contact persons, employers and/or organizations named by me in this form; conduct a national criminal background check; conduct a sex offender registry check; a social security trace or other appropriate background investigative report which may include information gathered through person interviews with third parties, family members, and persons, with whom I am acquainted. I consent to the church making such checks and understand that this may include information regarding my character, general reputation, and personal characteristics. I further agree to sign any and all documents, consents and/or agreements which may be necessary for the church and its authorized representatives and/or designees to complete the above.

By signing this form, I authorize the church to request and obtain the information described above. Further, I release the church and its denominational agency, affiliates, related entities, agents, employees, and officers (collectively "church") and all references from any claim or liability whatsoever arising out of such request or any information disclosed in response thereto, and I agree to hold the church and all references harmless and will not to bring any action or assert any claim against the church or any reference on account thereof.

I have read and understand the above and affirm that the information I have provided on this application is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

# SECURITY INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT DATE \_\_\_\_\_ REPORT BY (Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

## INCIDENT TYPE

Injury  Theft  Disruption  Vandalism  Suspicious Activity  Threat  Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DESCRIPTION

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## PERSON A

Victim  Witness  Suspect  Other \_\_\_\_\_ Church Member?  Yes  No

Name/Address

Phone

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Email

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## PERSON B

Victim  Witness  Suspect  Other \_\_\_\_\_ Church Member?  Yes  No

Name/Address

Phone

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Email

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## PERSON C

Victim  Witness  Suspect  Other \_\_\_\_\_ Church Member?  Yes  No

Name/Address

Phone

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Email

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## OTHER CHURCH STAFF/VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

*Please enter statements on reverse side.*

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**PERSON A STATEMENT**

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**PERSON B STATEMENT**

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**PERSON C STATEMENT**

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**OTHER COMMENTS**

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**SECURITY TEAM MEMBER TAKING REPORT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

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**SECURITY TEAM LEADER OR SENIOR STAFF MEMBER**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature