

Before the First Guest Arrives

Practical Security and Preparedness Insights



Welcome



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Overview

- Event Preparedness Case Study
- Digital and Physical Security Threats
- Event Planning Considerations
- Establishing Safety and Security teams



Diocesan Event Preparation Survey



Events at Scale

Case Study – SMU

**"It started with a
Tweet"**

Events at Scale

Case Study – SMU " 20 to 200"



Events at Scale

Initial Considerations

Larger crowds = compressed decision time

Temporary setups introduce new risks

Early arrivals change access dynamics

Small gaps scale into major issues

Preparation must begin months in advance, not days before

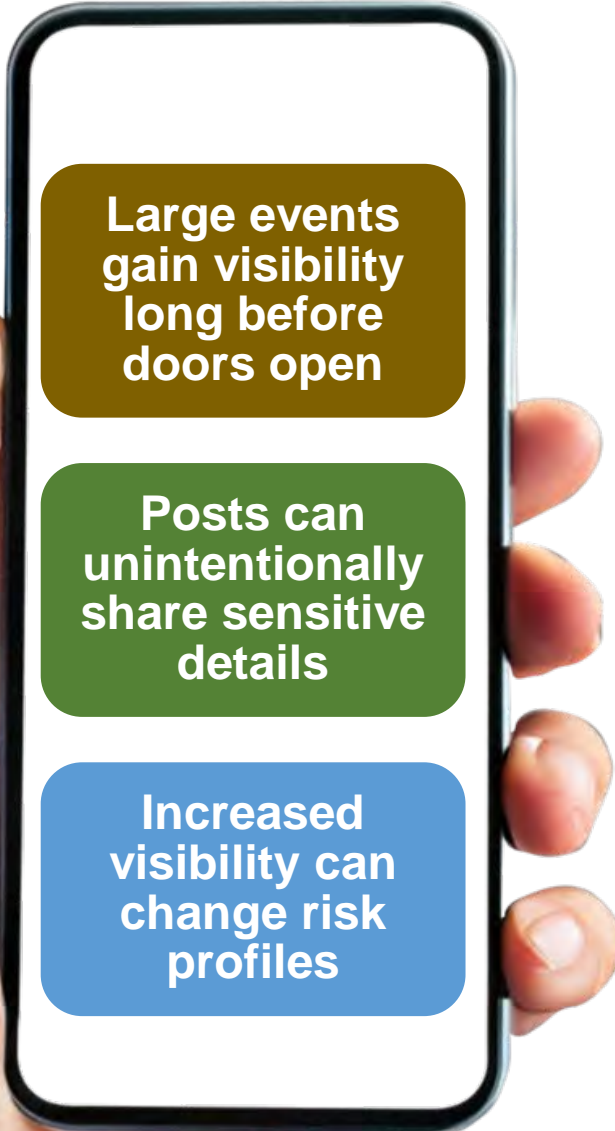


Digital and Physical Security Threats



Digital Concerns

Social Media



Large events
gain visibility
long before
doors open

Posts can
unintentionally
share sensitive
details

Increased
visibility can
change risk
profiles

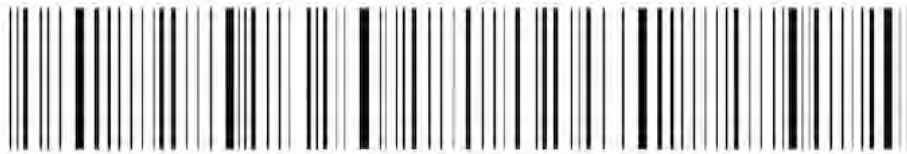
Messaging should be
intentional and coordinated

Preparation includes digital
awareness, not just physical



Digital Concerns

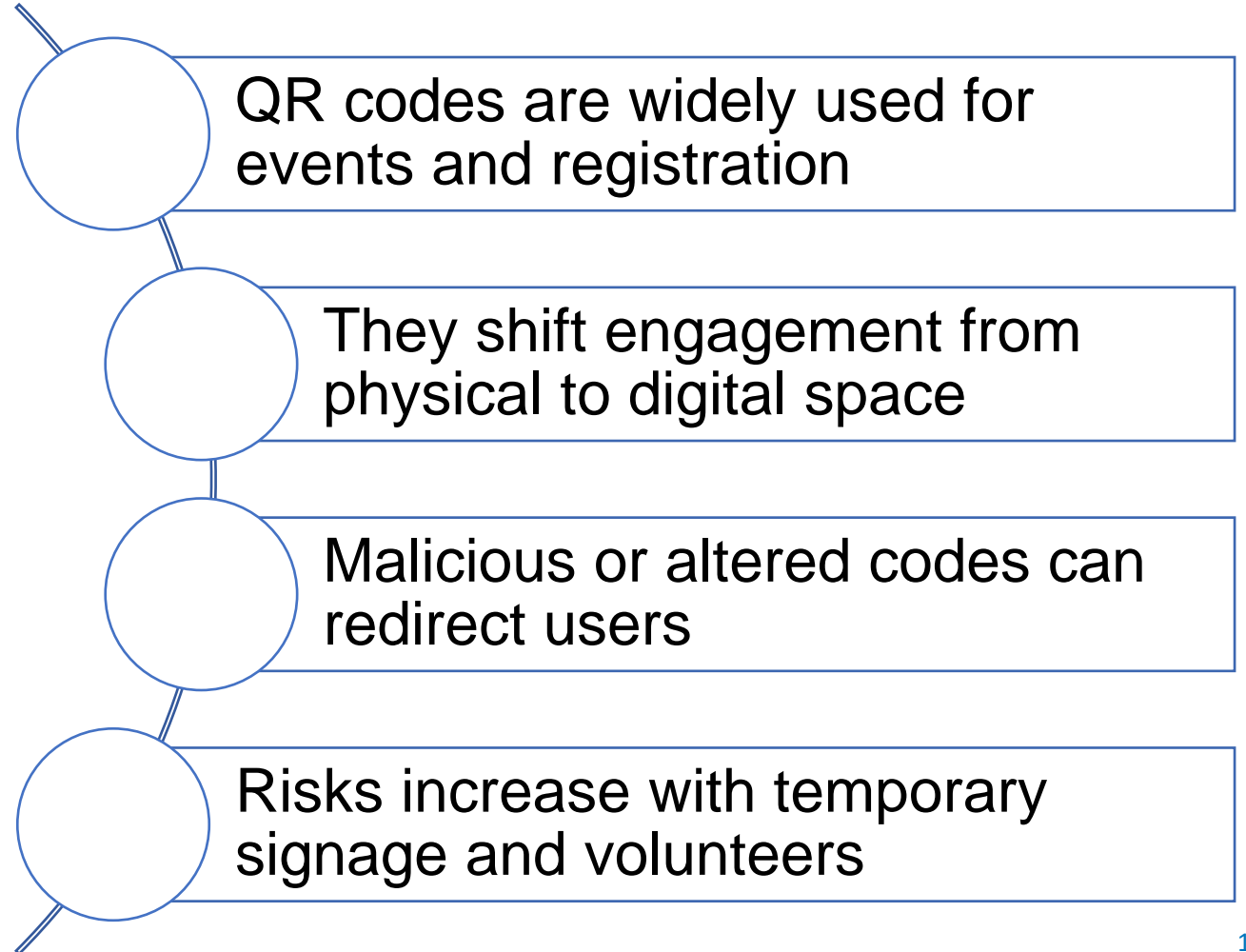
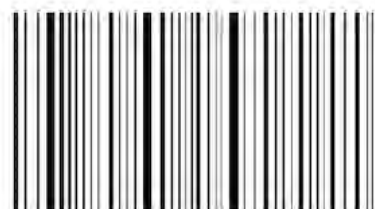
QR Codes and Digital Donations



7 1234 03782143 3482



9 7 1234 0373482 34 782143 7 89 32 82143



Physical Concerns

Access Control

More doors open = more variables to manage
Early arrivals often bypass normal controls

Temporary changes create unintended access points

Access control begins before the event starts

Clarity and consistency support both safety and hospitality



Discussion – Event Preparations



Your Diocese is preparing for a large event

What's the first steps for your site?

How far in advance do you prepare?

What are some safety and risk considerations?

05:00



Event Planning Considerations





4 Phase

**Approach to Event
Safety**



Preparation & Planning

Anticipate risks and establish controls



Risk Assessment & Event Classification

- Size, audience composition (children, general population)
- Indoor vs. outdoor, duration, weather exposure
- Special activities (processions, food service, transportation)

Roles, Responsibilities & Governance

- Clear designation of event lead, safety lead, volunteers, clergy
- Decision-making authority and escalation protocols

Safeguarding & Compliance

- Youth protection and vulnerable adult safeguards
- Required training, background checks, and supervision ratios



Preparation & Planning

Anticipate risks and establish controls



Emergency & Incident Planning

- Medical, fire, severe weather, lost child, disruptive behavior
- Coordination with local emergency services
- Event Emergency Action Plan

Facilities & Logistics

- Capacity limits, accessibility, lighting, utilities, sanitation
- Traffic, parking, and pedestrian flow planning

Communication Planning

- Pre-event staff briefings/Trainings
- Signage, public announcements, emergency messaging plan



Set-Up

Ensure people, spaces are ready

Staff & Volunteer Readiness

- Safety briefing
- Review of roles, scenarios, and communications
- Staff/Volunteer identification

Emergency Resources in Place

- First aid kits, AEDs, emergency contact lists
- Weather monitoring (if applicable)

Communications Testing

- Radios, phones, PA systems
- Backup procedures if systems fail





Set-Up

Importance of Crowd Control

Designate clear entry and exit routes with signage

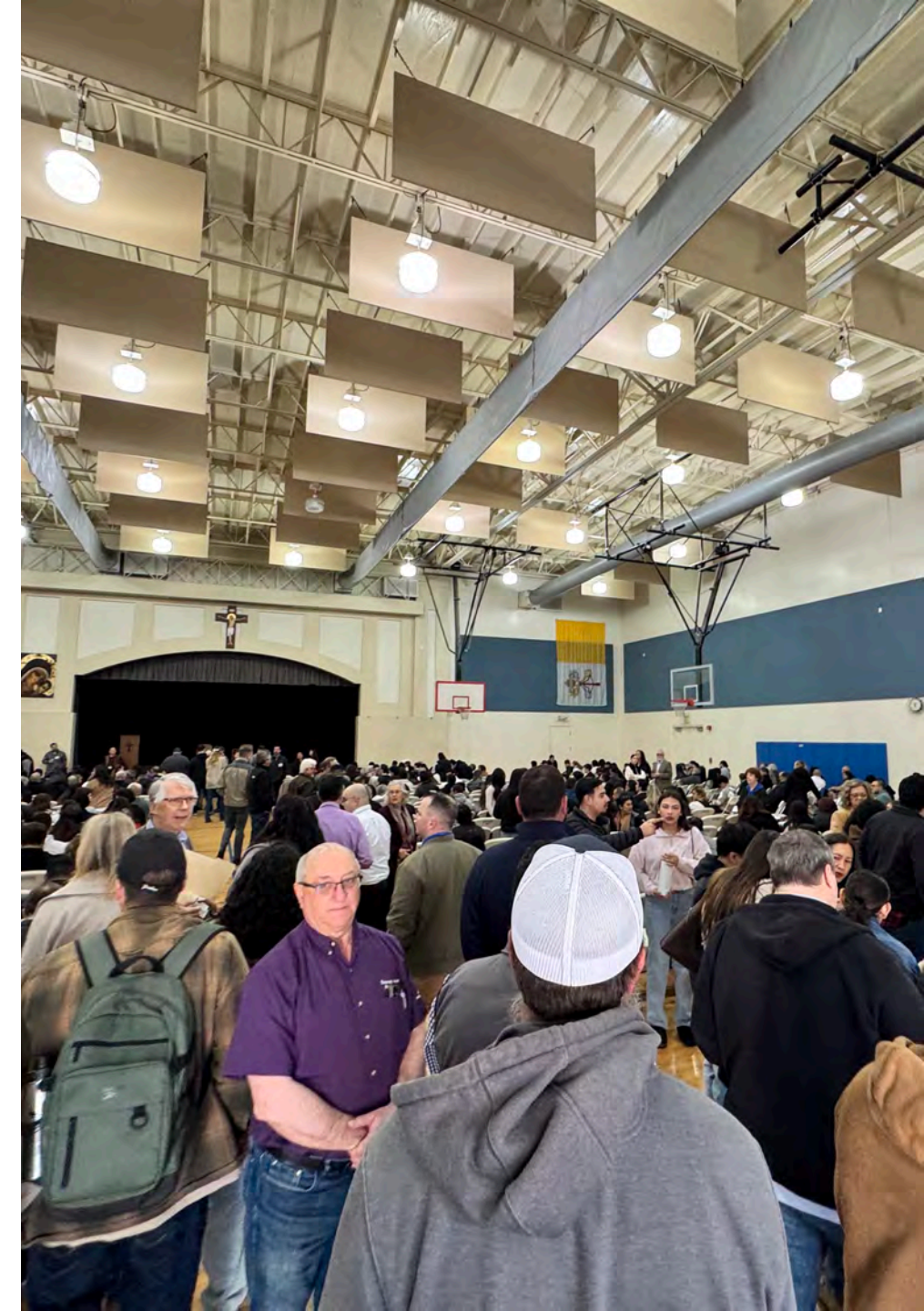
Maintain unobstructed pathways to emergency exits (per NFPA 101 Life Safety Code)

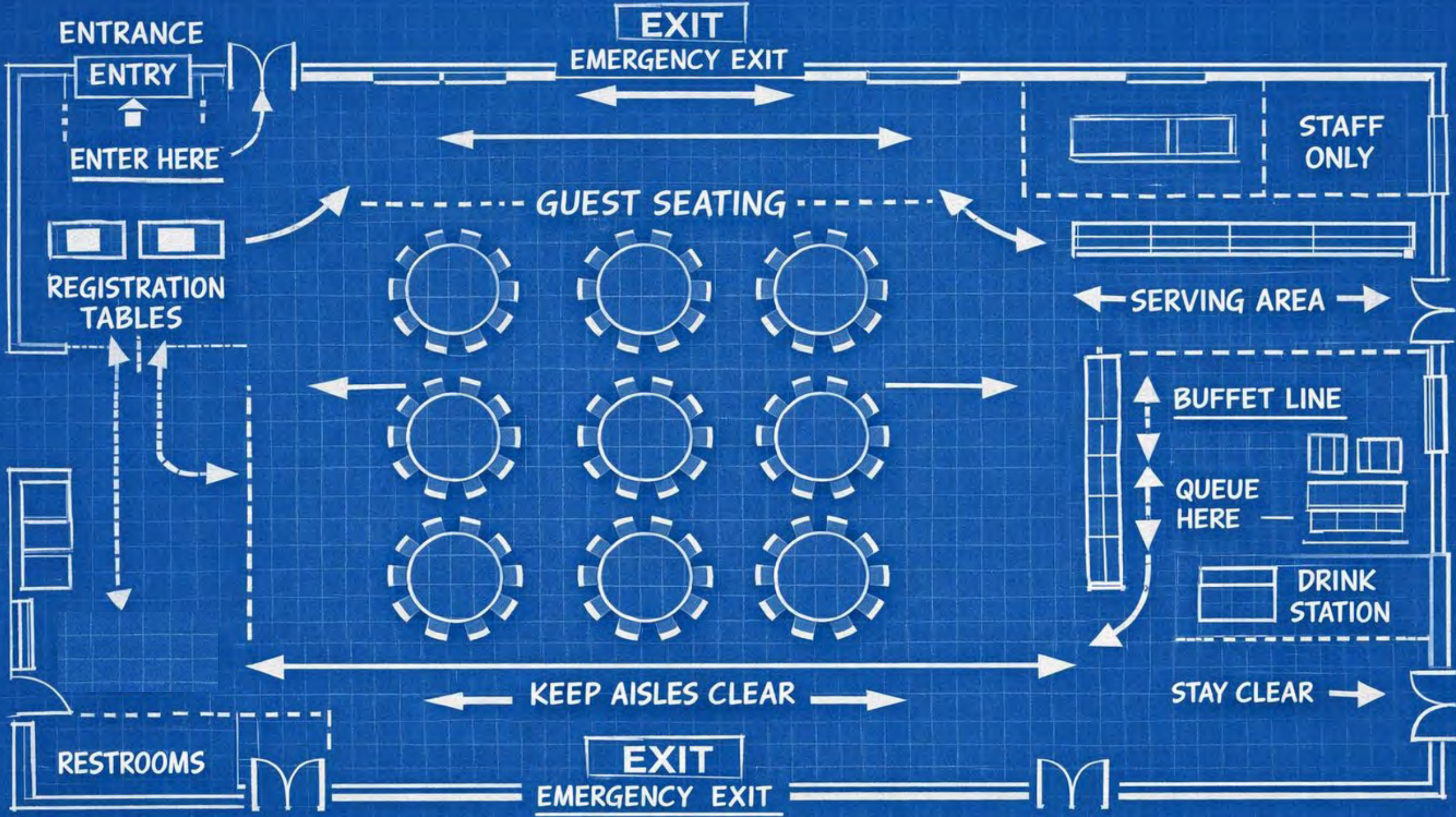
Assign trained volunteers or staff as event monitors

Prevent overcrowding by following room capacity limits

Keep high-traffic areas (serving lines, registration tables) organized to reduce congestion

Use signs, ropes, or floor markers to guide crowd flow





ENTRANCE

ENTRY

ENTER HERE

REGISTRATION TABLES

RESTROOMS

EXIT

EMERGENCY EXIT

EXIT

EMERGENCY EXIT

STAFF ONLY

GUEST SEATING

SERVING AREA

BUFFET LINE

QUEUE HERE

DRINK STATION

KEEP AISLES CLEAR

STAY CLEAR



Set-Up

Crowd Control Process

Design

- Physical Layout
- (Barrers, Exits, Flow Paths)

Information – Communication

- (Signage, Announcements, Social Media)

Management

- Staffing, Volunteers, Procedures, Coordination

Expectations

- Crowd Mindset – What they think will happen





Review

Maintaining situational awareness

Safe Event Close-Out

- Controlled departure of attendees
- Facilities secured and hazards addressed

Incident Review

- Timely reporting and follow-up when required
- What occurred, what worked, what didn't
- Submit claims to insurance broker/carrier

Staff & Volunteer Feedback

- Short debriefs or surveys
- Ask for future volunteers

Documentation & Improvement

- Update safety plans, checklists, and training
- Share lessons learned across parishes or diocesan offices

Establishing and Supporting Safety and Security teams



Emergency Response Team (ERT)

This team serves as the **BRIDGE** team until further assistance arrives



Emergency Response Team

Incident

Recovery

B

- **Block Threats** – Implement strategies to prevent crises.

R

- **React** – Take swift, decisive action.

I

- **Identify** – Recognize risks and vulnerabilities.

D

- **Deploy** – Mobilize resources and responders.

G

- **Gather** – Help the community navigate people safely

E

- **Enforce** – Ensure protocols and safety measures are followed.



Strengthening Response Teams

Volunteer Recruitment



Who to Look For

- Calm, observant individuals with good judgment
- Backgrounds in law enforcement, military, or EMS (preferred but not required)
- Trusted church members with strong integrity and discretion
- Good communicators who work well under pressure

How to Engage Them

- Announce the need during services, newsletters, or small groups
- Personal invitations from leadership or current team members
- Share the mission: protecting the congregation is a ministry
- Offer flexible roles (e.g., greeters with awareness training, parking lot monitors)

How to Train Them

- Initial orientation on church policies and emergency procedures
- Basic security training: situational awareness, de-escalation, radio use
- Regular drills: lockdowns, evacuations, medical emergencies
- Partner with local law enforcement for advanced training



Strengthening Response Teams

Roles during Mass – Hospitality Ministry



Entry Control

- Coordinate with church staff to ensure only one or two monitored entrances are open, while keeping emergency exits accessible.

Role Clarity

- Define specific roles for staff during Mass:
 - Monitor entrances and exits
 - Escort students or vulnerable individuals if needed
 - Observe the grounds and parking areas
 - Serve as discreet safety monitors inside and outside the building.
- Volunteers should be properly vetted and trained to support these responsibilities.

Incident Reporting Protocol

- Establish a clear, confidential process for reporting safety concerns or incidents, with follow-up procedures.



Strengthening Response Teams

Volunteer Recruitment

Emergency Management Skills Survey

Staff Skills Inventory (for Emergency Operations Planning)

Staff: As part of the development of our Emergency Operations Plan, and in accordance with district policy, please complete the following survey and return to the administration office. The information provided will be used to help design and update our Emergency Operations Plan in order to be fully prepared for an emergency situation should one arise.

NAME: _____ ROOM: _____

I. Emergency Response:

Please check any of the following areas in which you have training or expertise:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Search and rescue | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling/mental health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CPR | <input type="checkbox"/> AED | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Firefighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency medical | <input type="checkbox"/> Media relations |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Incident debriefing |

Explain or clarify items checked, if needed. _____

II. Special Considerations:

Please check and list special skills or resources you feel would be an asset in an emergency situation.

Explain items checked:

- Multilingual, list language(s) _____
- Experience with disabilities _____
- Ham radio or CB radio experience _____
- Knowledge of community resources _____
- Other knowledge or skills _____
- Other knowledge or skills _____



Strengthening Response Teams

Standard Response Procedure (SRP)



IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

OCCUPANTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

STAFF

Close and lock door
Account for occupants and staff
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

OCCUPANTS

Return inside
Do business as usual

STAFF

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Account for occupants and staff
Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

OCCUPANTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend

STAFF

Lock interior doors
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Do not open the door
Maintain silence
Account for occupants and staff
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

OCCUPANTS

Evacuate to specified location
Bring your phone
Instructions may be provided about retaining or leaving belongings

STAFF

Lead evacuation to specified location
Account for occupants and staff
Notify if missing, extra or injured people



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

OCCUPANTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard Safety Strategy

Tornado	Evacuate to shelter area
Hazmat	Seal the room
Earthquake	Drop, cover and hold
Tsunami	Get to high ground

STAFF

Lead safety strategy
Account for occupants and staff
Notify if missing, extra or injured people

General DISCUSSION





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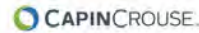


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