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TLP:CLEAR

[FB-ISAO Current Threat Level](#)

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level:

Elevated

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Physical Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as "**ELEVATED**." As per FB-ISAO's definitions of the Physical Threat Levels, "**ELEVATED**" means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events, but there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

FB-ISAO Cyber Threat Level:

Elevated

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Cyber Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as "**ELEVATED**." As per FB-ISAO's definitions of the Cyber Threat Levels, "**ELEVATED**" means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events, but there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

Stories

Responding to Swatting and Hoax Threats: Guidance for the Faith-Based Community, Page 1

Disaster Scams, Page 2

SPOTLIGHT: Welcome to Our New Board Member, Page 2

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FB-ISAO Newsletter

Responding to Swatting and Hoax Threats: Guidance for the Faith-Based Community

Faith-based institutions, including places of worship, schools, and nonprofits, have increasingly become the targets of swatting calls and hoax threats, leading to fear and potentially harmful interactions with law enforcement. These malicious activities aim to disrupt and intimidate through false reports of emergencies, like active shooter incidents or bomb threats, often prompting a large-scale law enforcement response. These institutions must be prepared to coordinate with local law enforcement, develop robust security plans, and take proactive steps to safeguard their communities against such threats.

A member of the FB-ISAO collaborated on the development of resources to address these growing concerns. Institutions are encouraged to strengthen relationships with local responders, create a clear emergency communication plan, and familiarize themselves with hoax threat indicators. A security plan, such as the CISA Security Planning Workbook, can provide a framework for preparedness, while resources like the FBI's Swatting Virtual Command Center offer additional support. It is essential to remain vigilant and secure personal and institutional information online.

In addition to building solid partnerships with local first responders, institutions should review and limit their online presence to avoid becoming easy targets for swatting or hoax threats. Bad actors often use publicly available information to carry out these attacks, so it is essential to periodically assess what is accessible online through social media and organizational websites. Restricting public livestreams or adding delays can reduce the risks while being mindful of what contact details or organizational data are openly shared.

Lastly, institutions should be ready to collaborate with law enforcement and cyber experts in the event of a threat. Saving all forms of communication—emails, social media comments, or voicemails—helps law enforcement with investigations, primarily when threats originate online. By working closely with local Fusion Centers and FBI Field Offices, institutions can ensure that they are part of a broader effort to mitigate the risk of future swatting and hoax threats.

The Swatting Calls and Hoax Threats Targeting Faith Communities resource can be [accessed here](#).



Develop or Update Your Security Plan

It is important to prepare for incidents by creating or updating a security plan for your place of worship. The CISA [Security Planning Workbook](#) provides a fillable form to guide planning and information sharing efforts. Additionally, the Office for Bombing Prevention has a [Bomb Threat Management Plan](#) and a wealth of information on [bomb threat preparedness](#).

FB-ISAO Advisory Board Get to Know the Board of Advisors

Contact Us

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Not Yet a Member of FB- ISAO?

How to join...

Not Yet on FB-ISAO Slack? You Need to Be!

Write to membership

Visit the [events page](#) for
a complete listing of FB-
ISAO events.



Disaster Scams

CISA urges users to remain on alert for potential malicious cyber activity. Fraudulent emails and social media messages—often containing malicious links or attachments—are common after major natural disasters. Exercise caution in handling emails with hurricane-related subject lines, attachments, or hyperlinks. In addition, be wary of social media pleas, texts, or door-to-door solicitations relating to severe weather events. CISA also recommends reviewing the following:

- ▶ Federal Trade Commission’s [Staying Alert to Disaster-related Scams](#) and [Before Giving to a Charity](#),
- ▶ Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s [Frauds and scams](#)

The Federal Trade Commission’s (FTC) [website](#) has some recommendations as well for when you might need to quickly hire someone for rebuilding or repairs. Below are a few signs of a possible scam:

- ▶ Scammers claim they don’t need to be licensed to do the work.
- ▶ Scammers say you’ll get a discount, but only if you sign a contract right away.
- ▶ Scammers tell you to sign over your insurance check.
- ▶ Scammers ask you to pay for everything up front.

Ways to avoid a scam:

- ▶ Verify your insurance coverage.
- ▶ Be skeptical of anyone promising immediate clean-up or repairs.
- ▶ Get estimates from more than one contractor.
- ▶ Get a written contract and read it carefully.

The FTC website also highlights some cautions for paying for repairs.



Spotlight: Welcome to Our New Board Member

On September 23, 2024, the [FB-ISAO Board of Directors](#) met and voted on the appointment of Steven Bieber as the new Treasurer and Secretary. With over 30 years of experience in water security, public policy, and environmental regulation, Steve brings a wealth of expertise to the role. His track record in building strategic partnerships and guiding executive leadership ensures his contributions will be invaluable as FB-ISAO continues to advance its mission.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to Boykin Jordan, who has stepped down from the Board after serving since 2022. Boykin’s leadership as Treasurer and Secretary was instrumental in helping FB-ISAO meet its fiduciary and compliance goals.