

TLP: CLEAR

Fall Holidays

As the weather starts to shift, we are reminded that these days bring about celebrations, recognitions, and bringing together groups at one time. These can also be key considerations for threat actors who may plan hostile events, or low-level harassment activities. Some considerations for planning and preparedness around these events include:



- Form a (Security / Safety) Committee. This can be very important for organizations that may not have a dedicated security staff or personnel. Everyone can have a role in security planning and preparedness.
Resources:
 - [CISA | Securing Public Gatherings](#)
 - [Mitigating Attacks on Houses of Worship Security Guide](#)
- Review or Build a Security Plan. Review lessons learned from past events. This is an important area that can help reduce the risk as well as reinforce success in areas.
 - As noted in the [Hostile Events Attack Cycle](#), many threat actors do extensive research and planning for their attack. One change to their planning (such as what [appears to have happened](#) when students saw concerning behavior and flagged down a security officer who approached the man at Edward Waters University seemingly causing him to flee the campus) can disrupt this planning and alter the attack.
- Establish a layered perimeter security / review access control protocol. This means finding ways to slow the attacker down before they can cause the most harm or impact.
- Devise parking strategies to set up physical barriers from roadways (reduces risk of vehicle ramming).
 - [Vehicle Ramming Attack Mitigation - CISA](#)
- Ensure greeters/ushers are trained on suspicious activity indicators, encountering unknown persons, and reporting suspicious activity as well as incidents.
 - [The Power of Hello Houses of Worship Guide](#)
 - [CISA De-escalation pamphlet](#)
- Understand the threat and how to recognize suspicious behaviors.
 - [If You See Something. Say Something campaign.](#)
- Rehearse or hold an exercise to review the security plan and ensure all parties know their roles and responsibilities.

[FB-ISAO Current Threat Level](#)

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level: **ELEVATED**

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations:
"ELEVATED."

FB-ISAO's definition of the Physical Threat Levels, **"ELEVATED"** means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events. Still, 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."**

FB-ISAO's definition of the Cyber Threat Levels, **"ELEVATED"** means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events. Still, there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

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Active Shooter Incidents

at Faith-Based Schools

On August 29, 2025, a 23-year-old former student conducted a mass shooting at [Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis](#). The attacker carried multiple legally purchased firearms. Investigators recovered writings containing anti-Catholic content and extremist themes. [Authorities classified the event as both a hate crime and domestic terrorism](#). The attack targeted students and staff during a Mass. The perpetrator had prior knowledge of campus layout and security routines.

In December of 2024, a 15-year-old current student executed an attack at [Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin](#). Two victims were killed and six injured before the shooter died by suicide. Firearms were accessed through what authorities believe was negligent parental storage. Investigators identified bullying and mental health issues as contributing factors. The shooter had direct access to classrooms and hallways due to enrollment status. [The father has been criminally charged for providing firearms](#).

The March 2023 attack at [Covenant School in Nashville, Tennessee](#) involved a 28-year-old former student. The perpetrator used multiple legally acquired firearms and had planned the attack over several months. [Mental health issues were concealed from family and providers](#). Six victims were killed before police engagement. The motive was primarily infamy-seeking. The attacker conducted surveillance and targeted high-occupancy areas such as offices and sanctuary spaces.

In all three cases, insider knowledge and pre-operational reconnaissance were significant enablers. The pattern of three shootings at faith-based schools within three years highlights the elevated threat environment for these institutions. Reconnaissance as part of the hostile event attack cycle (HEAC), consistent with findings from the [Gate 15 Hostile Event Attack Cycle \(HEAC\) White Paper](#). Below are some resources to consider

- [School Safety and Security page](#)
- [Active Shooter Preparedness Materials](#)
- [CISA Pathway to Violence Fact Sheet](#)
- [Behavioral Approach to Violence Prevention](#)

Spotlight: FB-ISAO Education!

We've held a series of discussions on two important topics, and we are getting ready to launch a third!! If you haven't participated in previous sessions, please consider joining the upcoming sessions as soon as they are announced. Even though our sessions are recorded and made available to all members, there's nothing like being part of the conversation where you can share your own experiences and more importantly ask questions!!

- The next series of discussion will focus on the intelligence function. We'll talk about the importance of understanding how intelligence informs your resilience building activities.
- Previous sessions addressed [FireArms in the House](#) and [Standing Up Teams](#).
- Our recording library is available on FB-ISAO Slack.

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with a friend!**