

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMERGENCY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

A RESOURCE GUIDE: FOREST LAKES DISTRICT EFCA  
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**Below you will find a list of highly recommended policies that every church should create and communicate.**

## BOUNDARIES-

Your staff team should have a very clear policy on "Boundaries" adopted by the board of oversight. These policies include financial, moral and interpersonal boundaries. It should be clearly communicated that any boundaries that are not upheld will be dealt with immediately. These policies may apply to staff as well as volunteers.

## EMERGENCY 'CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP' PROCEDURE-

There should be very a clear pathway for reassignment of leadership or pulpit responsibility to be effective immediately in the case of a tragedy or illness that prevents leadership capabilities to be fulfilled. There should be minimal question in regards to who steps in when the lead pastor or ministry leader cannot attend to their duties - especially senior leadership or vital Sunday morning positions.

Regardless of the fact if your staff is a "one man show" or a large staff team, a "second in command" should be decided upon by leadership. There have been cases where a pastor abruptly resigns on a Thursday or a severe flu hits the teaching or worship pastor on Saturday evening.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCY IN THE BUILDING-

It is necessary to develop a specific plan if a medical emergency occurs in the building. This extends beyond Sunday morning. Think through responses to kid's programming, youth group, classes, etc. Aside from staff, use the medical expertise of regular attenders who have such training. It is important to identify several people trained to use a defibrillator if there is a heart attack in the building. You do have one?

## SECURITY PROCEDURES-

These are policies developed by the security team and approved by the board of oversight as to what to do when there is a breach of security or public danger because of an active shooter or invasion of a gathering of any kind. You do not want to be deciding on the spot. ALICE training is highly recommended.

## EMERGENCY IN THE PULPIT-

Even a very small church should have a plan and a person or team assigned in the case of someone approaching the pulpit for a questionable purpose. In addition, there should be a plan for what to do if the pastor/anyone on stage faints or has another medical emergency while up front. This role could be fulfilled by another staff person (if there is one) or a person near the pulpit who has security responsibilities & has been trained. Although these occurrences are rare, it is unwise to "play it by ear."

## FINANCIAL POLICIES FOR CHECK-WRITING AND HANDLING OF MONEY-

There are many churches where one person counts or handles the money & writes the checks. This should change immediately with written policies formed by a strong financial team and approved by the board of oversight. Having one person oversee the financials without a team for accountability and input is unwise.

## A 'TRAGEDY' SERMON-

A pastor on staff must have a sermon developed to use if a tragedy of major proportions happens the week before that Sunday. No one, the Sunday after 9/11, should have been preaching on Leviticus, James or continuing a sermon series. In times of tragedy, people need to be discipled and comforted with what God has to say about tragedy, pain, and the hope of Christ.

## LIABILITY AND EXEMPTION STATEMENTS IN THE CHURCH CONSTITUTION OR BY-LAWS-

Talk to your insurer to develop these statements.