



Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church

A Safer Accotink

Safety and Security Task Force Charge

August 2019

A. Background

A safe and secure church means that all of the people, places, property, programs and processes of the place of worship are functioning in a way that is as free from the potential for harm as possible, 24 hours per day, every day, in every service and activity.

At the same time, leaders, volunteers, and church members need to be ready to respond to a threat or emergency of any kind, get assistance, and help themselves and others. The primary issues that most churches face are actually theft or vandalism; however, plans need to be made for a number of other scenarios, including (but not limited to) physical and mental health crises, natural disasters, missing persons, fire, and violent events (e.g., active shooter, domestic disturbance).

The objective of this task force and associated policies, procedures, and training is to provide security without interfering with the core mission and activities of the church--in other words, to ***both protect the faithful and continue to be a welcoming community.***

B. Safety and Security Task Force Charge

The Safety and Security Task Force (SSTF) is charged with investigating best practices to improve the safety and security of Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church (AUUC) in the face of evolving emergency response, preparedness, and other safety needs. Additionally, the SSTF has responsibilities for long-term planning, implementation, training, and communication. As such, the SSTF will:

- Guide the development of policies, procedures, and emergency response documents.
- Work with police to do periodic security evaluations of the church.
- Identify and support a Security Response Team (SRT).
- Develop and conduct training of the entire congregation and the SRT.
- Think critically about current policies, communications, or activities that may affect church safety.
- Identify and recommend purchases or church modifications that will improve church safety and security.
- Communicate within and without the church, including the congregation, renters, others who use our facilities, and our neighbors.

The Task Force will function until it is no longer necessary when safety and security is integrated into the jobs of the congregation and staff of AUUC.

C. Task Force Composition

The Task Force will be composed of 2 to 5 congregational members or friends, with complementary backgrounds and interests in safety and security, based on training, professional skills, or other related expertise. When vacancies arise or as needed, new members or friends can be appointed to the task force with the approval of the Board of Directors. As congregational security and safety is of utmost importance to all, the Board of Directors (BOD) will need to be more intimately involved to help craft critical portions of the policies, procedures, and guidelines.

D. Task Force Oversight

The BOD will provide ongoing oversight of the Safety and Security Task Force. The Task Force will provide status reports to the BOD, at most, quarterly or, at least, semi-annually. Reporting will include:

- progress during the last 3-6 months;
- efforts planned for the following 3-6 months;
- issues resolved;
- open issues.

E. End Products

Products created by the SSRT will conform to AUUC policies. The products to be developed by the Task Force will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **AUUC's Safety and Security Guidelines** provide clear, whole-church-focused guidance; provide information to be used for training; and include Emergency Response Procedures that give clear direction in the case of an emergency.
- **Lock and Key Policies and Procedures** clarify policy and procedures regarding locks and keys, including a key control log to keep track of who has keys.
- **Safe Building Policy** to accumulate rules related to maintaining a safe premises in order to help protect the life, property, and security of the AUUC facility and all its occupants.
- **Building Lockup Checklist** to be used each time someone locks up the building.
- **Strategic Operations Plan** to identify plans for interruption of business due to unforeseen circumstances.
- **Emergency Preparedness Plan** describes procedures the church should take in anticipation of any emergency.
- **Community Response Guide** identifies how the church can help in a community or national crisis.

Approved by AUUC BOD: 8/15/19