



**RAMADAN – SAFETY and SECURITY**  
**REFERENCE GUIDE for MASAJID**  
*(Ramadan 1434 – July 2013)*

The following outline is meant for the security of the Masajid and safety of its congregants. We are happy to provide this as a reference document and we ask that you review this and modify it to your specific needs. Also, do not hesitate to call on Shura Council if you need any assistance to develop your own safety/security guide or if you have ideas that can benefit other Masajid.

It is said that “plans” may not matter, but “planning” always does. We strongly recommend that you should initiate the Ramadan Safety/Security planning at least a month before the beginning of Ramadan.

**Ramadan Safety/Security Committee (RSSC)**

1. Establish a Ramadan Safety/Security Committee (RSSC) if you do not already have one.
2. The RSSC size should be in proportion to the congregation size. Eg: A committee of 10 for a congregation of 100 may be too big and conversely a committee of 5 for a congregation of 200 or 500 may be too small.
3. Make sure the RSSC includes brothers and sisters.
4. The only criterion for the RSSC members is that they are committed to be available 24/7 in case of emergencies.
5. Make sure all RSSC members know each other and have each other’s contacts.
6. Establish a hierarchy/chain of command with alternates.
7. *If* you already have a committee, make sure they are ready and willing to serve this year and that their contacts are current.
8. Once a RSSC is in place, convene a meeting at least a month before Ramadan to go over all necessary details.
9. Establish RSSC meeting calendar for the month of Ramadan. We strongly suggest weekly face-to-face meeting, preferably on Thursday before the high volume traffic days of Friday to Sunday. We also recommend a standing-only 5 min. meeting every other day with as many or as few members that are available to meet at a predetermined time. Absent members be notified of any anomalies.
10. Review any and all security assets at the Masjid, such as:
  - (a) Radios (walkie-talkies). If you don’t have them, consider renting them for the month of Ramadan. Make sure they are always fully charged and all RSSC members know how to use them.
  - (b) Security Camera[s]: Make sure they are in good working condition and that their cover at least the following areas: "Pedestrian and Vehicular Entrances / Exits, including Emergency Entrance and Exits in the Masjid and Parking Lots." We strongly suggest you test them ahead of time to make sure of their coverage. And, make sure the data is properly being saved in order that it can be reviewed.
11. Designate a person[s] who will open and close the Masjid. Develop a log, which can be signed in and signed out each day by the person who opens and closes the Masjid.

## **Ramadan Safety/Security Protocols (RSSP)**

The RSSP must be developed as a result of internal discussions/review and may include the following:

1. Notify your local Police Department (PD) with Ramadan dates, schedules and your Masjid RSSC point of contact.
2. If possible visit the Police Chief or Sheriff or invite them to visit your Masjid and help you review the facility for advice.
3. Make sure you have your local PD point person[s] contact? His/Her name and daytime and emergency contact number[s].
4. If you know your local Chief of PD, invite him/her over dinner before Ramadan and if not initiate, establish and cultivate close contact.
5. Most police departments have a Watch Commander during the night. Know him/her and their direct contact numbers.
6. Repeat – items 1 to 5 for your local Fire Department.
7. Document any and all incidences for your Masjid's internal record.
8. Any incidence that involves physical altercation needs to be reported to the police. Before picking up the phone and calling the PD, write down your story (key points) as an exercise to make sure that what you're going to say is clear and concise. The PD's prefer specifics. Make sure what you say can also be backed up with witness[es].
9. Any incidence that involves hate crime (slurs/threats in person or via email/voice mail) be reported to the police; to Shura Council; CAIR and also to your local Human Relations Commission. Do not call FBI yourself. Let CAIR deal with FBI as it requires expertise.
10. Establish a protocol as to who would call the PD, assuming more than one RSSC member is always at the Masjid. We recommend that preferably either the person who has witnessed the incidence or the lead RSSC member should initiate and remain the point person with PD, until the matter is resolved.
11. Post all emergency telephone numbers (police, fire, Masjid RSSC lead among others) for the purposes of congregation and post them in visible places. Make it known to the congregation during high traffic time, before Taraweeh prayers start. And repeat this information at least once a week.
12. *If* your Masjid is using a friendly neighbor's parking lot, designate a person to periodically walk/drive through that parking lot and also designate a person[s] to chaperone congregants, especially sisters.
13. Make sure the friendly neighbors' parking lot has ample light and if any camera[s] etc. Make sure there are no legal obligations to use the friendly neighbors' parking lot and also make sure they don't incur any liabilities for allowing your congregants to use their space.
14. Urge your congregants to not bring and/or leave valuables (laptops, cameras, cell phones, GPS, Purses, etc) in the car, especially lying on the seat making it visible to passersby. This may invite/encourage desperate people to break in.
15. Insist people to "lock" their cars and make sure they are locked. Seasoned burglars pick on cars that are unlocked because if they're caught they can only be charged with a misdemeanor where as if they are caught breaking into a car it is considered to be burglar felony.
16. Your local yellow pages would be helpful to find local towing companies. Invite them to discuss and learn of their services and retain the right company for unforeseen circumstances.
17. Educate the congregation about parking violations and also about consequences and only then "enforce" them diligently.
18. Make sure your Masjid has sufficient emergency lights for emergencies.

19. Make sure all the exit doors are properly marked, lighted and always “unlocked” and that no cars are parked outside the exit door[s].
20. Draw up an evacuation plan and post it in public space. Take some time and brief the congregation to know about the evacuation plan (if and when necessary) and emphasize that they should always follow the instructions of the designated volunteers and/or security guards, firefighters, police officers, etc. Also, designate a meeting point post-evacuation away from the Masjid building.

### **Private Security Guards (PSG)**

Masajid may also consider hiring private security guards for the month of Ramadan. You may call Shura Council for references. Following may be used as a reference.

1. There are two types of security guards available, armed and unarmed. We recommend unarmed.
2. Also, security guards come with and without a uniform. We recommend uniformed.
3. Make sure the security firm that's supplying security guards is licensed and insured. Ask for a copy of the firm's license and a certificate of insurance.
4. Ask the security firm for references.
5. Interview the security firm and ask them to provide the same guards for the entire month of Ramadan.