



# MUSLIM COMMUNITY SAFETY KIT

## Step-by-Step Guide to Community Safety

*Assalamu Alaykum* / Peace be upon you,

This “Muslim Community Safety Kit” has been developed to assist you and your community to help prevent or respond to the unfortunate incident of an anti-Muslim incident. The kit is designed to better equip you with the knowledge necessary to protect against anti-Muslim bigotry or attacks, and to secure your basic legal rights.

Below are suggestions for pro-active steps you can take.

### **HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE KIT:**

1. Read this kit carefully.
2. Circulate to your friends and family.
3. Photocopy relevant portions and post in your local mosque, Islamic center or organization.
4. Contact NCCM if you have any questions, or if you do not understand any part of this kit.

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**REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY.** Muslims must do their part to ensure the safety and security of our nation. If anyone notes suspicious persons or activities in their community, they should report it immediately to their local police and/or the RCMP.

**DEVELOPING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.**

Community leaders should immediately coordinate meetings between representatives of the Muslim community and local law enforcement and the RCMP. These meetings should focus on ways in which the community can help national security and on how authorities can protect Canadian Muslims from harassment and discrimination.

**MEET WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS COMMUNITY CONCERNS.** Delegations of Muslim community representatives should schedule meetings with local, provincial and federal elected officials or their key staff to discuss community concerns. Contact NCCM to assist you.

**BUILD COALITIONS WITH INTERFAITH AND MINORITY GROUPS.** Similar meetings should be coordinated with representatives of local interfaith and minority groups. These meetings should focus on building lines of communication and support, and hearing from these groups how they deal with discrimination and bigotry.

**MEET WITH LOCAL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS TO DISCUSS STUDENT SAFETY.**

Representatives of the Muslim community should meet with local school administrators to discuss safety plans for students and to sensitize the administrators to harassment of Muslim students. Contact NCCM to assist you.

**BUILDING AN EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST.** Community leaders should develop emergency e-mail and phone contact lists to be used in case of an incident that threatens the community's safety. Local imams, Islamic center board members, and community leaders should be on the lists. A second list should be developed containing contact information for all local law enforcement agencies.

**HOLD A COMMUNITY MEETING TO INFORM OTHERS OF SAFETY GUIDELINES.** Call for a meeting of the local Muslim community to discuss the information outlined in this kit. The meeting should take place at a local mosque or Islamic center and should be advertised using the emergency contact list.

**ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK.** Establish a network of community members who can offer emotional and material support to those who may be the victims of hate crimes or discrimination. Victims should not be left alone to deal with the negative impact of such incidents.

**REACTING TO INCIDENTS OF ANTI-MUSLIM HATE.** If you believe you have been the victim of an anti-Muslim hate crime or discrimination, you should:

1. Report the incident to your local police and/or the RCMP immediately. Ask that the incident be treated as a hate crime. Ask witnesses to give you their name and contact information.
2. Inform NCCM, even if you believe it is a “small” incident. **TEL: 1.866.524.0004, FAX: 613.254.9810, E-MAIL: info@nccm.ca**
3. Document the incident. Write down exactly what was said and/or done by the offender. Save evidence. Take photographs.
4. Act quickly. Each incident must be dealt with when it happens, not when convenient.
5. Decide on the appropriate action to be taken. Consider issuing a statement from community leaders, holding a news conference, organizing a protest, meeting with officials, or starting a letter writing campaign.
6. Mobilize community support. Contact NCCM.
7. Stay on top of the situation.
8. Announce results. When the incident is resolved, make an announcement to the same people and organizations originally contacted.

### **MOSQUE SECURITY GUIDELINES**

Areas of Vulnerability:

- \* Mosques located in isolated areas.
- \* Mosques left unattended for extended periods of time.
- \* Mosques with unsecured doors and/or windows.
- \* Absence of a burglar alarm system.
- \* Heavy exterior vegetation (shrubs, etc.) in which criminals may hide.
- \* Absence of exterior lighting.

#### **Take the following safety measures:**

1. Build good relationships with neighbours of the mosque. Invite them to visit your centre.

2. Try to have people attend the mosque as much as possible. Activity deters perpetrators.
3. Make an appointment with the community relations officer of your local police department to tour your center and make suggestions on improving mosque security.
4. Request additional police patrols in the vicinity of your center. Special attention should be paid to times of darkness and during prayers.
5. Consider creating a security committee at your mosque.
6. Post mosque members at entrances and parking areas during prayer times.
7. Report suspicious packages to police. Do not touch them. Install perimeter floodlights outside the mosque.
8. Install fire and burglar alarm systems.
9. Replace hollow core doors with more secure solid doors. Install burglar-proof bars on screens and large vents.  
(**Note** - Research municipal and local regulations before beginning security renovations.)
10. Trim shrubs and vines to reduce areas of concealment.
11. Participate in neighbourhood watch programs.
12. Document descriptions of suspicious people or vehicles. Make duplicates of all important papers, computer disks and records.
13. Remove potential fire hazards, such as trash and debris. Consider installing security cameras.

**CONTACT:** NCCM, tel: 1.866.524.0004, email: [info@nccm.ca](mailto:info@nccm.ca)