



# **SAFETY BEST PRACTICES**

## **FOR**

### **PUBLIC PLACES, HOME, OFFICE, AND VEHICLE**

Below is a list of tips and best practices to enhance your personal safety and awareness. It is no means an exhaustive list, and as always, vigilance and awareness of your surroundings is your best defense.

#### **PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS:**

**Stay alert, confident, and aware of your surroundings. Walk purposefully and make eye contact with people around you. Trust your instincts.**

**Keep your head and eyes scanning the areas you are passing through, stay off your phone and don't text while walking, as it distracts your attention and exposes you to a variety of threats (traffic, uneven surfaces, criminals).**

**Avoid alleys, short cuts and vacant lots. Stick to well-lit, busy streets.**

**Walk with a companion whenever possible.**

**When possible wear shoes and clothing that will not hinder an escape. Sneakers are best, shoes with low heels are your second best bet. Keep a pair in the car if you are going to be out on your way home from work. If you wear high heels and are pursued, kick them off and run barefoot.**

**Avoid displaying large amounts of cash. Use ATM's during daylight hours only.**

**Try not to carry a lot of packages at once, as this makes you an easy target.**

**If you carry a purse, don't dangle it by your side in such a way that a thief can run by you and grab it. Carry your purse close to your body, preferably in front.**

**If a car approaches you while you are walking, and you are harassed by the occupants, scream and run in the opposite direction so that the driver will have to turn around to pursue you**

**If you think you are being followed, abruptly change directions, stay in a well-lit area, and seek safety in a public building, that will give you an opportunity to reevaluate the situation. Then call someone to have a safety communications line open and pass the following information to them, where you are at, and who appears to be following you. If it seems appropriate call the Police.**

**A small but powerful keyring mounted flashlight can help you see in dark areas and can be a great deterrent to people that approach you too closely in an aggressive manner (shine it directly into their pupils and then run away). A safety whistle is also a great way to scare off attackers or draw attention/help to a dangerous situation.**



## VEHICLE SAFETY:

Park in open, well lit, and busier areas. If possible, park close to the entrance of your home, office, or any places you frequent.

When approaching your parked car have your keys handy, so you aren't distracted trying to get them.

Scan the area around your parked car and the surrounding cars for people hiding or hanging around with no obvious purpose. Check the back seat/cargo area of your vehicle for persons that may be hiding as you get ready to enter your vehicle.

Don't leave any valuables in your vehicle, or at the very least keep them out of sight or secured in your trunk, as visible items are tempting to car prowlers.

If your vehicle has an auto unlock feature, disable the auto unlock feature on all the doors (if possible) except for the driver door, that way if you are hurrying to get into your vehicle in an emergency, you don't give access to someone hiding or chasing you.

If being chased, assaulted, etc., near your vehicle, hit the panic button on your key fob to attract attention to your situation. If you see someone that you don't know or have issues with at your vehicle, immediately go back to your last place of safety and call the Police.

When driving to and from home, work, or other frequently visited places, try to vary the routes taken or at the very least be aware of multiple ways to get to and from these places, that way you are less predictable and know alternate ways to get to where you need to be.

If you think you are being followed, drive to a public place or a police or sheriff station.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AWARENESS:

Be aware of what you post on the Internet, you never know who is looking at your information. It could be stalkers, future employers, recruiters, family, etc.

Consider locking down access to your social media platforms to only close family and friends, as open pages can be used to gather a lot of personal information on you, your life patterns or that of family or friends.

If you need those platforms for work, keep a separate personal one that is more secure for your personal business, and keep the work ones focused in that realm.

## HOME SAFETY:

Consider installing a home camera/alarm system with DVR/Cloud recorded cameras. Include a doorbell with video & sound capability so you can observe who is there and speak with them without opening your door.

Deadbolts with long throws and extra-long screws that make it well into the door jamb/framing, should be on any exterior entry door. Glass slider type doors should have wood dowels in the slider tracks or frame locks that prevent the slider from being lifted off the rails to gain entry. Protective window films can be applied to doors and windows if you feel the need for additional security or have a particularly vulnerable window or door.

Foliage around windows, and entry doors should be trimmed, so you can view those areas easily from inside the home, and so that it does not provide criminals an easy place to hide from view.

Be very careful with or refrain from leaving any spare keys hidden around the exterior of your home.

Well-lit home exteriors are a great deterrent to criminals who like to hide near darkened homes.

Beware of Dog, or Home Alarm signs can be a deterrent, even if you don't have either of the aforementioned items.

Home light timers are an effective way to provide lighting in at least a few exterior or interior areas, so your home isn't completely dark when you are away, and to avoid entry into a completely dark home.

Have rehearsed family plans in place for fire, earthquake, or other issues, along with at least some minimal emergency supplies.

## WORKPLACE SAFETY:

Many of the previously mentioned tips in the personal, vehicle, and home safety apply here.

Don't take early or late meetings that would leave you alone with persons you don't know, or if it is an offsite meeting, not at public place, take someone with you.

Know where the emergency exits at work are and be familiar with any safety plans that your work adheres to.

For workplace violence situations remember the progressive process of RUN (away from the business if possible), HIDE (behind a substantial locked and barricaded door if you can't run away), and FIGHT (like your life depends on it if you are in close proximity to the assaultive suspect).

Report to your management if a co-worker is making threats of violence or exhibiting other worrisome behavior.