# Crime Prevention/Safety Tips for Your Business

## When do you call 911?

When to call 911?

- Threats to life, property, or public safety
- Emergency incidents
- Medical or behavioral emergencies
- Anytime a crime has just been committed or is in progress

What to tell 911?

- Call from a safe location. If you can't call, text 911.
- If you speak a language other than English, repeat your language or dialect to the call taker and wait until an interpreter joins the call.
- Do not hang up until the call taker says too.
- Explain the situation, it's ok to say "I don't know"
    - Where are you? Street name, nearby business, or landmark.
    - Describe the suspect and victim.
    - Was there a weapon?

## What to do in case of a robbery?

During incident:

- Don't argue or resist – it could put your safety at risk.
- Cooperate quickly and completely – criminals are unpredictable and may be armed
- Pay attention to person's physical appearance, the number of people and any vehicles involved
- Call 911 as soon as you safely can

After incident:

- Don't touch anything until police arrive
- Write down anything you can remember about the incident: a description of the people, vehicles involved and any other details.
- Immediately review and export video/image evidence from DVR or cloud. Make sure staff know how to access video.
- Alert neighbors so they can secure their business and notify police if they notice anything suspicious.

## Non-emergency contacts

Connect with CID neighborhood's community safety resources:

- **Monica Ly,** Seattle Police Dept. C-ID Liaison | 206-369-0489
- **Barbara Biondo,** Seattle Police Dept. West Precinct Crime Prevention | 206-233-0015
  Contact SPD Crime Prevention to schedule a free security assessment for practical ideas on burglary/theft prevention and workplace safety tailored to your business and location: Barbara.biondo@seattle.gov or 206.233.0015.

## Business Safety Tips: Exterior

Many exterior alterations including lighting, painting, or cameras require a Certificate of Approval before you make changes. Contact the Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods, ISRD Coordinator at 206-684-0226.

**Maintain clear lines of sight into your business from the street**. An unobstructed view into your business allows people and passing police patrols to see that it is safe.

- Open sightlines into and out from your business by removing boards, posters and blinds, tree limbs, or foliage that block storefront windows.
- Display your business name and street address so it's clearly visible from the street day and night. Post emergency contact information on the front and back entrance.
- Sign up for Seattle Police Criminal Trespass Program and prominently post Conditions of Entry (COE) signs at all pedestrian and vehicle entrances.

**Routine care and maintenance of a property signals a welcoming and safe environment.**

- Promptly remove graffiti, using appropriate methods.*
- Repair damaged doors or windows and remove outdated, faded, posters and displays.
- Replace burnt out lights and damaged signs.
- Clean up litter, rake leaves and keep walkway and sidewalks around your business clear.
- Secure trash and recycle containers, or store inside business or secure enclosure.

**Enhance security features that help deter intrusion, vandalism, and other unwanted activity.**

- Use security grade locks with latch guards to cover gaps that could be used to pry doors open.
- Install security film on storefront windows to reduce chances of intrusion.
- Make sure windows that can be opened are locked when you close your business.
- Explore installing a commercial, security-grade "scissor" or pull-down gate entrance but allows you to see into the space.
- Limit access to unmonitored areas such as stairwells, loading docks, roof tops, utility, or HVAC access (check fire code and utilities before restricting access)

**Manage access and monitor parking lots to deter criminal and other unwanted activity**.

- Post signage at parking entrance with information on who may use the parking lots, hours of use and any other restrictions explained in a clear and culturally relevant manner.
- Monitor activity around your business by frequently checking, walking through your business including alley entrances and parking areas. Address issues before they become problems.
- Close access to parking lots after business hours.

**Lighting is the number one deterrent for crime during nighttime hours.**

- Make sure all building entryways are well lit and light is directed toward the threshold.
- Add light under awnings and around the building perimeter, including parking lots, rear exits, trash storage areas and recessed alcove entrances.
- Light all parking lots, including surface lots and underground parking. Be sure exterior light fixture height and angle directs light to the ground so light does not shine directly into your eyes. Maintain low level lighting in building interior after business is closed to allow people – including passing police patrols – to see the business is secure.

## Business Safety Tips: Interior

- Greet customers, keep an eye on activity to signal potential shoplifters they are being monitored.
- Limit access points to your business so staff can monitor entry/exit. Use door chimes to alert you when people enter and leave. Lock doors when not open or restocking.
- Locate your Point-of-Sale near entrance, clearly visible from outside.
- Keep small amounts of cash – empty the register at night. Post signs that say there is no or low cash access. Vary times and routes when depositing at bank.
- Store iPads and other items of value out of reach of customers.
- Anchor tips jars to the counter and empty frequently.
- Keep shelving low so you can observe all areas of your store. Use mirrors and cameras to cover blind spots.
- Place height markers at all exits.
- Relocate, lock, limit quantity of high value or frequently stolen items.

**Security cameras*:**

Security cameras and CCTV are most effective when used with other crime prevention/deterrence strategies such as lighting, access control and attentive customer service.

- High-quality video images can aid law enforcement investigations. Cameras ideally have minimum of 4MP (1440P) resolution and cover the store perimeter and parking areas. Assess cameras for coverage, if there is a lot of overlap you are wasting the potential to cover more area around your business.
- Interior cameras ideally will cover all Point-of-Sale locations and the sales floor with targeted coverage of vulnerable locations and where alcohol or other high value items are displayed.
- Cameras are placed to have clear sightlines and are angled to capture faces at entry and exit.
- Vandal proof housing is recommended for cameras in vulnerable locations.
- Consider having monitors showing the live view of a security camera system where employees can observe it while doing other tasks.

**Prepare your team: Your people are your most important asset. Take steps to protect them and your business.**

- Create an action plan and prepare/train your team to respond safely to situations they may confront at work, from angry customers, and shoplifters to a robbery or potentially threatening situations developing outside of your business.
- Be vigilant and report crimes or suspicious behavior immediately to 911.

Remember lives are more important than property. Make sure that everyone knows important information like how to lock down or evacuate the building in an emergency.

## Work with your neighbors:

- Get to know neighbors who live or work near your business
- Share information with each other concerning crime and safety issues
- Look out for each other. Report if you witness criminal or suspicious activity on your block and ask your neighbors to do the same.