

# PUBLIC SAFETY BULLETIN: Commercial Robbery Prevention Tips

Preventing a commercial robbery requires a comprehensive security strategy that involves the efforts of business owners, managers and employees. Knowing what to do before, during and after a commercial robbery will help protect your property, avert expensive losses and create an environment where all those working in the business feel safer.



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## Before a Robbery

- Keep front doors and windows clear of signs and posters to allow for two-way visibility. Trim landscaping to ensure employees can see outside the business and customers can see inside the business.
- Keep the outside of the business well-lit at night. Ensure there is sufficient lighting all the way around the property, including any rear or side alleyways.
- Install video surveillance and make its existence well known to customers. Use cameras or mirrors to observe all areas of the store and try to avoid any “blind spots.” The equipment should allow for a 360-degree view of the exterior.
- Place a surveillance camera behind the cash register and facing the front counter.
- Through the FUSIS system, share real-time security video footage with the police.
- Maintain a clean environment – it’s good for business and uncomfortable for robbers.
- Post signs indicating “limited cash on hand.”
- Greet everyone who enters. Be alert for customers who seem to be loitering or glancing around the store without a clear purpose.
- Never allow individuals to loiter or panhandle outside of the store.
- Do not allow employees to congregate in one area. Ensure they are spread out and aware of their surroundings.
- If you or any employees see someone who is acting suspiciously inside or outside, call the police to investigate. Never allow individuals to wear ski masks or other clothing that covers their faces (Covid is over). Ask customers who are wearing sunglasses inside your store at night to remove them.
- Keep side and back doors locked. Employees should use the main entrance, if possible.
- Place markers at the entrance that employees can use to help gauge the height of a robber as they leave.
- Make bank deposits as often as possible, but never less than once a day.
- Have a panic or hold-up alarm installed in your business.
- Ensure the video camera is set to the correct date and time, the system is always functioning properly and that store managers are familiar with how to operate it.

## During a Robbery

- Stay calm and do not resist!
- Do as instructed. Do not make sudden moves.
- Keep your hands in sight at all times.
- Get a look at the robber but do not stare. Do your best to look for something distinctive about the suspect(s).
- Do your best to remember the type of weapon used (the color and shape of the weapon) and any distinguishing characteristics.
- Get a description of the robber's vehicle and direction of travel, if it is safe to do so.
- Activate the panic alarm only when it is safe.
- Personal safety first! Money and merchandise are not important and can be replaced.
- Do not chase or follow the robber out of the place of business. Let the police catch the robber.

## After a Robbery

- Close the store and lock the doors.
- Call 911! Stay on the line with the 911 operator.
- Do not touch anything the robber may have touched.
- Ask witnesses to stay until the police arrive.
- Step outside only after the police have arrived.
- Call the business owner, manager or other designated person.
- Do not discuss the amount of money taken with anyone other than the police.



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