

• Remember, if another employee suddenly walks into the middle of a robbery in progress and startles the robber, it could lead to violence. Discuss this problem situation with your employees and develop a policy and procedure for handling situations like this, based on good common sense and the sound and prudent judgement of your employees;

- Handle cash carefully. Avoid making your business a tempting target for robbers. Keep the amount of cash in registers low. Remove and place all large bills in your "money" safe as soon as possible. If a customer tries to pay with a large bill, politely ask if he or she has a smaller one. Explain that you keep very little cash on hand;
- Use only one register at night. Leave other registers empty and open. Tilt the register drawer to show there is no money in it;
- Leave blinds and drapes open when your business is closed. This allows police officers to visually inspect the inside of your business. It also makes it more difficult for criminals to conceal themselves and their criminal activities;
- If your business is robbed put your safety first. Don't resist an armed robber. Your personal safety is more important than money or merchandise;
- Don't talk except to answer the robber's questions;
- Don't stare directly at the robber;
- Don't make any sudden moves and keep your hands in sight at all times, if the robber thinks you're reaching for a weapon or alarm button your actions and furtive movements may lead the robber to violence;
- Don't chase or follow the robber out of your place of business; and
- Leave the job of catching the robber to the police.



You may contact the Los Angeles Police Department by calling the following, toll free, at 1-877-ASK-LAPD (1-877-275-5273) or TTY 1-877-275-5273 for the hearing impaired. You may also obtain additional information on this subject, along with additional crime prevention tips, by visiting the Los Angeles Police Department's Web site at www.lapdonline.org and clicking on the "Crime Prevention Tips" icon.

Should you have information regarding a criminal investigation or activity, please contact your local police station or the LAPD crime hotline at 1-877-LAWFULL (1-877-529-3855).

Los Angeles Police Department
Community Relations Section
Crime Prevention Unit
150 North Los Angeles Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 485-3134
www.lapdonline.org

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Robbery Prevention

www.lapdonline.org



Teamwork, crime prevention education and businesses working together with the police can help to reduce the likelihood of robbery. Every business owner, manager and employee plays a part in making businesses safe.

Here are some things you can do to help prevent robbery

- Have at least two employees open and close the business;
- Do not release personal information to strangers;
- Keep purses and personal valuables locked in desks or lockers;
- Install a robbery alarm;
- Place a surveillance camera behind the cash register facing the front counter. Replace videotapes regularly;
- Place excess money in a safe or deposit it as soon as possible;
- Avoid routine bank transactions, rotate banking days and vary times and routes of travel for bank deposits. Have two employees make the deposit, with one employee designated to be vigilant of suspicious persons or activity. If followed while enroute to make a deposit, drive to a busy area or the nearest police or fire station for assistance. Park as close as possible to the location where the deposit is being made. Report all suspicious activities to bank management or staff;

- Don't use marked "moneybags" that make it obvious to would-be robbers you are carrying money for deposit. Carry money in nondescript carriers;

- Keep a low balance in the cash register;

- Cooperate with the robber for your own safety and the safety of others. Comply with a robber's demands. Remain calm and think clearly. Make mental notes of the robber's physical description and other observations important to law enforcement officers;
- If you have a silent alarm and can reach it without being noticed, use it. Otherwise, wait until the robber leaves;
- Be careful, most robbers are just as nervous as you are;
- Personal appearance, dressing appropriately and being neat and clean also "sends a strong message" to robbers that you and your staff are professionals who are alert and prepared to handle any situation;
- Stay alert! Know who is in your business and where they are. Watch for people who hang around without buying anything. Also, be aware of suspicious activity outside your place of business. Write down license numbers of suspicious vehicles if visible from the inside of your business;
- Make sure the sales counter can be seen clearly. Don't put up advertisements, flyers, displays, signs, posters or other items on windows or doors that might obstruct the view of the cash register from inside or outside your business. The police driving by your store need to see in;
- Try to greet customers as they enter your business. Look them in the eye, and ask them if they need help. Your attention can discourage a robber;
- Keep your business well-lit, inside and outside. Employees should report any burned-out lights to the business owner or manager. Keep trees and bushes trimmed, so they don't block any outdoor lights;
- Encourage the police to stop by your business;
- Learn the names of the officers who patrol your area;
- There are many Business Watch groups and associations throughout the City of Los Angeles.

Make an effort to contact the Los Angeles Police Department, Community Relations Office in your area and inquire about how to join a local Business Watch group and to get involved.

Joining a Business Watch group can be a valuable resource to keep you informed about local crime problems and to provide you with valuable crime prevention information to better protect your business and employees;

- Be cautious when cleaning the parking lot or taking out the trash at night. Make sure another employee inside the business keeps you within sight while you are involved in work details outside of your building;
- If you see something suspicious, call the police. Never try to handle it yourself. It could cost you your life;
- Make sure important signs stay posted. For example, the front door should bear signs that say, "Clerk Cannot Open the Time Lock Safe;"

After the Robbery

- Lock your business;
- Ask any witnesses to stay until the police arrive;
- Call the police and remain on the telephone;
- Call your business owner, manager, or other designated person;
- Call the security hotline, if applicable;
- Don't touch anything the robber may have touched; and
- Write down an accurate description of the robber, weapon, property taken, vehicle and its license plate number as soon as you are able to do so.

