



**December, 2022**

Crime — burglary, robbery, and vandalism — can be particularly devastating to small businesses in terms of money, customers, and employee safety. Through crime prevention, business owners can protect their assets as well as their employees. Laying a foundation for prevention, business owners should take a hard look at their businesses in areas such as physical layout, number of employees, hiring practices, and overall security to determine vulnerability to various kinds of crime, from burglary to embezzlement. Once this step has been taken, crime prevention measures can then be implemented.

### **Before A Robbery**

- Keep your 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 your 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.
- 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 your store. Call the police to report that you would like them to leave.

- Keep side and back doors locked. Have employees use the main entrance, if possible.
- Place markers at the entrance that employees can use to help gauge the height of a robber as he leaves.
- 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 store managers are familiar with how to operate it.

### **During A Robbery**

- Stay calm and don't resist!
- Do as instructed. Don't make sudden moves.
- Keep your hands in sight at all times.
- Get a look at the robber but don't 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!
- Don't chase or follow the robber out of your place of business. Let the police catch the robber. There are cameras around town that will help with this process.

### **After A Robbery**

- Close the store and lock the doors.
- Call 911!! Stay on the line with the 911 operator.
- Don't touch anything the robber may have touched.
- Ask witnesses to stay until the police arrive.