

Protecting Your Safety



CYRUS R. VANCE, JR.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY





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Dear Friends,

There is no failsafe way to protect yourself against being the victim of a crime. However, there are a number of measures you can take to significantly lower your risk. Above all, it is important that you stay aware of your surroundings and avoid situations that make you feel uncomfortable or unsafe. This brochure provides you with some specific tips to help keep you safe.

Sincerely,

Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.

PROTECTING YOUR HOME

Entering Your Home

- When you come home, and especially if you are carrying packages, be sure to have the key to your door in hand and look around for strangers before entering.

Strangers at Your Residence

- Do not let strangers into your apartment building, even if it may seem rude. If a stranger wants to get into your building, tell him or her to use the intercom.
- Do not get into an elevator with anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable. Wait for the next elevator or for one of your neighbors.
- Do not open your door unless you are sure of who is there. Ask to see identification if someone you do not know claims to be there for a legitimate purpose, such as a house repair.

Protecting Your Home While You Are Away

- If you are going to be away for several days at a time, make sure to leave indications that you are still at home. The best approach is to put timers on certain lights or electronic appliances; set them to remain off during the day but on in the evenings. Arrange for mail, newspapers, and restaurant take-out menus to get picked up, and give trustworthy neighbors your emergency contact information.
- If you ever arrive home and suspect that you have been burglarized, call the police immediately. Do not go inside.

Pickpockets

- Carry your purse under your arm or keep your wallet in a front (preferably zippered) pocket. Busy shoppers are especially easy targets for pickpockets.
- Pickpockets often work in teams, with one person creating a distraction while the other takes your property. If someone is distracting you or demanding your attention, make sure your property is secure.
- Do not take out a wad of money when you pay for items. This will only advertise to pickpockets how much money you have and where you put the money after you have paid.
- When in a restaurant, keep your purse on your lap, not on the floor or on the back of your chair.

ATM Crime

- Especially at night, use ATMs that are indoors and that require you to swipe your card to enter the ATM area.
- Shield others' view of the keypad as you type in your PIN number.
- Put away your card, money, and receipt as soon as you finish your transaction.
- Do not spend time at the ATM counting your money.

Robberies

- Try not to walk alone at night, especially in unfamiliar areas. Walk in areas that tend to be well-lit and well-trafficked.
- If someone with a weapon is trying to rob you, do not try to fight back. Depending on the circumstances, you may want to consider running to safety. But as a general rule, no amount of money or valuables is worth risking your life for.

Bag Snatchers and "Helpful" Strangers

- Do not carry an excessive number of shopping bags or packages at once. They make it difficult for you to react to your surroundings and guard against potential bag snatchers.
- Be wary of a stranger offering to help you with your packages. That person may be trying to take your packages or distract you in order to steal other items of yours.
- To avoid being the victim of a push-in robbery or burglary, never let a stranger carry packages back to your residence for you or accompany you home for any other reason. What may seem a generous act can actually be a way for a thief to forcibly enter your home and steal money or other valuables from you. You also run the risk of becoming the victim of a sex crime.

Subways

- Do not ride the subway alone at night. Even when traveling with companions, during off-peak hours it is best to sit in the conductor's car on the subway or in the front of the bus.
- Sitting in the center of a subway car, as opposed to near a door, makes a purse or wallet snatch more difficult to pull off.
- Do not be fooled by commotion or distractions intended to divert your attention away from your belongings.

Driving

- Have your keys ready before you get to your car. The less time you spend standing still, digging through your pockets or purse, the better.
- Keep all valuables out of sight. With the exception of a purse, which should be kept on the floor of the car, put in the trunk anything that a thief might find remotely attractive.
- Never leave your car with the key in the ignition, no matter how quickly you expect to return to the car.

Drinking and Driving

- DO NOT drink and drive!
- If you do drink, make sure you can find a ride home with someone who has not been drinking.
- Do not let someone who has been drinking drive you home.
- Whether you are a driver or a pedestrian, be wary at all times of other potential drunk drivers. Drunk drivers are often recognizable by their tendency to weave in and out of driving lanes or disobey traffic rules and regulations.

In an Emergency

- CALL 911!

Manhattan District Attorney's Office

- If you would like additional safety advice, please call the Community Affairs Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office at 212.335.9082.

New York City Information and Services

- If you need services or information from the city, call 311.

Local Precinct

- Call your local precinct regarding concerns within your precinct.

1st Precinct	212.334.0611
5th Precinct	212.334.0711
6th Precinct	212.741.4811
7th Precinct	212.477.7311
9th Precinct	212.477.7811
10th Precinct	212.741.8211
13th Precinct	212.477.7411
Midtown South Precinct	212.239.9811
Midtown North Precinct	212.767.8400
17th Precinct	212.826.3211
19th Precinct	212.452.0600
20th Precinct	212.580.6411
Central Park Precinct	212.570.4820
23rd Precinct	212.860.6411
24th Precinct	212.678.1811
25th Precinct	212.860.6511
26th Precinct	212.678.1311
28th Precinct	212.678.1611
30th Precinct	212.690.8811
32nd Precinct	212.690.6311
33rd Precinct	212.927.3200
34th Precinct	212.927.9711
114th Precinct	718.626.9311