



Community Organization, Inc.

Commercial Robbery

Commercial robbery is a frightening and potentially dangerous situation. These types of crimes can make a victim of the business, its employees, and even its customers. Always keep in mind, your money and property can be replaced but you cannot -- is it really worth your life?

Prevention Strategies: Unlike property crimes such as burglary, you can't prevent a robbery merely by locking up your valuables. But you can dissuade potential robbers by minimizing temptation and maximizing the chance of being caught. Develop policies for prevention and what to do in the event of a robbery and its aftermath. Ensure employees are familiar with the policies and abide by them.

- Greet customers as they enter your business.
- Have written policies on opening and closing procedures then abide by them.
- Post signs that your business keeps a limited amount of money in registers.
- Lock back and side doors to prevent surreptitious entry. Panic bar style locks will allow for exit during emergencies while preventing unauthorized entry.
- Do not clutter front windows so that passersby are prevented from looking in especially the cash register area. Robbers are less likely to strike if they can be easily seen while committing the crime.
- Conspicuously display security alarm signs.
- Alert law enforcement immediately of suspicious people on or around your business.

What if a robbery happens: Even with every precaution, your business may at some time be the victim of a robbery. What you do during a robbery can affect your safety and the chances of catching the criminal committing the robbery.

- If the robber claims to have a weapon, believe him/her. If the robber displays a weapon, believe it is real!
- Cooperate with the robber's demands and do not argue.
- Tell the robber of any moves you must make to comply before moving - No Overt Moves.
- Be observant - be a good witness (do not put yourself in peril in order to observe).

It's over, what now?: After the robbery has occurred there are several things you can do to help law enforcement solve the crime. Your actions after the robbery are as important as those taken to prevent it and those during the event.



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- Lock the doors, secure the area, and call 9-1-1 immediately. Stop all regular business transactions.
- Preserve the crime scene from contamination. You would not want to wipe away a latent fingerprint that might solve the crime.
- Ask any witnesses to remain on scene for law enforcement to interview and encourage them not to discuss the event among themselves. Try to get the name and contact information for any witnesses who cannot remain at the scene.
- Write down what you recall and have other witnesses do the same.

Describing the Suspect:

- Height:
 - Think about how tall you are and was the suspect your height, taller, or shorter?
 - Then estimate the suspect's height
- Weight:
 - Think about how much you weigh and was the suspect about your weight, thinner, or heavier?
 - Then estimate the suspect's weight
- Complexion:
 - Was the suspect's complexion fair, dark, or swarthy?
- Hair:
 - What color was it?
 - How long was it?
 - How was it styled?
 - If the suspect's head was shaved or he was bald, say so.
- Clothing:
 - Go from feet to the head and describe the suspect's:
 - Shoes
 - Pants
 - **Suspects will remove hats, shirts, and coats, but they will rarely have the opportunity to change their pants and shoes.**
 - Shirt
 - Coat
 - Hat

Robbery Do's and Don'ts

- Don't panic and remain calm!
- Don't resist.
- Don't try to apprehend the robber.
- Do activate your silent alarm when it is safe.
- Do use bait money or dye packs if available.