



Knowsley Council
Employee Guide to Personal Safety

General information:

Health and Safety **at Work** is both an Employer and Employee responsibility as required by legislation. However when commuting to and from the workplace and when you are not at work health and safety becomes a **personal responsibility**.

There are many complex issues involved in tackling crime and disorder and many organisations offer guidance and advice on how to deal with potential situations that may arise and where to seek support following a distressing incident.

Although Employers have no statutory duty to protect employees who are not at work, the information contained in this guidance may help you to avoid the circumstances that may lead to an unpleasant, distressing or violent incident.

Situation Avoidance:

The best strategy for avoiding potential situations is to anticipate the risks and plan ahead. Consider the following information when calculating the risks, especially if you intend working late, attending evening meetings or are unavoidably detained on appointments or visits; all of which may require you to return to work to collect your vehicle after dark.

Plan Ahead:

If you are unable to park close to your workplace at the start of the day, consider moving your vehicle close to where you work at a later time in the day. Therefore avoiding a long walk back to your vehicle or returning to your vehicle in poor light or isolated areas.

Always try to park in recognised car parks that are commonly used by colleagues. Avoid parking on waste ground that may be in an isolated area.

If you need to carry valuable equipment or sensitive information and documents back to your vehicle, arrange for an escort to go with you or arrange to bring your vehicle closer to your workplace location, whilst you load or unload.

An example may be to use the visitor's car park at a Municipal Building, briefly parking to load or unload your vehicle. This is generally possible after 4pm in the afternoon. There may be other adjacent car parks that could be utilised for short periods to take items to your vehicle, e.g. the ASDA car park in Huyton is free for 2hours.

If any of the above are not possible and you must take equipment, documents, personal valuables etc back to your vehicle always arrange for a colleague to go with you.

General Safety Advice When Out On Foot:

- Anticipate and assess the risk
- Strategy - have a plan
- Avoid high risk areas
- Never assume that it can't happen to you
- Evasion is the best tactic
- If in doubt proceed quickly to a busy area – escape routes are vital-look for them
- Shout - don't scream
- When out walking do so with **a confident attitude and purpose** and don't wait around unnecessarily; be aware of your surroundings by keeping a constant look out. Don't wear personal stereo headphones. If you are listening to music you won't be alert.
- Keep your hands out of your pockets; try to keep your strongest hand free. If you are laden down with bags, be prepared to drop them if confronted.
- Walk in the centre of the pavement or footpath. Stay away from doorways, alleyways and entrances or areas with overhanging shrubbery or undergrowth.
- Walk (as far as road safety permits) so that you are facing oncoming traffic. This will enable you to see vehicles as they approach you.
- If walking out at night, try to avoid walking alone, it is safer in a group.
- If you have to walk alone, especially after dark, then carry your personal alarm in your hand, not in your pocket or bag. If you need to use it you must be able to access it as quickly as possible.
- When nearing your vehicle or home get your keys out ready; select the key that you are going to need, prior to reaching your destination. When you have accessed your property or vehicle, secure the doors immediately to prevent others from following you into the property or your vehicle.
- Don't take short cuts through isolated, unfamiliar or poorly lit areas. Stick to familiar territory.
- Look for escape routes; make a mental note of where shops, pubs and public telephone boxes are along your route and any other places you could go if you should need assistance.
- If you wear jewellery, cover it up whilst walking.
- Don't carry more cash and valuables than you need to and never count money in the street. If you use a cash dispenser, take stock of your surroundings, take your money and put it out of sight and move away from the till as quickly as possible. Avoid using cash machines in badly lit areas.
- If you are using a public telephone, turn to face away from the receiver once you have dialled, keep looking around as you talk. Carry change and a phone card. Remember - dialling 999 costs nothing if you are in trouble.

- If someone stops you in the street and asks you for the time etc....., step back to give yourself space and bring your arm up to your face to look at your watch don't look down at your wrist to see the time, or say you don't have a watch and move quickly on.

Personal Safety Checklist

Out and About:

- Does anyone know where you are?
- If your travel plans change, do you tell your supervisor/colleagues?
- Do you/your Team undertake a routine check on people you are to meet - particularly if you are meeting them on your own?
- Have you made sure you can be contacted?
- Do you know exactly where you are going and how to get there?
- If you are returning home after dark, have you considered the possible risks (e.g. where you parked the car, the availability of public transport, etc.)?
- Are you likely to be carrying cash or valuable items?
- Are valuables the kind that can be easily stolen, can they be easily seen or are they easily accessible to a thief (e.g. Laptop or personal computer, mobile phone, tools, briefcase or handbag)
- Do you carry a personal alarm?

At your place of work

- Are you alone at work at all, especially if working late?
- Are there areas where you feel uneasy (e.g. poorly lit entrances, corridors or car parks, etc)?
- Is your office/work area a potential trap (e.g. possible escape route blocked by a desk, filing cabinet, shop counter etc)?
- If your work involves contact with the general public, do you know what to do if someone becomes aggressive?
- Do you report aggressive behaviour from clients or colleagues?

Other available information: Regarding, Violence at work and accident/incident reporting.

[Corporate Health and Safety Site](#)

[Crime and Disorder Unit](#)

Other Organisations links & Contact details:

[Merseyside Police](#) – If it's an emergency call **999**

If it's not an emergency or for general enquiries call **101**

If you're calling from outside Merseyside you can call us on **0151 709 6010**.

[The Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) - Tel: **0207 091 0014**