

UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND, BALTIMORE

SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

“SAFETY BEGINS WITH YOU”

- You are responsible for your own safety.
- General Approach to Safety
 - Reduce opportunities that make you a target.
 - Increase overall awareness of surroundings.
 - Trust your instincts.
 - Prepare your outing with safety in mind.

PREPARE BEFORE YOU DEPART

- Dress comfortably, but professionally.
- Think conservative.
 - Avoid wearing excessive jewelry.
 - Avoid wearing expensive jewelry & accessories.
 - Avoid high heels and open-toed shoes.
 - Avoid carrying large handbags/purses.
 - Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to arrive at your destination.

COMMUNITY SAFETY TIPS

- Carry your purse with the clasp-side inward toward your body.
- Carry your wallet in a front or inside pocket, not in a back pocket.
- Carry as little money or valuables as possible.
- Be aware of people arguing or asking for directions as a means to distract you.

WHEN WALKING

- Use well-lit areas and main streets.
- Avoid alleys and shortcuts.
- Plan your route in advance.
- Travel in groups when possible.
- Walk confidently. Avoid looking like a tourist.
- If you are followed or feel you are being followed, head toward an open and/or populated area.
- Avoid texting & talking on cell phone while walking.
- Don't carry your phone in plain sight and keep it set to silent or vibrate when you are in a public area.

WHEN DRIVING

- Plan ahead. Know the route to your destination. Have alternate routes in mind.
- Pay attention to your surroundings as you walk to your car.
- Look inside your car before you get in.
- Lock your car doors and keep your windows rolled up.
- Get gas in advance to avoid having to get gas in unfamiliar areas.
- When stopped in traffic maintain distance from the car in front of you so you can easily pass if necessary.
- Keep valuables out of sight. If possible put valuables in the trunk before leaving your home or office.
- Park so you can leave quickly if you have to.
- Scan your surroundings prior to getting out of the car.

IF VICTIMIZED

- Remain calm.
- The most valuable possession you own is your life.
- Stay within yourself.
- Don't escalate the situation.
- Do not try to follow the assailant.
- Call 911.
- Be ready to provide the following information:
 - The nature of the incident.
 - When and where the incident occurred.
 - Number of persons involved
 - Description, including:
 - › Names if known
 - › Sex | Race | Age
 - › Approximate height
(It helps to use your height as a comparison)
 - › Hair color / style
 - › Complexion
 - › Distinctive characteristics
(scars, tattoos, or physical defects)
 - › Clothing
(start with the head – hat, top, pants, shoes)
 - › Direction and method of travel
 - › Vehicles involved
 - › Description of stolen property

