

## DARKER NIGHTS: Top safety tips for the winter period

With darker mornings and nights upon us, there is more need for vigilance at this time of year. Criminals are always on the lookout for an opportunity and are likely to target premises with relaxed security measures. There are several things you can do, and by following these tips, you can keep yourself, your team and your customers safe.



### Travelling to & from work

- Always let somebody know your location, destination and your ETA
- Be aware of surroundings and anything that feels different
- Keep your mobile phone fully charged
- Avoid distractions such as listening to music or being on the phone
- Ensure you are familiar with the area and plan your journey
- Have your keys ready when approaching your parked vehicle
- Make sure that your car has enough fuel and park in a well-lit area
- Using public transport, stand in a well-lit area near other people
- Using a taxi, use a reputable service and note the taxi registration details
- Walking to or from work, stay in populated and well-lit areas



### Safety at work

- Entry and exit should always be via the most public opening – usually the front of the premises. At least two members of staff should be involved, one keyholder should enter to ensure the premises is safe and then give a pre arranged signal to the second person that it's safe. The signal confirms that there are no intruders lying in wait, this visual indicator should be changed frequently. During this procedure the second person should be standing clear of the premises but in a position to observe as necessary.
- If opening and closing alone is necessary, the keyholder should have a radio personal attack button which is connected to the premises police response alarm system. Before approaching, view the premises from a distance to ensure there is no one loitering, outside or in nearby vehicles and that there are no signs of damage. When entering, lock the door behind and don't turn off your alarm until you can be certain you haven't been followed in. Complete a perimeter/area check on doors, windows, alarm and phone wires.
- Regularly ensure all doors, end-gates and safes are locked and be sure to utilise any time delay equipment. Secure all remittances immediately and efficiently. Restrict cash levels to meet immediate operational needs and avoid any confrontation with customers. When closing the premises, ensure the above procedures are followed in reverse as well as setting alarm systems according to security procedures.

**We recommend that you speak to your insurance provider for security advice tailored to your individual businesses.**

**You should always report any suspicious activity or crime to the Police on 999, then report to SaferGems on 01905 342051.**

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## Abuse, Aggression & Violence



### What does Abuse, Aggression & Violence look like?

- Harassment, including sexual and racial abuse
- Threatening behaviour, e.g. squaring-up without physical contact
- Verbal or written abuse, in person or over the telephone
- Physical or sexual assault
- Unreasonable and/or offensive remarks or behaviour
- Malicious damage to the property of staff, customers or the business
- Ganging up, bullying and intimidation
- Rude gestures or acts
- Spitting or throwing items

### Did you know...

The BRC (British Retail Consortium) estimated that in 2021 there were 455 Abusive, aggressive or violent (AAV) incidents toward retail staff every day - a rise of 9% on the previous year. Many retail-workers may 'normalise' AAV towards them as 'part of the job' or may feel reporting is pointless as nothing will be done however abuse is a crime and it must always be reported.

**You should always report any crime to the Police on 999, then report to SaferGems on 01905 342051.**

**Many leading retailers have seen a surge in abuse, aggression and violent incidents reported by their staff since the news of the cost of living crisis. With tensions and frustrations continuing to climb, we expect to see a rise in these incidents and look to further support you and your team in this challenging time.**

### Alerting behaviours:

#### Breathing

Check for accelerated breathing, this is often caused by increased levels of adrenaline

#### Face

The aggressor may be frowning, rubbing forehead, have flared nostrils or a reddened complexion

#### Eye Contact

The aggressor may fixate, stare OR avoid eye contact

#### Tone

Look for changes in voice, tone and speed of speech

#### Stance

Can appear tense or agitated, crossed arms, muscle twitching and clenched fists

### De-escalation techniques:

#### Plan

Decide with your team as to how you would signal for assistance should you need it

#### Calm, Confidence, Control

Appear calm, confident and remain in control of your actions

#### Active Listening

Be sure to mindfully hear and comprehend what the customer is trying to say

#### Divert

Tell the aggressor that you would like to check the issue with a colleague for resolution

#### Clear View

Ensure you stay in clear view of CCTV

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## Theft & Burglaries

During the winter months, criminals are looking for premises with relaxed security measures. When strong security procedures are in force, this acts as a deterrent; often reducing the chance of a theft or burglary taking place.



### Reducing theft and burglary crime:

- The best way to prevent shop theft is by being attentive, and if possible, meeting and greeting customers as they enter, so potential thieves know you are watching them
- Ensure security procedures are viewable and practice safe cash and jewellery handling
- When meeting visiting jewellery reps avoid showing in public areas
- Outside of business hours, high value items such as watches and jewellery should be removed to the safes, out of sight and only load/unload cash outside of business hours, leaving drawers/tills empty and ajar overnight
- Make regular visual perimeter checks including telephone and alarm wires
- Utilise all security equipment; ensure CCTV is fully working and all alarms are set

If you experience a robbery, here are a few points that may assist you, should you become a target.



### During a robbery

- Don't take any risks
- Avoid any sudden or unexpected movements
- If there is an intruder alarm/fogging machine, activate it if safe to do so
- Make a mental note of the appearance of the individual(s) along with clothing and any vehicles used, where you can



### After a robbery

- Phone the police on 999
- Report to SaferGems as soon as possible on 01905 342051
- Prevent any customers entering, ask for witnesses to remain on the premises until the police arrive. If not, take their names/addresses
- Ensure that the premises and any potential evidence is left untouched

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