

Personal Safety

Under Occupational Health and Safety legislation, all people have the right to work in a safe environment in which risk to their health and safety is minimised. Employers have a duty to provide a safe working environment. Below are some tips that may assist staff to satisfy their individual sense of personal safety. Additional factors may need to be considered depending upon individual circumstances.

Within The Premises

1. Familiarise all staff/volunteers with emergency procedures and policies on how to deal with aggressive people, armed robberies, cash handling etc.
2. Restrict access to employee only areas and back rooms.
3. Ensure valuables such as personal possessions belonging to staff/volunteers remain locked away at all times. Items such as mobile phones, handbags and wallets should not be left unattended and in view, even for a moment.
4. Install audible door announcers to identify when people enter the premises or similar.
5. Keep doors and windows locked if staff/volunteers are working late.
6. When a staff member or volunteer is temporarily leaving the premises, notify a second party and advise that person of the staff member's/volunteers likely movements, expected time of return or arrival at next location.
7. Encourage staff members/volunteers to move their private vehicles closer to the church/place of work during daylight hours. After hours, arrange an escort to the car park or have someone watch their safe arrival into the car.
8. Pre-program important numbers such as Triple Zero '000' and security into church telephones and the mobile telephones of staff members and volunteers.

On The Street

1. If a second person has been notified of a staff member's/volunteers departure from the premises, ensure that the same person is contacted and advised that the staff member/volunteer has reached their intended destination safely.
2. Avoid walking alone at night unless absolutely necessary, stay on lit paths and wear visible clothing.
3. Wear comfortable clothes and footwear that allow for freedom of movement.
4. Avoid shortcuts and dark, isolated areas.
5. Walk purposefully and know where you are going.
6. Walk on the footpath facing the oncoming traffic.
7. If you feel threatened, cross the road or enter a store or place of business even if you have just left it.
8. If using a public telephone, stand with your back to the phone after dialling maintaining a view of the surrounding area and persons approaching.
9. Carry purses and handbags close to your body.

In Your Car

1. Position vehicles as close to your church/work premises as allowed.
2. Have keys in hand ready for use. Do not search for them in a handbag or backpack along the way or when standing at the car door.
3. Check inside the car by looking through the windows before getting in.
4. Consider driving with all of the doors locked and the windows wound up.
5. Do not leave valuable items visible inside the car.
6. When leaving the car, always close the windows, remove the ignition key and lock the doors.

NO AMOUNT OF PROPERTY IS WORTH RISKING YOUR SAFETY

This material is for guidance and general information purposes only. It is not intended to give specific legal or risk management advice nor are any suggestions, checklists or action plans intended to include or address all possible risk management exposures or solutions. You should seek professional advice tailored to your own circumstances.