



# Loss Control TIPS

## Technical Information Paper Series

*Innovative Safety and Health Solutions<sup>SM</sup>*

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## Safety and Security for Business Travelers

U.S. companies report that their employees' exposure to violence while they are traveling on business has increased substantially since 1990. In addition, employees are having increasingly frequent encounters with dangerous individuals who attempt to rob them for money, equipment, or other valuables. This trend is growing, along with a spread of violence from urban areas to rural areas.

Every employee who travels should have a basic understanding of how to spot potentially dangerous situations so that he or she can avoid trouble before it occurs. The best measure businesses can take to ensure that their employees travel without incident is to provide appropriate instructions about crime prevention. Employees should truly understand that if they are not security conscious, they may contribute to their own victimization.

Here are crime prevention tips for business travelers:

### Tips On How To Avoid An Assault

- Project a strong, confident image.
- Avoid situations that appear to be dangerous.
- Be aware of your vulnerability and your surroundings. Listen for unusual sounds, such as footsteps behind you.
- Take measures to avoid looking like a tourist. Thieves are attracted to tourists because they expect tourists to be carrying large amounts of cash.
- Carry limited cash, and do not "flash" cash, as it may entice a potential robber. Travelers checks may be appropriate.
- Leave all unnecessary valuables at home.
- If you are faced with danger, stay calm and evaluate your options.

### Tips To Follow If You Are Assaulted

- Stay calm and assure the assailant that you will follow instructions. Do nothing to upset the assailant. The key word to keep in mind is *survival*.
- If an assailant asks for money, give it to him or her.
- Make a mental note of the assailant's appearance, voice, mannerisms, vehicle, license plate, and direction and method of travel.



## Tips On Vehicle Safety and Security

- When possible, schedule stops in high crime areas early in the day.
- As you return to your vehicle, have the door key in your hand. Check the back seat before getting in. Do not approach your vehicle if someone unknown is near the vehicle.
- Do not walk alone through an unattended parking lot or in a deserted parking garage.
- Use escort services if they are provided.
- When leaving facilities after hours, check outside before leaving the building.
- When traveling in your car, make certain that you have sufficient fuel to get to your destination.
- Stick to known, main streets after dark.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers
- If your car breaks down, stay in the car with the doors locked and windows closed. Activate the emergency flasher.
- If you think you are being followed, keep out of desolate areas. Look for a place where there are people, then stop and let the vehicle pass you.
- Employers should provide parking near employee entrances for workers on late night shifts.
- Female workers should exercise extra care because of the risk of rape and sexual assault.
- Park in a well-lighted and busy area.
- Lock all valuables in the trunk of your car, or take them with you.
- Do not leave your driver's license, car registration (unless required by state law) or other identification in your glove compartment.

## Tips to Avoid Becoming a Victim Of a Carjacking

- Be aware of your surroundings when you approach, enter, or exit your vehicle. Being alert is the best protection.
- Park in well-lit areas and avoid parking next to vans or occupied vehicles.
- When approaching your parked car, check the back seat for suspicious people, and have your key out and ready *before* you get to the car.
- Once you are in your vehicle, immediately lock all the doors. Keep them locked during your trip.
- Keep your windows rolled up.
- When you drive at night, always stay on main streets and avoid high crime areas.
- If you must stop at a dark intersection, leave an adequate space cushion so you can easily maneuver around the vehicle in front of you to quickly leave the area.
- If someone who looks suspicious approaches your car while you are waiting at an intersection, prepare to drive away immediately and assertively.
- If someone bumps your car from behind, be extremely cautious before exiting your vehicle. (One thing to watch for is a second person taking the wheel while the driver who bumped you approaches your car.)
- In any potential problem situation, remember to stay calm and use your head.

## If You Are Confronted By a Carjacker

- Hand over your keys immediately. ***Do not resist!***
- Keep your hands in plain view at all times.
- Back away from your vehicle as far and as quickly as possible.
- Do what is requested of you. (Often carjackers will demand your wallet or purse. Give it to them.)
- As soon as it is safe, call the police and report the crime.

*Remember:* Carjackers are usually armed. Do not try to be a hero!

## Tips On Hotel and Motel Safety and Security

- Don't answer the door in your hotel/motel room without verifying who is at the door.
- When returning late in the evening, use the main entrance of the hotel.
- Close the door securely whenever you are in your room. Use all available locks.
- Do not draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash or jewelry.
- Check to see that any sliding glass doors or windows and any connecting room doors are locked.
- Don't leave your luggage unattended in the lobby.
- If you must keep valuables in your room, leave the radio or TV on when you are absent to give the appearance that the room is occupied.
- Don't hang out the "Please Make Up This Room" sign. It announces your absence and presents an open invitation to a burglar.
- Do not leave your room door ajar when you have left momentarily (such as when getting ice or using a vending machine).
- Never reveal your room number within earshot of unfamiliar people, or in elevators, restaurants, or bars.
- If a hotel employee requests entrance to your room, verify this with the front desk before you admit the person.
- When you make a reservation, verify that the hotel has smoke detectors or automatic sprinklers.
- To be ready for escape during a fire or emergency situation, identify two exits near your room, and count the number of doors from your room to these exits.
- Never use the elevators during a fire emergency.

## What You Can Do

Be *alert* for suspicious individuals and/or conditions that may represent a threat to you. Be *aware* of your vulnerability and follow the previous suggestions to protect yourself. Get *involved* by becoming more security and safety conscious, and by reporting suspicious activities to the appropriate authorities.

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford's Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

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