

PERSONAL SAFETY

We all have the right to feel and be safe as we go about our daily lives. We all react differently to situations and safety can mean different things to different people. We don't want to live in a state of paranoia but we need to have a healthy regard for our own safety and wellbeing.

There are a number of things you can do to maximise your feelings of safety.

DEVELOP A SAFETY PLAN

A safety plan means you have thought about your personal safety in your own circumstances. By being aware of possible unsafe situations and how you may react if your safety is ever compromised can be empowering. What would I do in an emergency situation? Who could I call? By following these simple tips you may feel more confident when out and about.

- Be assertive, walk with confidence and be aware of your surroundings.
- Keep valuables out of sight.
- Vary your routine and stick to well-lit roads.
- Avoid short cuts and dark, isolated areas.
- Walk on the footpath facing the oncoming traffic.
- Be observant and aware of people who appear suspicious and/or try to distract you. Keep a safe distance and call for assistance if necessary.
- Carry a mobile phone. If out of range,

the emergency number from mobile phones is 112.

- When listening to music only put the ear piece in one ear. This will ensure you can hear anyone coming up behind you.
- Remain active and involved in your community. Connected people generally feel safer and more confident.
- You may consider exercise or self-defence classes.

HANDBAG SECURITY

Your handbag or its contents can be stolen in seconds. Your cash and cards will be used shortly after and the inconvenience of replacing everything in your handbag takes time and money. There are often emotional anxieties and sometimes physical injuries as a result of a handbag theft.

By taking a few simple steps you may avoid having your handbag or wallet stolen.

Carry purses and handbags close to your body. Ensure they are zipped and secured at all times.

Never leave your handbag unattended in a shopping trolley or on top of a pram. Inattention when purchasing items can lead to handbag theft.

Be mindful of distractions. Thieves working in pairs may attempt to divert your attention in order to steal your handbag or its contents. One may ask you the time or for directions while the other is stealing your purse from your bag.

In restaurants and cafes place your bag on your lap. Leaving a bag on the floor or seat beside you makes you vulnerable to distraction techniques.

If your bag is stolen report it to the police. Notify your bank or credit card provider as soon as possible. Never keep a written record of your personal identification numbers (PIN) with your cards. Never divulge your PIN. Banks and other agencies will never request this information over the phone or internet.

USING AN ATM

Seek out ATMs located inside buildings, supermarkets or other busy locations.

Scan the area for suspicious activity prior to using the ATM. If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe any time when using the ATM, cancel the transaction and leave.

When using an ATM, shield your PIN number and be alert to anyone watching you. Place your money in your purse/wallet immediately after the transaction and secure your bag. Never overtly count your money in public.

Do not carry large amounts of cash with you. Only withdraw money needed at the time.

Make use of EFTPOS facilities and have your bills direct debited to avoid having to carry cash for bill paying purposes. Payment plans can be direct debited from savings or credit accounts. Contact your service providers for more information.

IN YOUR CAR

- Know where you are going and plan your route.
- Ensure you have enough petrol to complete the journey.
- Ensure your vehicle is roadworthy and keep up to date with services.
- Be mindful of where you park your car – especially if you are returning to your car when it is dark.
- Have car keys in your hand ready for use. Avoid fumbling in your bag for keys.
- Consider driving with your doors and windows locked.
- If you are involved in a road rage situation, do not stop and get out of your car. Obtain the registration number and report the incident to police.
- If you are being followed, do not go home. Do not turn off and drive into unfamiliar areas. Drive to a police station or service station where you can get help and attract attention.
- Your car provides you with a barrier between you and potential danger. Do not get out of the vehicle if you feel unsafe and do not pick up hitch hikers.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Plan your journey to minimise time spent waiting at bus stations at night.
- Choose a well-lit and clear walking path to and from the station and stand where you can be seen.
- Take the time to locate safety features – emergency buttons, CCTV cameras, safety zones and public transport staff.
- Keep your valuables concealed and secure.
- If you feel unsafe, alert public transport staff, police or other passengers to help.
- If you feel uncomfortable with the person near you, consider changing seats.
- If you leave your car at a bus station, park as close as possible to buildings or lights, and have your keys ready when you return. Remain alert and take note of suspicious people.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE

If you are in danger or see a crime being committed, call Triple Zero (000). If you have information about a crime contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000

Victims of Crime Helpline

Everyone reacts and deals with being a victim of crime in their own way. If you feel you are not coping and need help, contact Victim Support in Tasmania on

- (03) 6165 7524 during business hours and
- 1300 300 238 in an emergency or after hours
- <https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/victims>

They can provide over the phone assistance and referrals to useful contact services and agencies.