

A BRIEF LOOK AT -

PERSONAL SAFETY



In addition to Agency's other policies, procedures, and trainings, as well as the information in other "A Brief Look" lessons, personal safety/security may include (in no particular order):

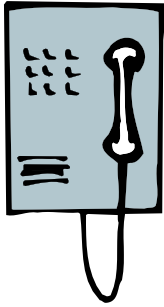
- Leave valuables at home or locked in your vehicle, desk, or locker
- Be sure car is locked at all times
- Take only a small amount of money to work
- Store your purse and/or briefcase in a secure area, out of site of routine passers-by
- Ensure you have an unobstructed exit from your work station
- Employer will perform background checks on all employees who have direct patient/client contact to protect them
- Possessing firearms or weapons, concealed or otherwise, on or in Agency property may threaten the safety of yourself and others. You may not bring weapons onto Agency property or possess them while conducting Agency business. Failure to comply with this policy will result in discipline and potential criminal charges
- Illegal drug or alcohol use or possession may threaten the safety of yourself and others. You may not use or possess them on Agency property or while conducting Agency business
- If threatened by co-worker or intruder, don't argue, beg, plead, or minimize his/her comments and stay calm
- In any emergency or disaster situation, stay calm
- Use safe work practices; follow all directives
- Do not open suspicious packages
- Don't work alone in the office
- Don't walk to your car alone after dark; have a "buddy system"



Personal Safety While Working with Patients/Clients in the Community

General guidelines to assist you with various safety issues:

- Do not carry excessive amounts of money with you and avoid carrying a purse. If you must carry your purse lock it in the trunk of your car before you leave home.
- When driving, keep purse, cell phone, etc. on the floor, not on the seat.
- Wear closed toe shoes.
- Wear your ID at all times. You may want to carry additional forms of identification in your pocket, as well as your Agency's phone number.
- When walking alone, avoid groups of people lingering on the street.



- Do not take short cuts down alleys, through buildings, or across private property. Avoid narrow or confined spaces.
 - Watch what's going on around you.
 - Be familiar with your surroundings. Know where to find pay phones. Always have enough change with you for the pay phone.
 - Present yourself in a confident manner; do not appear nervous or anxious.
 - Never walk into a home uninvited. Never walk into a vacant home.
 - If you see you have a reason to suspect illegal drug use or alcohol abuse by a patient/client or patient's/client's family member, report this to Agency management.
- If any weapons are present in a patient's/client's home, either ask that they be put away or leave. Report this to your Supervisor immediately. When changing the client's bed linen, carefully handle linens and be aware of sharp items such as needles which might be in the patient's/client's bed.
- If the patient/client has pets that are aggressive, ask that they be put away.
- Do not allow strangers to enter the patient's/client's home.
- If you are being harassed by a patient/client or family member, maintain a quiet attitude, never argue with or strike the person, and notify your Supervisor at once.
- If a patient/client becomes violent, leave the environment and notify your Supervisor at once.
- If you feel uncomfortable while providing care to a patient/client, ask a family member to be present.
- Follow your Agency's emergency preparedness plan.

Driving Safety

- Keep your car in good running condition.
- Always keep your car doors locked and the windows up when in slow traffic or at a traffic light.
- Have a spare set of keys in an appropriate location.
- Carry your keys in your hand. This enables you to get into your car immediately and it is also a form of self defense. (Hold the key ring in the palm of your hand and put a key between each of your four fingers with the sharp ends sticking out).
- Have enough fuel for the day's travel.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers.
- If you see a stranded motorist, drive to the nearest phone or use your cell phone and call the police.
- If you fear you are being followed, drive to the nearest police, fire, or gas station.



- If a person tries to car jack your car, give it to him/her.
- Plan your route. Know exactly where you are going ahead of time. Contact the patient/client or the office if directions are not clear.
- Park as close to your destination as possible.
- Park in well lighted areas.



- If you have car trouble, put on your flashers, raise the hood, tie a white cloth on the door, or put a “Call Police” sign in the window. Stay in your car with the doors locked and windows closed. Ask anyone who stops to call the police; **do not** go with this person.

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QUIZ

1. My employer will perform background checks on all employees who have direct patient/client contact to protect them.
 True
 False

2. When walking alone, go by groups of people lingering on the street because there is safety in numbers.
 True
 False

3. Have enough fuel for the day's travel.
 True
 False

4. If you see a stranded motorist, be helpful and pick him/her up and drive him/her home.
 True
 False

Signature

Date

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ANSWER KEY

1. TRUE
2. FALSE
3. TRUE
4. FALSE