## AGENT SAFETY

It is critically important that an agent be aware of safety risks inherent in any business. The residential real estate business presents certain safety risks because of the time of day and week when much of the business is conducted. This company has the following safety policies, guidelines and suggestions:

1. If the agent does not know a customer, try to arrange a meeting at the office.

2. NEVER meet a prospect at a vacant house ALONE. ALWAYS take another person with you. DO NOT meet the prospect after dark.

3. ALWAYS let the office or someone at your home know where you will be when showing property, especially to prospects you are first meeting.

4. When on the showing, DO NOT go to dark areas, basements, garages, or areas without multiple exits. Allow the prospect to view those areas on his/her own and stay in an area that allows for quick exit.

5. ALWAYS drive your own car. DO NOT let a prospect you do not know drive your car. Preferably, meet the prospect at the office, tell the office your destination and expected time of return and drive separate cars to the showing.

6. USE COMMON SENSE. If something doesn't feel right or look right, trust your instincts and remove yourself from the situation.

7. Whether to use self-defense techniques and how to handle a crisis if it occurs are personal decisions. Think about your choices in advance.

8. View safety videotapes and talk to your local police. The company has a videotape available on agent safety and urges each agent to view it regularly. In addition, the videotape is regularly shown at a sales meeting, and the local police are asked to make safety presentations at a sales meeting periodically. Take advantage of these opportunities to be smart and be safe. No commission is big enough to justify personal risk!

**REALTOR® Safety Tips**

1. Give your office your daily schedule and make it a habit to check in…if you are not on schedule or out of touch it will sound alarms sooner.
2. Use in office “pre-showing” interviews to deter criminals looking for low risk opportunity crimes.
3. Make copies of all drivers licenses before leaving the office and leave the copies with your broker.
4. Online background checks are available and should be used if you feel suspicion.
5. Remind sellers to secure valuables, weapons, and prescription drugs prior to showings.
6. Pre-inspect to property to ensure #5.
7. Try to travel in separate cars to the showing. Call in their license plate to your office. Do not allow them to block your car in the driveway. Park on the street or with an escape route.
8. Keep aware. Trust your instincts.
9. Monitor your location and options at all times.
10. Keep visitors in front of you… “Off to your left, you’ll see…”
11. If possible carry the garage door opener in your pocket, if you feel threatened; covertly press the button to open the door and say “the owners must be driving in.”
12. If you call 911, try to use the home phone so that the location is easily traceable.
13. Pick up the cordless phone and carry it during the showing. Note if there is a speed dial feature for 911 on the phone.
14. Keep your cellphone speedial set for 911.
15. Always carry a cellphone on your person.
16. Increase your security in areas of poor cellphone reception: travel with another agent, only go during daylight hours, keep your gas tank topped off, and be aware of safety issues at all times.
17. Buy a camera cellphone. Take a picture of your buyer in front of the home and email the picture to your office. This creates a record of who you were with, what time, and what location you were at during that time.
18. If possible and suspicious, take a picture of the buyer’s vehicle and license plate as they drive in front of your vehicle. Email it to your office.
19. Take self defense courses.
20. Wear shoes that allow you to run and climb.
21. Use your keys or phone as a weapon if attacked.
22. In the office, turn your desk to face the door or use a mirror.
23. Greet (CHALLENGE) all persons entering the office: “May I help you? Who are you here to see?”
24. Lock the office door when alone.
25. Report any suspicious behavior to law enforcement. It may save another agent.
26. Be aware that criminals may be casing homes for burglary as well as the threat to rob/injure you.
27. Travel in pairs if suspicious. Have another agent or staffer accompany you on the showing.
28. Have an office code word that secretly means “HELP ME!”

**Broker Tips: Advise your Agents**

Agents should not put home phone numbers in their advertising.

1. Maintain a log of your agents car (make, model, tag).
2. Keep an emergency contact log of people you can contact to trace an agent’s whereabouts (family, friends, gym, club, etc.)
3. Agents should have 911 in their cellphone’s speed dial.
4. Conduct safety training. Invite law enforcement to speak.
5. Keep an emergency action folder at the front desk with phone numbers to immediately notify law enforcement, your agents, other area brokers of any suspicious or criminal activity.
6. Have a policy of communication with agents in the field so that a problem is noticed as soon as possible.
7. Remind your agents to wear jewelry conservatively.
8. Have self defense training including defensive devices.
9. Have a safety procedures for showings after dark or in areas with poor cellphone reception.
10. Safety procedure enhancements include sending more than one agent and having someone call the agent every 15-20 minutes to ensure their safety.
11. Red Flags: Potential Buyer only wants to see vacant property or asks agent if they are coming alone.
12. Do not show property to someone who comes up to you while locking up a listing.
13. Always get a phone number and call to verify that it is legitimate.
14. Always have clients come to the office and fill out an information sheet. Make a production of copying their drivers license. This will deter someone looking for an opportunity crime.
15. Tell agents not to go in bedrooms, upstairs, basements, or dark areas on a showing with Potential Buyer.
16. Be wary of repair workers who show up “out of the blue.”
17. Look at the drivers license to ensure the race, age, and physical description match.
18. Require the filing of police reports on incidents.
19. Require that the BIC be immediately notified of any incident.
20. Maintain a folder of contact information for rape victim support services.
21. Require agents to carry cellphones in addition to pagers.
22. Require agents to answer cellphone calls from the office during showings.
23. Require agents to program 911 into their cellphone speed dial.
24. Encourage agents to use cellphones with cameras so that they can email in a picture of the Potential Buyer at the property. “Let me take your picture in front of this house so that you can remember it.” (Now, there is a picture of the Potential Buyer and a record of the time/location of the agent).
25. Encourage the use of cellphones that can be rigged to a body alarm that triggers a warning to the office during an attack.
26. Train both male and female members on safety and let the males know that they are also at risk.
27. Keep in mind office safety. Disgruntled employees are also a threat. Alert all staff and agents if a fired or disciplined employee should be watched.
28. Trim hedges around the office.
29. Increase security lighting.
30. Require locking of all doors.
31. Install video surveillance and alarm systems.
32. Advertise the presence of surveillance with signs on premises.
33. Challenge/greet anyone that enters your office. “May I help you?”
34. Encourage your agents and staff to attend any law enforcement training or “ride along” programs.
35. Encourage your agents and staff to join neighborhood watch groups so that they learn to become more observant while in the community.
36. While driving, doors should be locked and windows up to discourage car jacking.
37. Remind agents that most crimes occur at Open Houses and Vacant Properties.

Remind everyone to be safe everyday!