General Personal Safety Tips for Students and Employees

Cell phone protection

- Carry your phone with you whenever possible and make sure it is in a safe place whenever you leave it behind. If you are leaving your phone in your car, be sure it is hidden from view.
- Turn off your phone when you are not using it.
- Request a personal identification number.
- Use the "lock" feature on your phone.
- Report a stolen cellular telephone immediately to the cellular telephone carrier and Police.
- Check your monthly bills carefully, and report unfamiliar calls to your cellular phone company.
- Do not give out your electronic serial number or even your phone number to strangers, including callers who represent themselves as technicians testing your line.
- Keep your subscriber agreement, which includes your electronic serial number, in a secure location.

Know how to contact College Security or the Police

Know the emergency telephone number for your campus Security or Police department.

- Keep the emergency phone numbers near your phones (stickers, magnets, etc.).
- Program emergency phone numbers into your personal cell phone.
- Learn where the campus emergency telephones (Blue Light Telephones) are located on campus and learn how to use them.
- Learn where other emergency telephones are located throughout campus (chemistry labs, woodworking areas, etc.).
- Insure that you are subscribed to the campus mass notification system on campus.
- Participate in any campus emergency transmitter, whistle, or other safety programs being offered.

Walking around campus

- Familiarize yourself with the layout of the campus. Survey the campus while classes are in session and after dark to see that academic buildings, walkways, facilities, and parking lots are adequately secured and well-lighted.
- Plan the safest route to your destination; choose well-lighted, busy pathways and streets.
- Share your class schedule with your parents and trusted friends and give them your telephone numbers.
- At night, stick to well-lighted areas whenever possible and avoid alleyways or “short cuts” through isolated areas.
- Travel in groups and avoid going out alone at night.
- Use the campus escort or shuttle services at night.
- Know where the emergency call boxes are located on campus and learn how to use them.
- If you are being followed, change direction and go to the nearest business or home; knock on the door, and request that someone call the Police. Note the description of the person following you.
- Walk near the curb and avoid shrubbery or other places of potential concealment.
- Tell a friend or roommate where you are going and what time you expect to return.
- Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you.
- Carry your purse close to your body and keep a firm grip on it; carry your wallet in an inside coat pocket or your front pant pocket.
- Keep your keys separate from your purse or backpack.
- Don’t overload yourself with bags or packages and avoid wearing shoes that restrict your movements.
- Walk with a confident stride; keep your head up and look around.
- If a motorist stops and asks for directions, keep your distance from the car.

Motor vehicle safety

- Park in well lighted areas, where your vehicle is visible; avoid parking next to vans or trucks.
- Keep all items out of sight, especially valuables; remove or place CD players/cases, etc. in the truck.
- Service your vehicle regularly to avoid breakdowns.
  - Keep your vehicle locked at all times.
  - Consider “The CLUB” or an alarm system.
  - When leaving your car for service, remove your other keys.
  - Have your key ready when you approach your car. Before getting in, check inside and under your car to make sure no one is hiding.

When driving

- Carry a cell phone.
- Never let fuel level get below ¼ tank.
- Drive on well-traveled streets and keep your car in gear while it is stopped. Allow at least one car length space between your car and the car in front of you so that you can escape should someone try to get into your car.
Always be aware of your surroundings and check your rear view mirror often.
Keep doors locked and windows shut and keep valuables out of sight; either covered or in the trunk.
If your car breaks down, open the hood and stay inside. If someone stops to help, do not open your window or door, but have him or her call for assistance.
If you do not know the location of your destination, ask someone for specific directions before you leave.
If you get lost, do not pull over until you find a well-lit public area, and then call the police.
If you suspect you are being followed, drive to a well-lit public area and call the police.
Always carry an emergency kit in your vehicle with first aid supplies, flares, flashlight, jumper cables, blanket, etc.
Never pick up hitchhikers.
Beware of people who yell, honk, and point at your car as if something is wrong; if your car breaks down, stay inside and lock the doors. If anyone approaches to help, crack the window and ask them to call the Police. Ask uniformed people to show identification.
Beware of people who motion and ask you to stop and lend assistance; if you want to assist someone whose car has broken down, go to the nearest phone or use your cell phone and call the Police.
Beware of people who may bump your vehicle from behind; if you think you were bumped intentionally, signal the other driver to follow you to the nearest police station.
If a person with a weapon confronts you and wants your vehicle, give it up. No car is worth being injured or losing your life over.
If traveling in an unknown area leave enough space between your vehicle and the one in front of you to allow room to drive around it if necessary.

Safe walking, jogging or running

- Plan your outing in advance and walk/jog/run in familiar areas.
- Go with a known companion if possible.
- Carry identification.
- Don’t wear jewelry or carry cash.
- Avoid secluded or dimly lighted areas.
- Avoid going after dark.
- Always face the traffic.
- If you’re being followed, cross the street or change directions; keep looking back and get a good description of the person.
- If you’re still being followed, go to the nearest house or business and call the Police.
• Wear bright colors to improve your visibility.

• Change your route and schedule.
• Avoid bushes where a person could hide.
• Take a key with you; do not leave your house or room unlocked; someone could be watching to see when you are not home.
• Carry your cell phone, a whistle or shrill alarm to summon help.
• Do not wear headphones/earphones for an IPod, walkman, etc.

If you are attacked

• Go with your instincts, but be realistic about your ability to fight off someone; your instinct may be to run, scream, kick, hit or bite. However you decide to respond, be sure you do so with full commitment of your effort.
• If a weapon is displayed, don’t resist. Give up your property and save your life however throw the property as far as possible away from you and run in the opposite direction.
• Do what you are told and don’t make any sudden moves.
• Try to remember as many details as possible and alert College Security or the Police as soon as possible.
• Your goal should be to escape safety and survive; cooperate if you think that resisting may lead to further harm however do not enter a vehicle with the perpetrator. Your chances of survival are reduced once you are inside.
• Remember every situation is different; you are the only one that can decide the appropriate course of action.
• Constantly play the “what if” game to think about what you would do in a particular threatening situation. This will help prepare you to respond instinctively when a threat is encountered.
• After an event, never feel guilty about what you did or did not do.

Bicycle safety and protection

• Use a bike light when riding a bicycle at night.
• Wear a helmet at all times when riding a bicycle.
• Obey all traffic laws; you must stop at intersections; pedestrians have the right of way.
  • Pay attention to your surroundings; warn pedestrians when you are passing them.
  • Take extra care when passing parking lot exits or driving through parking lots.
  • Give proper hand signals when turning or stopping.
  • Before leaving a lane, give a hand signal. Leave the lane only when safe to do so.
  • Secure your bicycle with a heavy duty U-lock or chain. When possible, lock at least your
front wheel and frame to a bike rack or other stationary object.

- Do not park your bicycle in a doorway, on stairs, or blocking any handicapped access. Use a bike rack.
- Engrave or permanently mark your bicycle with an identifying number and record that number with College Security or the Police.

Cyber security

- Never give your password to anyone.
- Change your password frequently.
- Do not allow others access to your e-mail account.
- Monitor your access time; by keeping track of when and how long you were on a computer system, it will be obvious if someone has gained access to your account.
- Be wary of anonymous “re-mailers”.
- Do not put personal information or photos on your web page and do not give personal information that can identify where you live to social networking sites.
- Never leave your computer/laptop unattended.
- Engrave markings on your computer.
- Shop online only with companies that you know; check with the Better Business Bureau if unsure.
- Use a secure browser that will encrypt or scramble purchase information or pay with a money order or check.
- Update your virus software regularly, or when new versions are available.
- Do not download files sent to you by strangers or click on hyper links from people you don’t know.
- Make certain that all your personal information is deleted from your computer prior to disposing of it.
- Monitor your children’s internet access and consider installing blocking software.

Describing a suspect or a vehicle

Date
Time
Location
Direction of Travel
Weapon

Suspect Information:

Male/Female
Adult/Juvenile/Approximate Age
Race
Height/Weight
Hair Color
Eye Color
Mustache, beard, sideburns or other facial hair
Tattoos, scars or other identifying marks
Gait, limp or amputations
Clothing:
Hat
Glasses
Shirt type/color
Pants type/color
Shoes

Automobile Information:
Make/Model
Color
Year
Body style (2-door, 4-door, convertible, truck, etc.)
License plate number
Distinguishing features (spoiler, racing stripes, tinting, damage, etc.)

On foot

- Avoid dark, vacant, or deserted areas; use well-lit routes.
- Avoid walking/jogging/running alone, especially at night. Ask a friend to go with you. Call College Security to accompany you around campus during evening hours.
- Dress in clothes and shoes that will not hamper movement.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. Avoid wearing headsets that impair your ability to detect and respond to potentially dangerous situations.
- Report suspicious activity or noises immediately.
- Carry a noise-making device with you at all times, and use it if you suspect you are in danger. Move to a lit area or building and raise a commotion. Call 911 or activate a blue light emergency phone in the event of an emergency.

If you sense trouble

- Move away from the potential threat if possible; cross the street and increase your pace.
- Join a group of people nearby.
- If a threatening situation is imminent and people are close by, yell, scream or do whatever you can to get their attention. Remember, dialing 911 and or/activating a
fire alarm are both part of the personal safety system. 911 calls are free from most pay phones, and blue light emergency phones are usually located in many areas on campus and simply require a push of a button to notify emergency services of your situation.

- If you are facing an armed criminal, you may minimize the risk of injury to yourself if you comply with the criminal's demands. However, if your life is in immediate danger, use any defense you can to get away.
- Dial 911 immediately and give a description of the suspect

Obscene and annoying phone calls

- Hang up as soon as you realize the nature of the call. Do not try to find out who the caller is, even if you think it is a friend playing a joke.
  - Use your answering machine to screen calls. You can also record an obscene phone call with the memo feature on some answering machines.
  - If the calls occur frequently, keep a log of exactly when the call was received and what both parties said. Describe the type of voice and note any background noises.
- Consider changing your phone number and depersonalizing your answering machine message.
- Consider purchasing a machine that requires an access code before your phone will ring.
- If the calls continue, contact College Security or the Police.

Automatic teller machines

- Try to use ATMs during daylight hours. If you must go at night, do not go alone.
- Avoid ATMs that are not well lit or clearly visible from the street.
- Be aware of people loitering or sitting in cars around ATMs.
- Prepare your transaction ahead of time. Do not spend much time at the machine.
- Do not give out your Personal Identification Number (PIN) to anyone! Many thieves will attempt to steal your PIN number by calling you on the phone and claiming they are the police, security officers, or bank officers. Memorize it and do not keep a written copy of it in your wallet.
- Either keep your ATM receipt or tear it up and throw it away.

Protecting yourself from identity theft

- Destroy private records and statements. Destroy credit card statements, solicitations and other documents that contain any private information. Shred this paperwork using a "cross-cut" shredder so thieves can't find your data when they rummage through your garbage. Also, don't leave a paper trail; never leave ATM, credit card or gas station receipts behind.

- Secure your mail. Empty your mailbox quickly, lock it or get a P.O. Box so criminals don't have a chance to steal credit card offers. Never mail outgoing bill payments and checks from an unsecured mailbox, especially at home. They can be stolen from your mailbox and the payee's name erased with solvents. Mail them from the post office or another secure location.

- Safeguard your Social Security number. Never carry your card with you, or any other card that may have your number, like a health insurance card or school issued ID. Don't put your number on your checks; your SSN is the primary target for identity thieves because it gives them access to your credit report and bank accounts. There are very few entities that can actually demand your SSN - the Department of Motor Vehicles, for example. Also, SSNs are required for transactions involving taxes, so that means banks, brokerages, employers, and the like also have a legitimate need for your SSN.

- Safeguard your computer. Protect your computer from viruses and spies. Use complicated passwords; frequently update antivirus software and spyware. Surf the Web cautiously. Shop only at trustworthy web sites and be wary of obscure sites or any site you've never used before.

- Know who you're dealing with. Whenever you are contacted, either by phone or e-mail, by individuals identifying themselves as banks, credit card or e-commerce companies and asked for private identity or financial information, do not respond. Legitimate companies do not contact you and ask you to provide personal data such as PINs, user names and passwords or bank account information over the phone or Internet. If you think the request is legitimate, contact the company yourself by calling customer service using the number on your account statement or in the telephone book and confirm what you were told before revealing any of your personal data.

- Take your name off marketers' hit lists. In addition to the national Do Not Call Registry (1-888-382-1222 or https://www.donotcall.gov), you also can reduce credit card solicitations for five years by contacting an opt-out service run by the three major credit bureaus: (888) 5-OPT OUT or https://www.optoutprescreen.com. You'll need to provide your Social Security number as an identifier.

- Guard your personal information. Ask questions whenever anyone asks you for personal data. How will the information be used? Why must I provide this data? Ask anyone who does require your Social Security number, for instance, cell phone
providers, what their privacy policy is and whether you can arrange for the organization not to share your information with anyone else.

- Monitor your credit report. Each year, obtain and thoroughly review your credit report from the three major credit bureaus; Equifax (800-685-1111), Experian (883-397-3742) and TransUnion (800-680-4213) or at https://www.annualcreditreport.com to look for suspicious activity. If you spot something, alert your card company or the creditor immediately.
- Review your bank and credit card statements carefully. Look for unauthorized charges or withdrawals and report them immediately. Make sure you recognize the merchants, locations and purchases listed before paying the bill. If you don't need or use department store or bank-issued credit cards, consider closing the accounts.
- Keep track of your billing dates/cycles and follow up with creditors if you don’t receive bills/statements on time.
- Use random letters and numbers for passwords; don’t use your mother’s maiden name, your birth date, your graduation date, your social security number or any other familiar letters or numbers that can be associated with you as passwords.
- Be aware of how ID thieves can get your information. They get information from businesses or other institutions by stealing records, bribing employees with access to records, hacking into computers, rummaging through trash, posing as a landlord, employer, or someone else who may have a legal right to the information, stealing credit and debit card numbers as your card is processed by using a special information storage device ("skimming"), stealing wallets and purses containing identification and credit or bank cards, stealing mail, including bank and credit card statements, pre-approved credit offers, new checks, or tax information or completing a "change of address form" to divert your mail to another location.

If your identity is stolen

- Contact the fraud departments of each of the three major credit bureaus. Tell them that you’re an identity theft victim. Request that a "fraud alert" be placed in your file, along with a victim’s statement asking that creditors call you before opening any new accounts or changing your existing accounts.

1). Equifax To report fraud: 1-800-525-6285 (P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241),

2). Experian To report fraud: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742) (P.O. Box 9532, Allen, TX 75013), and

3). TransUnion To report fraud: 1-800-680-7289 (Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92634)

- Contact the creditors for any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently. Speak with someone in the security/fraud department of each creditor, and follow up with a letter.
- If your Social Security number has been used illegally, contact the Social Security Fraud Hotline at 1-800-269-0271.
• File a report with College Security or the Police in the community where the identity theft took place. Get a copy of the police report in case the bank, credit-card company, or others need proof of the crime.
• Keep records of everything involved in your efforts to clear up fraud, including copies of written correspondence and records of telephone calls.

Computer scams

• Computer phishing is a crime. Phishers attempt to fraudulently acquire credit card details and other sensitive personal data via bogus e-mail or pop-up windows. It may look like a legitimate e-mail from a legitimate institution, but beware of unsolicited requests for information.
• Financial or payment institutions will never request that you send them personal sensitive data via e-mail or pop-up windows.
• If you receive a suspicious looking e-mail from any bank, lending, or payment institution, it is best to delete and not respond. If, by coincidence, you have an account with the entity mentioned in the e-mail, call your legitimate institution using the number on your physical bill or via the telephone book or through telephone information.
• Do not call the number that may be listed in the bogus e-mail and do not click on any link listed in the bogus e-mail

Con Artists

• If a deal sounds too good to be true; it probably is.
• Be wary of any get rich quick scheme that wants you to invest money in advance.
• Never give out your credit card information over the phone unless you made the call.
• Do not buy on the spur of the moment; take time to research the company or product.
• If you are approached by a possible con artist or unauthorized solicitor, report the incident immediately to College Security or the Police.

Using public transportation

• Try to avoid isolated bus or train stops and times when few people are around.
• Stay away from the curb until bus/train arrives.
• Have the exact fare or ticket/pass ready as you board the bus.
• If possible, sit near the driver and notify him or her of any problems.
• A crowded bus is a prime target for pick pockets; carry your bags close and carry your wallet in your coat or front pant pocket.
• If someone is bothering or harassing you, move to another seat location and/or tell
the person in a loud voice to “STAY AWAY”.
- Don’t fall asleep on a bus or shuttle.
- Remain on the bus/train if you are uncomfortable with getting off.

Theft protection

- When leaving your dorm room, home, or office, lock doors and windows even if you will be gone for "just a minute."
- Never leave your purse, wallet, or valuables exposed; store them out of sight. Be especially careful with your credit cards, which are very popular items among thieves because they are usually easy to steal and then use again. Consider obtaining a credit card with your photo imprinted on it.
- Computers, especially if they are portable, are primary targets of theft. Consider the purchase of a locking security or tracking device.
- Keep a list of all items and serial numbers in a safe place.
  - Never prop open a locked door.

Vandalism and graffiti

- Report all vandalism and graffiti immediately.
  - In addition to being illegal and costly, much vandalism and graffiti may also be bias, hate or gang related.

Dating safety

- Trust your instincts. Check out a first date or blind date with friends first. Better yet, go with other friends on your first date.
- Always have a plan to get yourself home. Carry money for a taxi or public transportation in case your date is cut short; bring a cell phone also.
- Know what you want sexually and don’t send mixed messages.
- Trust your instincts about situations to avoid.
- Be clear and responsible in your communications with others. If you are getting a double message-or if the person is in no condition to give consent—don’t have sex.
- Be forceful, firm and assertive. Don’t worry about being polite if someone is not respecting your wishes.
- If you go out with other friends, don’t get separated; watch out for each other.
- Do not lose self control or impair your judgment by the use or abuse of alcohol or drugs.
- “No” means “NO”. It does not mean maybe.
- If someone is unable to give consent it is called sexual assault or rape.
  - Never be drawn in to a gang rape situation.

On line dating

- Never give personal information to people that you don’t know (name, home address, phone number, etc.).
  - If you decide to talk to someone on the phone don’t give out your number; call them and use caller ID block.
  - Use a nickname in chat rooms or message boards.
- Meet chat friends in public places and with other friends; take a cell phone with you.
- Never go to someone’s room, apartment or house that you just met.

Drink Safely

- Not drinking is an option.
- Intoxication seriously impairs your physical and mental abilities and makes you an easy target for becoming a crime victim.
- Drinking impairs our ability to make good decisions concerning our safety.
- Individuals and groups under the influence of alcohol will do many dangerous or illegal things that sober people would never consider.
- If you drink, don’t drive; always have a designated driver.
- If you have problems when you drink, you are probably a problem drinker.
- Alcoholism is a disease; if you or someone close to you needs help, contact your Counseling Center, Health Center, College Security or Police department to determine your best available resource.
Party safety

- Never leave your drink unattended.
- Never accept a drink from anyone but the server at the bar.
- Attend parties with friends and look out for one another.
- If you think your drink has been tampered with, let someone know and go directly to the hospital.
- Control your amount of drinking.
- Never drink and drive; always have a Designated Driver!

If you are a victim/survivor of sexual assault or rape

- Seek help immediately. Call the local Rape Crisis hotline or contact RAINN 1-800-656-HOPE to be directed. You are not at fault. Do not feel guilty or try to forget what happened; it is a crime and should be reported.
- Do not shower, wash or change clothing; valuable evidence could be destroyed. Get medical attention as soon as possible, preferably within 72 hours for physical injuries sustained, sexually transmitted diseases (STD’s) pregnancy prevention (if applicable), and the collection and preservation of evidence crucial to pursuing criminal action.
- If you think you’ve been assaulted while under the influence of an unknown drug (GHB, etc.) seek help immediately. Try not to urinate before providing a urine sample and if possible collect any glasses that you drank from.
- Seek counseling and support to deal with emotional trauma; RAINN (The Rape Abuse Incest National Network) or your local Rape Crisis Service, College Security or the Police will be able to assist with determining the best available resources.

Holiday security

- If you leave campus during school holidays store your bicycle with Student Housing.
- If you leave your car on campus find out where you are supposed to park it and remove all valuables from it.
- Place valuables that you cannot take with you out of sight in your room/apartment/home and unplug all appliances before you leave.
- Park your car in a well-lit location and leave your keys and contact information with a trusted friend.
- If you stay on campus during holidays or the summer be alert to any suspicious persons around the residence halls, bike racks, or parking lots.
- Call College Security or the Police immediately to report any unusual activity.
Helping a crime victim

- Don’t blame or judge the victim.
- Let the victim know that you are sorry for what happened.
  - Offer the support of a professional counselor.
  - Tend to the immediate physical or emotional needs of the victim.
  - Do not disturb any crime scenes.
  - Offer to support the victim if they decide to contact the police.
  - Listen to the victim if they are willing to talk about the crime.
  - Help with transportation, babysitting, cooking or other everyday needs.
  - Offer to accompany the victim to the police station, hospital or courts.
- Tell the victim you will continue to be there for support and follow up with him/her later.

REMEMBER; a safe campus is everyone’s responsibility!