

Safety Fact Sheet
PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

Violent or aggressive incidents are very rare but they do happen. If your work takes you away from your usual base there are a few precautions you can take to reduce the risk. Before leaving your base to carry out a visit, spend time thinking about any possible risks you may face and how you would deal with them.

For a violent or aggressive incident to occur there must be a victim, an offender and an opportunity. By following the practical tips below, you can reduce the opportunity, keep yourself safe and feel confident when out and about.

Safety on the streets

- Consider where you are going and how you are going to get there.
- Plan your route. Avoid short cuts – keep to well-lit streets or busy areas. If you can, avoid quiet or badly-lit alleyways, deserted areas, subways or isolated car parks.
- Be alert, walk with purpose and confidence, this will make you appear less vulnerable.
- Walk facing traffic so that a car cannot pull up behind you unnoticed.
- Avoid chatting or texting on your mobile phone, or wearing earphones when walking down the street alone, this will distract you from your surroundings and could prevent you from hearing danger approaching.
- If you see potential danger, change your route and head for a safe place e.g. a pub, garage, or anywhere there are other people.
- If someone grabs your bag, don't hang on to it, let go. You could get hurt – your safety is more important.
- Consider carrying a personal safety alarm which can be used to shock and disorientate an attacker giving you vital seconds to get away.

Personal safety whilst driving

- When parking in daylight, consider what the area will be like after dark. Try and park in a well-lit area, or under street lighting if you will be returning to your car after dark.
- Whilst approaching your car, have your car keys ready.
- Always keep your windows fully up and your doors locked when driving.
- Don't leave valuables on show, keep them out of sight in the boot.
- Leave enough space between your car and the one in front of you when you stop in traffic.
- Never drive with an almost empty tank, ensure you always have enough fuel.
- Always carry a charged mobile phone and loose change in case you break down.
- Regularly check your tyres, oil and water levels to reduce your chances of breaking down.

If you were ever involved in an incident of violence or aggression, or in a situation that made you feel threatened, report these to your line manager as soon as possible.

Remember – trust your instincts, if you feel uneasy act on your instincts.