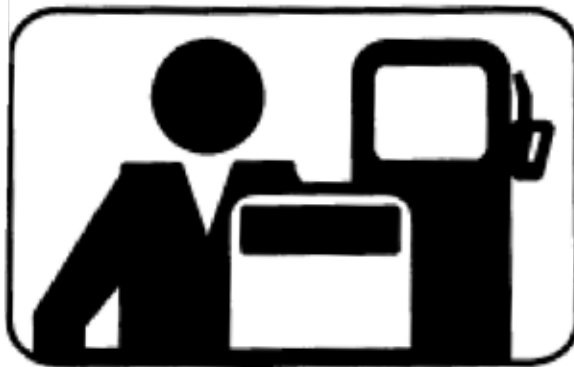


CONVENIENCE BUSINESS SECURITY ACT

Robbery Deterrence and Safety Training Guidelines



SUMMARY OF REQUIRED TRAINING ELEMENTS

- PART I - ROBBERY PREVENTION STRATEGIES (BEFORE THE ROBBERY)
- PART II - ROBBERY REACTION STRATEGIES (DURING THE ROBBERY)
- PART III - POST ROBBERY STRATEGIES (AFTER THE ROBBERY)
- PART IV - PERSONAL SAFETY



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INTRODUCTION

In 1990, the Florida Legislature enacted into law the Convenience Store Security Act (Chapter90-346, Laws of Florida). In enacting this law, the Legislature found that many convenience stores operating during the night and early morning hours, area at risk for robbery. It further found that certain minimum security requirements are helpful in protecting the store employees and the consumer public from robbery and injury.

In1992, the Legislature further defined the issues related to convenience store security. It enacted into law the Convenience Business Security Act (Chapter92-103, Laws of Florida).

As part of the provisions of this chapter, several security requirements are mandated for affected convenience stores.

Section 812.174, Florida Statutes, reads:

“Training of employees.--The owner or principal operator of a convenience business or convenience businesses shall provide proper robbery deterrence and safety training by an approved curriculum to its retail employees within 60 of employment. Existing retail employees shall receive Training within 6 months of the effective date of this act. A proposed curriculum shall be submitted in writing to the Attorney General with an administrative fee not to exceed \$100. The Attorney General shall review and approve or disapprove the curriculum in writing within 60 days after receipt. The state shall have no liability for approving or disapproving a training curriculum under this section. Approval shall be given to a curriculum which trains and familiarizes retail employees with the security principles, devices, and measures required by section 812.173, Florida Statutes. Disapproval of a curriculum shall be subject to the provisions of chapter 120, Florida Statutes. No person shall be liable for ordinary negligence due to implementing an approved curriculum if the training was actually provided. A curriculum shall be submitted for reapproval biennially with an administrative fee not to exceed to \$100. Any curriculum approved by the Attorney General since September 1990 shall be subject to reapproval 2 years from the anniversary of initial approval and biennially thereafter.”

In order to carry out this provision, the Attorney General has established guidelines that are designed to provide a framework of major topic areas that we feel are essential for employees to know and understand. While this is not meant to be a model curriculum or a comprehensive outline of every possible topic that convenience store employees should know about robbery deterrence, the topics included herein must be adequately covered for approval of a training curriculum. Examples of specific training points are included with each major topic area. These examples may be tailored to the individual needs of your company/store, as long as each topic listed is covered in the training.

ROBBERY DETERRENCE AND SAFETY TRAINING GUIDELINES

SUMMARY OF REQUIRED TRAINING ELEMENTS

PART I - ROBBERY PREVENTION STRATEGIES (BEFORE THE ROBBERY)

- A. Understanding Company/Store Security Policies
- B. Visibility
- C. Cash Management System
- D. Security Measures/Devices

PART II - ROBBERY REACTION STRATEGIES (DURING THE ROBBERY)

- A. Robbery Reaction
- B. Robber Identification

PART III - POST ROBBERY STRATEGIES (AFTER THE ROBBERY)

- A. Post Robbery Procedures

PART IV - PERSONAL SAFETY

- A. General Precautions to Avoid Trouble
- B. Alternatives When Confronted With A Rape Situation
- C. After An Assault

PART I - ROBBERY PREVENTION STRATEGIES (BEFORE THE ROBBERY)

A. Understanding Company / Store Security Policies

1. Employees should be thoroughly familiar with all company / store policies that relate to robbery deterrence. In addition, they should understand their specific role or responsibility as it relates to each policy.
2. Examples of specific company policies that should be included under this part include:
 - n Procedures for opening and closing
 - n Cash management (bank deposit and cash counting) procedures that minimize a discernible and are not done in public view.
 - n Procedures for reporting robberies and other crimes that conform to the needs and procedures of local law enforcement agencies in your area.
 - n Policies for greeting and handling customers who come into the store.
 - n Policies for handling suspicious persons or unruly customers.

B. Visibility

1. Visibility into and out of the store, makes natural observers of store employees, customers, and passersby. It also creates a feeling of risk for potential offenders.
2. Examples of specific information that can be included under this part include:
 - n Window signage should allow a clear and unobstructed view of the cash register and transaction area.

- n Window tinting on the windows of the establishment should not reduce exterior or interior viewing in a normal line of sight, as required by Section 812.173, Florida Statutes.
- n Counters, shelves, and display racks should allow employees to see customers throughout the business.
- n Signage prominently placed at the entrance of the business that the cash register contains \$50 or less, as required by, Section 812.173, Florida Statutes.
- n The outside of the building and the parking lot should have enough lighting to allow visibility at night. An intensity of two foot candles per square foot, is required by Section 812.173, Florida Statutes.
- n Trees and shrubs should be maintained in such a manner, that they do not obstruct visibility or block the intended pattern of lighting fixtures. (i.e., provide a clear line of sight between 3 and 7 feet)
- n Interior lighting should be maintained in such a manner that there is clear visibility throughout the store.

C. Cash Management System

1. One of the best deterrents to armed robbery is to practice advertise a cash management system. By keeping the lowest possible amount of cash on hand and letting everyone know it, you can reduce the attractiveness of business to a robber.
2. All employees should be thoroughly familiar with cash management policies and these policies should be strictly enforced.
3. Examples of specific cash management strategies that should be included under this part include:
 - n A cash limit for the register should be encouraged, of no more than fifty-dollars (\$50). Post a conspicuous sign in the convenience store entrance which states that the cash register has \$50 or less (required by Section 812.173, Florida Statutes).
 - n As is also mentioned under security devices, a drop safe or time delay money management container must be installed according to Section 812.173, Florida Statutes. Notice of the fact that the clerk cannot access cash management devices is a robbery deterrent.

ROBBERY DETERRENCE AND SAFETY TRAINING GUIDELINES

- n Safes and cash registers should be closed and locked at all times when they are not in use.
- n Money orders should be used, whenever possible, to pay lottery winners in lieu of cash.

D. Security Measures/Devices

1. Employees should receive training which thoroughly familiarizes them with the purpose of all security measures being utilized by the company/store.
2. Employees should also receive instruction in the proper operation of all security devices, how that equipment is to be maintained and who is to be notified in case of repair or activation of the device.
3. Specific security measures / devices that must be covered to comply with Section 812.173, Florida Statute include:
 - n A silent alarm that notifies local law enforcement or a private security agency that a robbery is taking place. This should be covered in the curriculum even if the business has an exemption from this requirement.
 - n A security camera system capable of retrieving an image to assist in the identification and apprehension of a robber. Training on proper maintenance should be included if that is the responsibility of the employee.
 - n A drop safe or cash management device that provides minimum access to cash receipts.
 - n Height markers at the entrance of the establishment which display height measurements from the floor.

PART II - ROBBERY REACTION STRATEGIES (DURING THE ROBBERY)

A. Robbery Reaction

1. Even with a robbery prevention program that incorporates the above suggestions, there is always a chance that a robbery will occur. Employees should understand that robbery is a potentially explosive confrontation, although most robberies take less than 2 to 3 minutes.
2. It is imperative that all employees be taught how to react in that short period of time in a way that will promote the safety of employees and customers.
3. Silent Alarm – Unless the silent alarm is activated automatically by a bill trap, the silent alarm button should be pushed only if it can be done without notice to the offender. This will promote the safety of employees and customers.
4. Call "911" when the area is secure regardless of whether or not a silent alarm has been activated. Unless critically injured, the employee can assist law enforcement and emergency personnel in effective response to the situation.
5. Examples of specific points that should be covered in this part include:
 - n Be as polite and as accommodating as possible.
 - n Cooperate fully. Do exactly what the robber asks.
 - n Listen carefully in order to be able to comply.
 - n Do not volunteer any information. Speak only in response to the robber's instructions.
 - n Inform the robber if you must make a move to comply with his instructions.
 - n Do not argue, resist, fight, or use any weapons.
 - n Do not chase the robber or leave the store.

B. Robber Identification

1. While our primary concern should be to follow the above safety procedures, employees should also be aware of what they can do to help identify the robber. The more details a victim can remember, the more helpful it will be to law enforcement.
2. Examples of specific points that should be covered in this part include:
 - n Be observant as much as possible without obviously staring.
 - n Notice any unusual physical characteristics (scars, tattoos, limps, etc.).
 - n Unusual speech, mannerisms, clothes, or jewelry should also be noted.
 - n Familiarization with height markers, suspect identity cards, weapons cards, or measures used by the company should also be covered.



Part III - Post Robbery Strategies (After the Robbery)

A. Post Robbery Procedures

1. Immediately after the robber has left, the actions of store employees are critical for several reasons: (1) Any injured persons must be cared for, (2) the potential for a hostage situation must be averted, (3) the police and company officials must be notified, and (4) valuable evidence must be preserved.
2. Time is critical. The possibility of apprehension decreases significantly within the first 30 minutes of a robbery. Training employees in the proper security procedures can help them react calmly and efficiently after a robbery.
3. Examples of specific points that should be covered in this part include:
 - n Lock all doors immediately. Do not allow any one to enter the store until law enforcement officers and company officials arrive. This will prevent the robber from coming back into the store and will minimize the possibility of a hostage situation.
 - n Call "911" or other necessary emergency numbers for any needed emergency medical assistance and to give law enforcement pertinent information.
 - n Call appropriate company management officials.
 - n Ask all witnesses to stay until law enforcement arrives and ask them not to discuss details of the incident.
 - n Discontinue business operations and freeze all documents and cash until police and internal auditors advise you to resume.
 - n Do not touch any notes, money, documents, counter tops or other surfaces the robber may have touched.

- n Armed robbery is an act of violence that arouses extreme fear and terror for the employee victim as well as any customer victims that may be present. They should be that they will experience a variety of other emotions often associated with victims of violent crime. Post robbery counseling can make them aware of some of the ways in which the stress and trauma of the robbery may manifest itself in their (victim) actions and feelings.
- n Employees should be familiarized with company services available for employee victims and procedures for dealing with customer victims after the robbery.

PART IV - PERSONAL SAFETY

A. General Precautions To Avoid Trouble

1. In addition to robbery, there are other situations which can occur in convenience stores that pose a potential threat of personal injury or sexual assault to employees and customers. Some of these situations include: (1) intoxicated persons, (2) confrontations with shop lifters or thieves, (3) equipment malfunctions (car washes, pumps, etc.), and (4) underage purchasers of alcohol or tobacco. Employees should be made aware of these situations, how injury can be avoided, and how to react when confronted.

2. Examples of specific points that should be covered in this part include:
 - n Watch people both inside and outside the store. An alert cashier can anticipate, head off, and avoid many potentially dangerous situations.

 - n Many of these types of problems have occurred in stores because someone starts an argument or fight. Never put the person down. Listen to his/her complaints carefully. Remember that the goal is to avoid confrontation and get the person out of the store without further trouble.

 - n If an argument or fight starts anywhere on the premises, do not get involved. If pushing, shoving, or similar overt actions occur, call the police.

 - n If you feel threatened or intimidated by someone making sexual overtures or lewd comments or gestures, report it to the police and to your supervisor. It may avoid later problems with that same person.

 - n In any suspicious situation where you are concerned for your safety, do not hesitate to call the police and request a courtesy patrol check.

B. Alternatives When Confronted With A Rape Situation

1. The chance of facing a rape situation on the job is small. Statistics show that rapes most often occur in the home or on "date" and "acquaintance" situations. They can and do occur, however, in conjunction with other crimes such as robbery or theft.
2. No one knows how he or she would react to the life threatening terrorizing sexual assault. Individuals can handle and react to such situations better if they are aware of the dangers inherent in a potential rape situation and both prevention and tactical measures that can be taken.
3. Examples of specific points that should be covered in this part include:
 - n Know yourself. Every person is a unique individual whose attitudes and reactions are the result of a combination of many factors.
 - n Realize that every situation is different. The specific circumstances, whom you perceive your attacker to be, and your personal approach and attitude all enter into your response. It is important to think about how you would respond to different situations before they occur.
 - n Alternative tactics include: running, screaming, gaining a psychological advantage, talking and physically resisting. Know the positive and negative features of each, how these relate to your own strengths and weaknesses.

C. After An Assault

1. In the event that an assault does occur, your immediate concerns should be your physical safety and proper medical attention. Help is available. Call the police. As-soon as possible, the police officer will take you to your local hospital or rape treatment center. You can decide later whether or not to prosecute.
2. If you do not want to call the police, at least contact a crisis counselor or physician immediately. These individuals can offer you objective professional advice to help you decide how to proceed.

3. Examples of specific points that should be covered in this part include:
- n Initially, prosecution may be the last thing on your mind, but after your immediate needs have been met, you may want to assist the police. Be sure you don't destroy any valuable physical evidence. Unfortunately, most of this evidence will be on and in your body, so waiting for evidence collection will be especially difficult for you.
 - n DON'T douche, shower, change your clothes or disturb the crime scene, even though that maybe your initial impulse.
 - n If you decide to call the police and report the crime, they will ask you some initial questions regarding the identity and location of the suspect, his direction of flight and any weapons. These questions may be asked in route to the hospital.
 - n Procedures differ among hospitals. Generally, the victim will be asked name, date of birth, brief medical history and perhaps some other general questions. You will first be checked and treated for any visible physical injuries. Any treatment you receive will be strictly your choice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge our references used to determine this information.

- 1.) Lesson Plan: Armed Robbery
Crime Prevention Practitioners Training Course
International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners
Written By: Thomas J. Kudo February 1987
- 2.) Robbery Deterrence Manual
National Association of Convenience Stores
Copyright 1987 by
National Association of Convenience Stores, Inc.
1605 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2792
- 3.) Commercial Crime Prevention Reference Manual
Florida Crime Prevention Training Institute
Office of the Attorney General
Crime Prevention and Training
The Capitol Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1050
- 4.) Crime Prevention Program Development Reference Manual
Florida Crime Prevention Training Institute
Office of the Attorney General
Crime Prevention and Training
The Capitol Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1050
- 5.) Understanding Crime Prevention
National Crime Prevention Institute
School of Justice Administration
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky
- 6.) "Checkpoint Security Program"
Amoco Corporation
Mail Code 5208
200 East Randolph Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60601-7125

In addition to the above listed references, we also received input from crime prevention practitioners throughout the State of Florida as part of the Attorney General's 16th Annual Statewide Crime Prevention Conference in Ft. Myers, Florida on October 11, 1990.