

Public Hazard - Suspicious Persons



Who Is A Suspicious Person?

A suspicious person is either one who is exhibiting suspicious behavior, or who is in an area or doing something that is not normal (such as supposedly changing the oil on a car).



What Is Suspicious Behavior?

Suspicious behavior is sometimes difficult to define, but is one of those things that most people "know when they see it." It is something that is out of place, not quite right, or just makes you feel 'weird' about it. The following is a partial list of behavior that may be suspicious:

- Wearing heavy clothing in warm weather (e.g., a trench coat when it is 85 degrees outside)
- Asking questions that are not common about the location of something, security measures, or availability of chemicals or other items.
- Attempts to conceal the face by turning away when someone approaches (e.g., rapidly)
- turn and pretend to read something on a bulletin board)
- 'Hiding' in shadows or behind objects in an apparent attempt to keep from being clearly seen
- Being evasive when asked a direct question, attempts to change the subject
- Giving too many details that are unrelated to the conversation (e.g., when asked about what they are doing in a restricted area, they start talking about what they did when they got up in the morning, where they parked, everyone else they have visited or know on campus, etc.)

Public Hazard – Suspicious Persons - Continued

- Carrying items that do not fit in with what they are doing (e.g., a student carrying a toolbox into a lecture classroom)
- Door to door solicitors without a properly issued permit.
- Persons involved in a fight, any loud explosions or screams.
- Offers of merchandise or repair work at unusually low prices (could indicate stolen property or some form of fraudulent scheme).
- Apparent business transactions conducted from a vehicle, especially around schools or parks and if juveniles are involved a constant flow of strangers to and from a particular residence on a regular basis especially at late or unusual hours.
- Anyone being forced into a vehicle could indicate a possible abduction.
- Persons loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas, or in the neighborhood.
- An improperly parked car an abandoned vehicle someone leaving one vehicle and driving away in another.
- Anyone observed peering into vehicles as they walk down the street or someone removing license plates, gasoline or accessories from a vehicle, someone attempting to enter a vehicle using a coat hanger or other device, anyone tampering with the hood or trunk of a vehicle.
- Someone carrying certain types of property, i.e., a T.V., stereo, etc. especially when those items are not wrapped as if just purchased.
- The sound of breaking glass or wood
- A stranger entering your neighbor's home while your neighbor is away or someone crossing your or a neighbor's yard; anyone trying a neighbor's door; a moving truck or van pulling up to a neighbor's house while they are away.
- A vehicle or person, not normally on your street, yet keeps passing by, maybe even slowly while looking around.
- Someone hanging around your vehicle
- The sound of footsteps behind you or of a vehicle moving slowly behind you while you are walking.



When at home

1. Observe and note description of individual(s); clothing, hair color, height, etc and what they are doing.
2. Do NOT be obvious that you are observing
3. Call 9-1-1 provide your name and location and what you are observing.
4. Be sure all your doors and windows are locked.
5. If possible take a picture with your phone for law enforcement



When out and about, at school or work:

1. IF you feel safe - Inquire if you can help.
2. Note the location and description of intruder/suspicious person or activity.
3. **Call 9-1-1. Try to keep track of where the person is going. Try to get license number make/model of car if the person gets into a car.**
4. Notify the building security or management office
5. Remember as many details about the intruder(s) as you can, or if safely possible take a picture with your cell phone.



If you are at a bus or subway stop, a parking lot or garage

1. Move towards more people even if it means you will miss your bus or train.
2. **Call 9-1-1.** Try to keep track of where the person is going and what he/she are doing.
3. Note the location and description of intruder/suspicious person or activity
4. Remember as many details about the intruder(s) as you can or if safely possible, take a picture with your cell phone.



If you feel you are being followed:



1. If Driving

- a. Go to the nearest Police or Sheriff's office
- b. Stay on busy roads
- c. Do NOT pull right up onto the car in front of you at a stop light or intersection
- d. Remember as many details about the intruder(s) as you can



2. If Walking

- a. Move towards a busy area or into a public place.
- b. Look for a law enforcement officer
- c. Lace your keys through your fingers for a quick strike weapon.
- d. Remember as many details about the intruder(s) as you can or if safely possible, take a picture with your cell phone.

