

Armed robbery awareness





The Queensland Police Service (QPS), is committed to delivering safe and secure communities across Queensland through developing partnerships to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime. This is to ensure that Queensland is a safe place to live, visit and do business.

An armed robbery on your business could have a significant impact on the health, safety and welfare of your staff and customers. Armed robberies are often unpredictable and can place your staff in dangerous situations. As a business owner, you should be aware of actions that you can take to provide a safe working environment for your employees and a safe place to do business for your customers.

The QPS is pleased to provide you with this Armed Robbery Awareness booklet. This resource has been developed to provide you with practical tips and strategies to reduce the risk, or at least minimise the impact, human and financial of an armed robbery on your business by considering the following strategies which will assist you to:

- Prevent your business being targeted by offenders
- Increase the safety of your employees and customers
- Reduce the impact of crime on your business
- Assist police with the investigations of a crime committed on your business.

This information should be read in conjunction with the Business Security Guide that explains the layered security approach.



We encourage you to:

- Read this booklet, have discussions with your staff on the content and organise formal training in armed robbery awareness with your local Queensland Police Crime Prevention Unit.
- Where relevant, take action to implement design changes to your premises.
- Utilise the available resources in the armed robbery awareness package (height markers, stickers) in relevant areas within your workplace.
- Place the 'CODE A' sticker in relevant areas within your workplace (i.e. cash points).
- Remember: **No amount of money or property is worth risking a life!**

By taking a proactive stance with your business security, you can lessen opportunities for crime and maximise the safety of your staff and customers.

Take the time to conduct your own business security assessment and apply the suggested treatment options where necessary.

For further assistance, or to request an armed robbery awareness training session, please contact your local Crime Prevention Unit.

Protect your business

Design of business premises

- Provide a clear, well-lit view of the premises from both inside and outside.
- Keep sightlines visible around your premises so that staff can see people entering. Maintain landscaping so that ground cover is no higher than one metre and hanging foliage is no lower than two metres.
- Install height markers on the inside of your doors, as this will help you judge the height of offenders.
- Locate 'point of sale' areas away from doors and public areas and in a location that can be seen from both inside and outside.
- Use counters that are wide and high enough to maximise distance between staff and customers to reduce opportunities for contact with your staff.
- Remove clutter (including advertising material and displays) from windows and around 'point of sale' areas.
- Keep store rooms, rear access points, doors and windows secured at all times.
- Use mirrors to monitor blind spots making sure they are positioned to prevent view of cash handling procedures.
- Pay attention to rear access points to avoid dark concealment spots.
- Use electronic sensors to alert staff to customers entering the business.
- If relevant to your business, consider installing a cash window to secure your main entrance during evening operating hours and to serve customers.





Limit the amount of cash held on the premises

Staff management

Under Australian Workplace Safety Legislation, a person who conducts a business has a primary duty of care to ensure the health and safety of workers and others in the workplace which includes violence in the workplace.¹ It is important to be prepared for the possibility of an armed robbery on the premises and to have appropriate processes in place to minimise risks.

Here are some things to consider:

- Staff should be alert to suspicious behaviour and know how to report it.
 - Provide regular training for your staff on security and armed robbery procedures so they know what to do if an incident occurs.
 - Have more than one staff member involved in opening and closing the business.
 - When leaving the workplace, consider departing in groups.
 - Utilise the 'drop the hood' initiative – do not allow entry to persons wearing hooded jumpers, helmets or masks.
 - Ensure all keys and staff passes are returned when a staff member terminates their employment. Implement a key register to control issue and duplication of business keys.
 - If a staff member leaves under difficult circumstances, consider changing cash handling and security procedures and passwords for security and electronic systems if relevant.
- Request armed robbery awareness training from your local Queensland Police Crime Prevention Unit.

Cash handling and storage

Adopting safe cash handling procedures within a business environment can assist in preventing crime.

- Limit the amount of cash held on the premises and publicise this fact with a sign saying “minimal” or “no cash kept on premises”.
- Minimise cash levels by frequently clearing cash registers and securing in a safe.
- Open the cash drawer only when it is in use and keep locked at all other times.
- If possible, have a secure area for handling and counting cash which is out of sight of the general public and access points.
- Ideally, use professional security companies to collect cash and transport it to the bank. If you need to transfer money to the bank yourself:
 - Do so at irregular times and vary the route.
 - Try to use more than one person.
 - Conceal bank bags.
 - Do not wear a uniform or company identification.
 - Do not display cash in public.
- Handle, count and move cash around your business as little and as discreetly as possible.

¹ https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0022/20299/preventing-respond-work-violence.pdf



THESE PREMISES ARE
PROTECTED BY
**TIME LAPSE
ANTI-THEFT
CAMERAS**

Closed circuit television security systems may act as a deterrent and are critical to identifying offenders

| Security

Specific equipment and technology may greatly improve the security of your business. Seek specialist security advice and consider the following:

- Closed circuit television security systems may act as a deterrent and are critical to identifying offenders and assisting police in apprehending them. Systems should be tailored to individual business needs and consideration given to:
 - Camera quality and placement.
 - Camera set-up including lighting and focus.
 - Recording systems (image quality, continuity and storage length).
 - Staff training in operating the system and competency in providing footage to police.
 - Routine maintenance.
- Install a monitored alarm system.
- Install a safe which is secured to a sturdy fixture and consider features such as:
 - Torch and drill resistance.
 - Post-feed deposit.
 - Time delay mechanism.
- Regularly empty cash from registers into the safe.
- Limit the number of safe keys and/ or number of people with the combination.
- Consider sensors or electronic beepers at the business entrance to alert staff to customers.

- Make use of signs and stickers to promote security measures such as;
 - ‘Staff cannot open safe’ or ‘safe is on time delay and cannot be opened by staff’.
 - Premises under constant video surveillance.
- If your business is high risk, you may require security staff to monitor the premises.
- Never publicly discuss your security arrangements, even with friends and instruct your staff to do the same.

In the event of an armed robbery

As soon as it is safe to do so, call Triple Zero (000).

Have an armed robbery procedure in place.

Make sure staff are trained in the procedure and practice it regularly.

During an armed robbery, it is important to stay calm. The overall aim is to ensure the offender leaves the premises as soon as possible, without injuring or harming anyone. Use ‘**CODE A**’ to help you and your staff prepare in case an armed robbery incident occurs.

CODE A

Calm	Try to remain calm. Stay away from the personal space of the offender.
Obey	Obey instructions. Avoid making any sudden or unexpected movements.
Description	Note the features of the offenders, including clothing, scars, tattoos, height, hair colour, accent and speech and any weapons used.
Evidence	Remember what is touched by the offender and do not touch it yourself.
Alarm	Activate the alarm and call police on Triple Zero (000) when it is safe.

After an armed robbery incident

- Call police on Triple Zero (000) as soon as you can and when safe to do so. Be ready to provide your name, address and premises details. You will be asked to describe what happened, what property was taken from the premises and anything you can recall about the offender, their vehicle and their direction of travel.
- Close the premises to the public and isolate the areas where the offender/s confronted staff.
- Ask witnesses to remain to assist police and not to discuss the details of the incident with each other.
- Ensure that no person touches any surface or items that the offender/s have touched. Forensic evidence such as fingerprints may not be visible to the naked eye.
- If contacted by the media, speak to police first. Incorrect statements could jeopardise the investigation or court proceedings. Avoid discussing the amount of property stolen.

Staff support

Crime can impact everyone differently. Some people who experience an armed robbery report a feeling of being scared, violated and isolated after the event. Your staff may experience after effects of the crime in their day-to-day life, at work and with their family and friends. It is normal for people to react differently and it is important for management to assist and support staff post incident.

Some common reactions include;

- **Physical** – nausea, headaches, sleep problems, jumpiness and changes in appetite.
- **Emotional** – sadness, anger, scared, anxious, helplessness, guilt and isolation.
- **Behavioural** – withdrawn, increased smoking/alcohol consumption, difficulty making decisions and changes in relationships.
- **Cognitive** – lack of concentration, flashbacks, reduced performance at work and distressing dreams.

Experiencing these feelings are a normal part of being affected by a crime. In most cases, these reactions are temporary. Support from colleagues, family and friends is an important part of recovery. Free services are available to support your staff and to help manage the effects of crime victimisation.

If you or your staff have been the victim of crime or have witnessed a crime, you can access a range of services through Victim Assist Queensland. This includes financial assistance, information and referrals to support services.



Contact Victim Assist

Request information using the Victim Assist online form

Email Victim Assist:
victimassist@justice.qld.gov.au

Phone 1300 546 587 (business hours)

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