

The 10 Commandments of Agent Safety:

Most crimes committed against real estate agents are crimes of opportunity. When the opportunity exists, the criminal acts. The precautions that follow are intended to minimize those opportunities, thereby effectively eliminating the crime.

- 1. Do not meet a stranger at any property.** Ask to meet at your office (or a public place after office hours) so others can see the prospect. Take a partner (another agent, broker, family member).
- 2. Take your car.** Your environment is safer. Never ride with a stranger.
- 3. Avoid work after dark.** Close an open house well before dark. Show property only during daylight. If possible, write and counter offers during daylight. If not possible, use a partner.
- 4. Dress for safety.** Dress professionally, yet comfortably. Wear comfortable shoes. Avoid expensive jewelry. Do not carry large amounts of money.
- 5. Set a Showing Itinerary.** Use a standard form. Leave a copy with the office or a family member. Let the prospect know that the copy exists.
- 6. Use a Prospect ID Form.** Before showing property, have a prospect disclose on a printed form such information as name, address, auto make and model, auto tag, driver's license, local address, and two references. Verify the information before leaving.
- 7. Use an Agent ID Form.** Make sure your office knows your auto make and model, license tag, and credit card numbers.
- 8. Establish a Coded Distress Signal.** When necessary, be able to call the office or home with a message that would appear harmless to a prospect but would alert others.
- 9. Stop working immediately.** At the first suspicious signal, inconsistent answers, or abnormal or strange behavior, cease working with the prospect. Trust your gut feelings. An embarrassing moment or a lost sale is better than the alternative.
- 10. Notify your broker immediately.** The broker should decide what action to take at that time.

This information is provided by the Birmingham Association of REALTORS®.

For a copy of the three suggested forms (Commandments 5, 6 and 7) contact Dave Mace at dave@birminghamrealtors.com.