

- Securely lock the doors and windows.
- Note any person loitering outside the premises, and if your suspicions are aroused, inform the police.
- Activate the alarm system where appropriate.
- Secure the last door after exiting.

While at work:

- Be alert to unusual activities inside and outside the premises.
- Don't admit visitors to private areas of the premises without suitable identification.
- Don't admit any after-hours visitors if they do not have an appointment, or if you do not personally know them.

What to do if a Robbery Occurs

If an armed robbery occurs:

- Keep calm and don't make any sudden movements.
- Do what the offender demands.
- Memorise as many details about the offender as you can.
- Note the method and direction of escape.

Following a Robbery

Notify the police as soon as it's safe to do so, using the 111 service.

If possible, the telephone line should be left open until the police arrive, so that instructions and information can be passed on without delay.

While waiting for the police to arrive:

- Render first aid to any victims, and let them know that professional help is on its way.
- Shut and lock the outside doors and post a staff member there to allow access to the emergency services and police.
- Preserve the scene and the evidence. As far as possible, avoid touching anywhere the robbers may have left fingerprints, footmarks or other evidence.

When the police arrive, help them as much as possible. They will need to interview all witnesses, including staff. In order to preserve the scene, they may ask to interview you at a police station or away from the premises that have been robbed.

Reactions After a Robbery

Being the victim of an armed robbery can be a traumatic experience. Common reactions include:

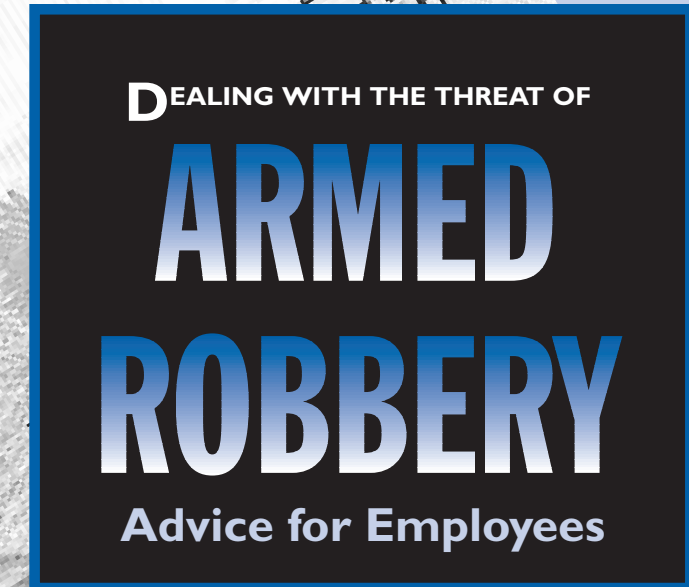
- Anger, or a general mistrust of strangers, and wariness of customers;
- Fear and anxiety attacks, especially of returning to work;
- Feelings of helplessness, isolation, frustration or even guilt;
- Loss of confidence, loss of concentration and sometimes loss of memory;
- Sleeping difficulties, loss of appetite, trembling or outbursts of crying.

If you experience any of these reactions, you should seek professional counselling.

Support from management and colleagues is also very important in the recovery process.

Further Information

See the *Guidelines for the Safety of Staff from the Threat of Armed Robbery*. This is available from any office of the Occupational Safety and Health Service (OSH).



Armed Robbery: Who's at Risk?

Any business handling cash, whether large or small, in town or country, is at risk from armed robbery. So are premises where drugs are stored, or easily convertible items such as liquor and cigarettes.

If you work in such a business, it's essential to take common-sense measures to protect yourself from armed hold-up. You also need to know how to conduct yourself should an armed hold-up occur.

This leaflet has some basic information to help, but it is not intended as a substitute for the training you should receive from your employer.

Employers' Responsibilities

Under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, employers are required to have a policy in place for dealing with significant hazards such as armed robbery. The policy should address:

- Identifying, assessing, minimising and monitoring risks;
- Protecting the premises;
- Security of cash and/or drugs, and/or other valuables;
- Key control;

- Opening and closing routines;
- Access to the premises;
- Training and supervision of staff on safety measures relating to armed robbery;
- Using and maintaining security equipment;
- Action to be taken in the event of a robbery;
- Helping staff after a robbery;
- Liaising with the police.

This policy should be available to all staff.

Security Measures

Employers need to consider security measures for protecting premises and staff, such as:

- Tamper-resistant locks, catches and hinges on doors;
- Locks and bars on windows;
- Intruder alarms;
- Security lighting;
- Closed-circuit television or still camera surveillance;
- Signs indicating that a minimal amount of cash or drugs is held on the premises;
- Physical protection of the cash area;
- Changing the combination for the safe at frequent intervals;

- Controlled entry procedures;
- Security guards.

Transporting Cash

Where large sums of money are transported, consideration should be given to contracting it out to a licensed security firm.

Where a security firm is used, the guards employed on cash transit duties should:

- Be in the uniform of the security company contracted; and
- Display an identification card, which should be presented and checked before collection of the cash.

If you suspect that a guard is not genuine:

- Don't confront the guard;
- Notify the police and the security company at the first opportunity.

If you have to carry out regular bankings yourself, then:

- Use an unmarked bag or container to carry the cash and/or securities.
- Vary the time of day that you make the trip to the bank.

- Vary the route taken wherever possible.
- If possible, rotate the task so that it's not always done by the same person.
- If you can, take an escort whose role is to remain as an uninvolved witness who can raise the alarm.
- Travel by vehicle rather than on foot or by public transport. Take care if using a taxi, as radio communications are open and can alert a person with criminal intent. Choose a reputable taxi firm.

Opening and Closing Premises

Where practicable, more than one staff member should be involved in opening up — and particularly closing — premises.

Before entering the premises:

- Look for anyone loitering around.
- Check for any signs of attempted entry.
- If you're not sure, or the premises are not secure, do not enter. Advise the police immediately.

Before leaving the premises:

- Ensure that time locks are activated, and that the safe is securely locked.
- Check that no unauthorised person is still on the premises.