

A Smart Approach to Safety: Tips for Real Estate Agents

Working in real estate can be dangerous. It's common for agents to meet strangers in isolated locations at odd hours, which can be the perfect setting for an attack. The real estate, rental and leasing industries have seen an average of 77 work-related deaths a year from 2008 to 2011, according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. What is the best way to protect yourself? Arm yourself with a healthy level of mistrust and a smart approach to safety.

Your Profile:

- » Avoid using provocative, "Glamour Shot"-type photos in your marketing materials.
- » Don't give out your home address.
- » Don't give out your home phone number.

Private Showings/Open Houses:

- » Let at least one personal contact and your office know where you are at all times.
- » Don't agree to a private showing unless you've already met a client in your office.
- » Have clients complete an information form (name, copy of driver's license, vehicle information) during Open Houses and prior to scheduling private showings.
- » Bring a co-worker along.
- » Don't leave client(s) in your blind spot. Let the client proceed in front of you during a private showing.
- » Drive through the neighborhood prior to a private showing or Open House. Be on the lookout for safety concerns.
- » Identify each of a home's exits prior to a showing or Open House. Keep exit doors unlocked.
- » Take a self-defense class.
- » Don't allow a client to ride in your car unless you know them well.
- » Don't wear expensive jewelry.
- » Leave your purse in the trunk of your car.
- » Dress professionally, not provocatively.
- » Buy a personal security app for your cell phone, and always keep your cell phone in your hands.
- » Be ready to defend yourself. Travel with pepper-spray.
- » Trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, remove yourself from the situation. Don't worry about offending a client. Your safety is paramount.

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