

Your Personal Safety in the COVID-19 Virus

The past few weeks of uncertainty has taken a toll on many people who have become more fearful of being a victim of a crime. The spike in gun purchases and ammunition have done little to stave off that fear.

I have received calls from several clients and others about what can be done to increase personal safety in these unsettling times. Some fear that their communities will be targeted by bad actors. The reality is we are quite safe in our neighborhoods. Bad guys know that we are all working from home and walking in our communities. If something is suspicious, it will stand out and we will be quick to call 911. The burglary rate for occupied dwellings is less than 2 % in normal times. The reality is the bad guys want your stuff, not you.

The real threat is fraud over the internet or phone calls with bad actors trying to prey on your fears to get you to send money or wire funds to another country. Fraud is pretty easy to spot. Anyone saying they are with the Federal/State government and ask for funds to be sent somewhere should be an immediate red flag. This is particularly true when asked to pay funds with gift cards or "Western Union" or other money transfer businesses. The government looks for payments with credit cards and checks, not gift cards. The surest bet is to hang up the phone and call the actual agency that is claiming you owe them money. Another common threat is that there is an arrest warrant issued for you or there is some issue with your social security number. If there was actually an arrest warrant issued for you, the police would come to your door.

The risk will increase when you leave your neighborhood. It is important to understand that in this day and time we all go to the same places. Most businesses are closed except grocery stores, gas stations, and other businesses that are deemed essential.

We have all learned a lot about social distancing. Let's use those new learned behaviors to pay attention to those who don't follow the guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control by trying to get too close to you. The most likely scenario is someone approaching you in a parking lot. Simply being aware of your surroundings as you get in and out of your car will go a long way to keeping you and your family safe. If something is concerning, let others know at the business you are visiting or call 911 for assistance. Being more aware and less scared will go a long way as we get through these unsettling times.

Stay Safe!

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Personal Safety at Work

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