

# NVAR Safety Guide



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*An exclusive guide  
for members of the  
Nevada Association of  
REALTORS®*

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## Agent Safety

Real Estate can be a rewarding profession. However, by its very nature, showing properties to prospective buyers and tenants, who are in many cases strangers, can be dangerous.

In most instances, doing the three following things can make a huge difference in personal safety:

- Identify any potential clients, copy his/her drivers' license
- Always keep cell phone close and don't hesitate to call 911 in case of emergency
- Trust your instincts.

Simple awareness can go a long way in helping REALTORS® avoid becoming a victim of a violent crime.

## REALTOR® Safety

Increased awareness on the issue has led the real estate industry to respond. New policies are being promoted to change the way REALTORS® work with new clients. These efforts will protect both agents and consumers. Some key examples are: new clients are asked to meet agents in the office for an initial consultation, potential buyers are asked to present identification upon meeting an agent and get lender pre-approval before viewing properties.

It's important to understand the large majority of consumers are honorable, but REALTORS® must also remember the old adage "Better to be safe than sorry," alluding to the small percentage of the public that has to be guarded against.

This is list of safeguards all REALTORS® should adhere to

- Be careful with personal info
- Verify customer information
- Enlist a coworker
- Announce showings
- Scout locations early
- Keep phone in hand
- Keep customer in sight
- Pay attention to exits
- Take a self-defense class
- Trust your gut

The Nevada Association of REALTORS® is committed to protecting its members and maintaining their personal safety. By educating REALTORS® about potential threats and providing them with resources to protect themselves, NVAR can help REALTORS® stay safe.

**SAFETY FIRST**



### - Partners In Real Estate Safety - 10 Security Steps for Companies

Real estate brokerages are often in the best position to help keep practitioners out of harm's way. Here are 10 ideas you might try to keep safety first in the minds of your salespeople.

- Establish safety measures. Initiate office safety strategies such as the buddy system. Compile 'important info' cards on salespeople that can be shared with law enforcement if needed. Establishing call-in procedures can lower risks.
- Have salespeople sign out of the office and indicate where they'll be.
- Have office visitors sign a registration book or prospect card. In large offices issue an in-house ID tag or access card to salespeople and staffers that can be worn at all times.
- Establish a secure location in your office where staffers can go in case of a threatening situation.
- Put safety policies in writing and make sure everyone follows them.
- Make sure private offices and work areas aren't accessible to visitors. The less outsiders know about the inner workings of your office—where salespeople sit, nooks and crannies, and back doors—the better chance you and the salespeople have to escape in an emergency.
- Switch open houses. If safety is a concern, have salespeople partner at open houses. More females than males are attacked.

### Security Steps for Companies (cont.)

- Make periodic checks on your salespeople. Visit or at least call open houses where practitioners are working.
- Know where your salespeople are. Establish a call-in system, requiring salespeople to call the office at specific times. If your office is closed on weekends, arrange for salespeople to call one another.
- Create a secret language. Use a voice stress code, a secret word or phrase that is not commonly used but can be worked into any conversation so that salespeople can indicate if there's a problem.



# REALTOR® SAFETY PROGRAM

### NAR Safety Resources

NAR's REALTOR® Safety program helps REALTORS® understand the risks they face through knowledge, awareness, and empowerment. Go to [NAR.org/safety](http://NAR.org/safety) to read up on its many safety precautions.

**REALTOR® Safety Guide**

### REALTOR Safe Harbor

REALTORS® often need a simple way to find safe, public locations to meet prospective clients. REALTOR® Safe Harbors are locations who have agreed to allow REALTORS® to meet at their office.



REALTORS® can simply go to [REALTORSafeHarbor.com](http://REALTORSafeHarbor.com) to quickly find all Safe Harbor locations in their area. The location can be quickly forwarded to a client with a few clicks. Mobile apps are available for iOS and Android and can be found by searching for "REALTOR® Safe Harbor" on the App Store or Google Play. To sign your office up to become a safe harbor, go to [REALTORSafeHarbor.com](http://REALTORSafeHarbor.com).

REALTOR® Safe Harbor is a partnership between NVAR and Real Agent Guard: We're safer together.

*"The best advice I ever got from a trusted colleague, and it's really pretty basic, is trust your gut. If something doesn't feel right, get out. You can worry about ramifications after you're safe"*

— REALTOR® quotes

## Safety checklist for hosting an Open House or showing property

❑ 1. Notify a co-worker or a family member/friend (for business and off hours showings) of your plans. This could include anyone from office receptionist or fellow REALTOR® to a spouse. Make plans to check in with the designated person at designated times and a protocol if contact at the specific time is not met.



❑ 2. Check cell phone strength and signal prior to the open house/property viewing. Have emergency numbers programmed on speed dial. Carry an extra, fully charged cell phone battery.

❑ 3. Once at the property, turn on the lights and open the curtains. These are not only sound safety procedures, but also great marketing tactics.

❑ 4. Determine several escape routes that can be used in case of an emergency. Make sure all deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.

❑ 5. Make sure that if a back door escape is utilized, escape from the backyard is possible. Frequently, high fences surround yards that contain swimming pools or hot tubs.

❑ 6. Inform a neighbor the property will host a showing and ask if he or she would keep an eye and ear open for anything out of the ordinary.

❑ 7. Call the local police department and ask them to have a squad car drive by during your open-house hours.

❑ 8. When clients/prospective buyers begin to arrive, jot down their car descriptions, license numbers and physical descriptions.

❑ 9. When showing property, always walk behind a prospective buyer. Direct them; don't lead them. Say, for example, "The kitchen is on your left," and gesture for them to go ahead of you.

❑ 10. Listen to your instincts. If a situation feels unsafe or uncomfortable, get out of it.

## REALTOR® Safety

It's not pleasant to think about, but even the most safety-conscious real estate professionals might find themselves in a dangerous situation. If this happens, remember that the primary goal in any incident is to escape from the danger and call for help. Try to find a discreet way of removing yourself from the situation, such as saying you need to step outside to make a phone call and then not going back inside.

If an attack does occur, trust yourself and stay as calm as possible. Think rationally and evaluate your options. There is no one right way to respond to a confrontation, because each situation is different. The response depends on the circumstances: location of the attack, your personal resources, the characteristics of the assailant and the presence of weapons. There are many strategies that are effective, but you must rely on your own judgment.

Make a conscious effort to get an accurate description of your attacker(s). Even the smallest details may give authorities a clue to finding the suspect. Tell authorities everything you can remember, no matter how small a detail it might be. The more information they have, the more likely your attacker is to be caught.



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