An Garda Síochána

Convenience Stores and Newsagents Association of Ireland

Retail Crime Prevention Advice

This advice leaflet is a guide for retailers to practice good retail security policies and procedures. The advice is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive.

The **Garda Retail Security Guide**[1] is available to download on the Garda website www.garda.ie

To contact your local Crime Prevention Officer, please go to the List of Crime Prevention Officers[2] on the Garda website.

Dealing with suspected shoplifter

- Alert other employees immediately if you notice suspicious activity.
- Keep suspect in sight at all times.
- Staff should be sure that a theft has taken place and that the stolen item is in the suspect's possession.
- It may be necessary to allow the thief to leave the shop to confirm that a theft has occurred.
- If possible, two staff members should be involved. Note any explanation provided.
- Staff have no power of search and must call the Gardaí.
- Retailers should have a policy of prosecuting all identified shoplifters.
- The staff member has no power of search and should call the Gardaí at this time.
- The staff member should record details of the incident, and the date and time in their notebook.
- When the Gardaí arrive at the scene they will then take charge and may arrest the offender if an offence is disclosed.
- All retailers should have a policy of prosecuting **all identified shoplifters.**

Preventing Customer Theft

- Join a **Business Watch** scheme as businesses working together can prevent theft from shops.
- Provide security training for all staff, permanent and part-time, in proper cash, stock handling and best crime prevention procedures.
- Establish clear and consistent policies with a monitoring procedure to ensure compliance.
- Schedule an adequate number of employees to work at same time.
- Greet all customers entering the store to let them know you are aware of their presence.
- Display signs and posters to reinforce security messages.
- Design the store lay out so customers must pass the cash register area to exit the store.
- Avoid multiple entrances and exits.
- Close off unused checkout aisles and alarm unlocked exits.
- Never leave the cash register unlocked or unattended.
- Do not allow customers distract the cashier while another person is being served.
- Provide a receipt for every purchase. Require receipts for cash refunds. Cashiers should watch price tags for possible price switching. Ask for a price check if something seems out of place.
- Do not display merchandise near store entrance/exits.
- Keep small expensive items in locked cabinets or behind the counter.
- Keep displays low for better visibility.
- Install CCTV or mirrors to eliminate blind spots in corners that may hide shoplifters.
- Maintain adequate lighting throughout the store.
- Limit the number of items taken into dressing rooms by each customer.
- Install an intruder alarm system to standard (EN 50131) and connect to a PSA approved monitoring centre to standard (IS 228).
- Install Panic Attack Buttons, particularly in cash handling areas.

1 https://www.garda.ie/en/Crime-Prevention/Protecting-your-business/Retail-Security-Guide.pdf
2 https://www.garda.ie/en/Crime-Prevention/Who-is-my-local-Crime-Prevention-Officer-/

Robbery Prevention

Develop a security plan in case of robbery. Ensure staff are familiar with security procedures.

- **Co-operate**. Keep calm. Robbers only want cash and not to be caught.
- **Obey**. Do not argue or resist.
- **Observe.** Look for the unusual. Note as many characteristics of the robbers as possible.
- **Preserve**. Do not touch anything or let anyone in. Wait for the Gardaí to arrive.

Petrol Drive Offs

Signs to look out for:

- Vehicles using farthest pump island.
- Driver remaining behind the wheel while passenger fills up.
- Car doors left open.
- Registration plates hidden or appear altered.
- Bikers not removing their crash helmets.
- Vehicle headlights left switched on.
- Vehicle parked facing away from the kiosk towards the exit.
- Customer hiding behind their own or another vehicle when filling up.
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Preventative measures:

- Request pre-payment.
- At quieter trading times, close off pumps farthest from shop.
- Ensure the view onto the forecourt is clear and unobstructed.
- Ask all customers if they have purchased fuel when they approach tills to pay.
- Do not release petrol to vehicles that have their licence plates obscured from view.
- Do not release petrol to drivers of vehicles who have their faces obscured.
- Ensure that staff are looking out for suspicious activity at the petrol pumps.
- Display clear CCTV signage to help deter offenders.
- Regularly service, repair and clean CCTV cameras.
- Ensure that CCTV images are recording on to a form of data storage.
- Ensure that staff are trained and aware of this crime reduction advice.

Reporting a Crime

- In the event of a robbery, call 999 or 112 for Garda response.
- Provide full details (description, clothing, transport, travel route, movements in store, etc.)
- Note the investigating Garda's details. Request the PULSE incident and Victim of Crime Letter numbers for follow up.
- Request updates on progress of investigation/prosecution from Garda member.
- Email Divisional Victim Services Offices[3] for monthly updates.
- Complaints about policing response should initially be raised with Community Policing Unit and then local Garda management.

3 https://www.garda.ie/en/Victim-Services/Garda-Victims-Services-Offices/List-of-Garda-Victims-Services-Offices-GVSOs-contact-details.pdf

Checking for Counterfeit Currency

- **Feel** - you can feel the raised intaglio printing on all genuine banknotes.
- **Look** - hold the note against a bright light source, the denomination (e.g. €5, €10, €20 etc.) should be fully visible and perfectly formed in the top left hand corner.
- **Tilt** - look at the colour shifting ink on the reverse side of the high value notes (i.e. €50, €100 etc.).
- **Check** - the security thread embedded in the genuine banknote. The watermark and the security thread is visible on the note when held up to a bright light source.

Unsolicited requests for personal and financial information

Unsolicited requests for your contact details or financial information should always be treated with suspicion.

- Ignore all unsolicited communications.
- Check the validity of any proposed financial transaction thoroughly before forwarding any money or personal details.
- Carry out appropriate enquiries if in doubt.

Preventing Burglary and Vandalism

- Doors and locks fittings should be maintained to recognised security specifications.
- Keep the premises well illuminated after closing to ensure high visibility and increase the likelihood of intruders being noticed.
- Consider fitting grilles or shutters to provide a solid barrier around the shell of the building.
- Internal grilles offer a similar level of protection by only leaving the glass windows and/or the doors exposed.
- Consider anti-ram bollards, which are removable during trading hours, in conjunction with shutters or grilles.
- Cash tills should be left open and empty after trading hours.
- Cash amounts retained on the premises should be kept to the minimum and in proper security cash safes.

The advice contained in this information leaflet is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute. Nothing contained in this publication should be interpreted as mandatory, obligatory or designed to conflict with any statutory regulations.