

SAFETY PLANNING TIPS FOR HOME VISITS

Scheduling

- Go early in the day to high-crime neighborhoods.
- Schedule the most challenging case first.
- Know perpetrator's schedule.
- Know when home health aide is at the house.
- Know client's schedule (day program, senior center, ongoing medical treatment).

Communication

- Leave your schedule with supervisor and coworkers.
- Discuss emergency signal plan with supervisor or coworkers.
- Have emergency numbers available.
- If meeting law enforcement, wait for them to arrive.
- If a client or someone else in the home denies access, or is threatening and angrily demands that you leave, you should leave immediately. If you feel the client is endangered, ask for law enforcement assistance and return later with them.
- Be alert and aware of what is occurring, such as verbal and non-verbal communication, level of tension, etc. Keep in touch with your intuition and "gut level feelings". If you start feeling nervous or afraid, even if "nothing happened", make an excuse and leave. Come back later with another APS worker.

Car / Travel

- Use county car when possible to avoid hostile clients learning your license plate number or damaging your car.
- Have your insurance # and AAA # handy.
- Keep maps in car; know where you are going. Avoid wandering on foot through rough neighborhoods or apartment complexes looking for the client's residence.
- Have a full tank of gas; make sure spare tire is in good repair; make sure you have a blanket, jumper cables, water, shovel.
- Lock doors and windows.
- Don't open window more than 2-3 inches to talk to strangers.
- Carry keys in your hand. Have extra car door key separate from other keys.
- Choose a safe path to your car.
- Make sure valuables are not visible – lock them in the trunk when you leave.
- If you think you are being followed, drive to the police or fire station or to a public building

Tools/Dress

- Flashlight , Whistle, Cell phone (fully charged).
- Hand cleaner gel.
- Dog biscuits.
- Dress practically and sensibly.
- Maintain a low profile.
- Leave jewelry at home. Take only what you can afford to lose.
- Carry a shoulder bag rather than a purse – secured between your arm and body.
- Keep hands free - no unnecessary parcels or bags.