

## You Can Help Combat Crime if You are Aware of...

- Suspicious persons
- Questionable actions
- Dangerous conditions

Your information is valuable. Get it to the police quickly. Time is of the essence. Look for the following:

- The individual's height, age and complexion, dress, speech, movements or any peculiarities in appearance or actions. If there are two or more persons, concentrate on one. Compare the physical proportions and age with someone you know.
- Distinguishing marks. A ring or other jewelry, tattoo or scar, missing tooth or finger, bow-legs or a limp.
- The direction taken. If a car is used, note the color, style and license number. If a license plate has several numbers, remember those that come first.

If your group or social organization would like an evening or daytime presentation, contact the Skokie Police Department Crime Prevention/Community Relations Unit at 847/982-5919 or 847/982-5924, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

*The Skokie Police Department has been fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) since November of 1988. Accreditation is a process by which law enforcement agencies voluntarily seek to demonstrate their continued ability to meet nationally recognized standards. Re-accreditation occurs every 3 years.*

*The benefits to Skokie residents, businesses, and employees include controlled liability insurance costs, administrative improvements, greater accountability, and increased governmental and community support for these agencies.*

*The Village of Skokie Police Department's philosophy of community oriented policing is designed to help build a partnership with our citizens. The partnership will work to find solutions to identified issues in our neighborhoods, on our streets, and in our industrial and commercial areas.*

**For more information on Police Department programs and services please visit [www.skokie.org](http://www.skokie.org).**



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**Chief of Police**  
Anthony Scarpelli

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**The Skokie Police Department**



**Village of Skokie**  
**Police Department**  
7300 Niles Center Road  
Emergency: [Fire, Police, Medical] 911  
Non Emergency: 847/982-5900  
[www.skokie.org](http://www.skokie.org)

## The Con Artist

It's very difficult to describe a con artist. Both men and women can be con artists and can successfully manipulate even the most intelligent person. To avoid becoming a victim, it is important for you to be observant of what a person says and does.

## Actions To Watch For

While you can't identify con artists by their looks, you can often spot them by their actions. Here are some things that should trigger your suspicions:

- Whenever you are asked to turn over sizable amounts of cash, be cautious. Consult with trusted family members or friends before making your decision.
- Be cautious of being drawn into "secret deals" wherein you are asked to surrender anything of value. Ask yourself, "Why are you being asked not to tell anyone?"
- Any scheme that promises you rich rewards should be carefully investigated.
- Remember that when someone offers or promises something for nothing, you usually get nothing.
- Be sure contests are not just a "come-on" designed to draw you into a money losing scheme.
- Regarding home improvements, the very best investment you can make is to spend time investigating the reputation of people doing work on your home. They should be reputable and have satisfied customers. It is often advisable to get estimates from several different firms so that you can compare home improvements costs.
- Signing a contract is not a frivolous matter. The contract may be secured by a deed of trust on your house or other item of value. The contract may include a provision that failure to pay on time will permit a judgement to be entered against you.
- Be wary when you are pressured to act immediately or lose out. There is no better insurance than dealing with reputable, highly recommended businesses or persons.

## Other Means of Fraud:

- Telephone calls
- Consumer frauds (through the mail)
- Business opportunities
- Medical frauds
- Advertising campaigns

## Safety When Out and About

1. Do not keep large sums of money or valuables at home. A bank is the safest place for your money.
2. When you go to the bank to make a withdrawal, don't walk away from the counter with the money in your hand.
3. When out walking:
  - Try to walk with a friend.
  - Always walk on the sidewalk and against the flow of traffic.
  - Do not walk close to doorways or alleyways.
  - Walk in well-lit areas.
4. Always lock your car. Check it before entering to be sure no one is hiding inside.
5. Never pick up hitchhikers.
6. Keep your purse out of sight when driving.
7. Do not wear expensive jewelry in plain sight when using public transportation or walking.
8. Be alert when shopping.
  - When using the rest room, don't hang your purse on the hook on the stall door.
  - Never leave your purse unattended in a shopping cart.
  - Avoid carrying a wallet containing both cash and identification.

## Self Protection Rules

Some good rules for self-protection are:

1. Never discuss your personal finances with strangers.
2. Never expect to get something for nothing, especially from strangers.
3. Never withdraw cash from your bank at the suggestion of a stranger.
4. Never be too embarrassed to report the fact that you have been victimized. Reporting the incident to the police will help others from becoming victims.

## Cons to be Wary of:

### Police Officer Impersonators:

You will be told that they are trying to catch a dishonest employee or police officer and you will be asked for money. They may even show you badges and ID cards. If this happens to you, call your local police department to verify their identification. Don't use the phone number that they give you. It could be the phone number of an accomplice. The phone number for the Skokie Police Department is 847/982-5900.

### The Pigeon Drop:

A con artist (male or female) will approach you saying that they have found a large amount of money or some other valuable item and would like to share the wealth. While they are talking to you, a third person (accomplice) arrives. They decide that each should put up earnest money to show good faith. The offenders will attempt to persuade you to withdraw money from the bank, turn it over to them and accompany them to an office building. Once there, one accomplice may say they have to use the rest room but doesn't know where it is. The other subject volunteers to show them where the rest room is. The victim never sees them or the money again.