Restaurants, bars and taverns can be targets for robbery, burglary and theft. These businesses may accumulate a large amount of cash during daily operations, which makes them attractive targets for criminal activity.

**Armed Robberies**

A robbery can happen at any time, but anticipated settings and expected times – like opening and closing – are the most vulnerable. While robberies may involve total strangers, it’s not unusual for current and former employees (and their family or friends) to be involved. Armed robberies often escalate and can lead to serious injuries or death. Fortunately, business owners can implement safety measures to mitigate the likelihood and severity of an armed robbery.

- Staff should be trained to comply with demands rather than confronting robbers. The safety of the staff and customers far outweighs the financial or property loss from a robbery.
- Cash on hand should be kept to a minimum. This has become less of an issue in today’s credit card environment.
- Deposits should be taken to the bank at varied times and through varied routes of travel. Deposit services can be contracted to pick up deposits, which better controls this risk.
- No one, whether hourly employee or manager, should be allowed to be alone in a restaurant, bar or tavern, if possible. Lone employees may be seen as more vulnerable targets for robbery.
- Employees should enter and leave using the “buddy system.”

  - When opening, one employee enters and checks for security-related problems. The other employee waits outside until they receive an “all clear” signal.
  - When closing, one employee exits the restaurant, proceeds to his/her motor vehicle and drives around the building to look for any security concerns. If no problems are observed, an “all clear” signal should be given before others leave the restaurant or bar under the observation of the first employee.
  - If problems occur during either opening or closing procedures, one employee should always be in a position to go for help or call for help.
Employee Theft

Employee theft is the most frequent criminal event in a restaurant. Employees have the greatest opportunity to steal because they have access to the assets and are familiar with the operation of the restaurant. Many restaurant operators place too much trust in those individuals responsible for cash and inventory.

One of the most frequent methods of employee theft of cash is by manipulating sales transactions. Inventory and deliveries should be monitored to ensure the proper stock is received, on hand, and accounted for. Higher value inventory, such as liquor, should be locked in a secured area to prevent theft.

Other means of employee theft include misuse of coupons, gift certificates, complimentary passes, and credit cards.

To help prevent employee theft, criminal background checks should be conducted on any employee with access to the safe, deposits, or keys to the building. Society Insurance partners with IntelliCorp to provide complete background checks at a discounted rate. Find this resource under Programs & Discounts within the Risk Management tab at www.societyinsurance.com.

Violence

Incidents of violence can involve both customers and employees. They may range from verbal threats to use of fists, knives, or guns by both men and women. Violence can also be the result of street gang and drug activity, both inside a restaurant or bar and in the parking lot or patio areas.

The presence of a manager in the dining room/service area has been found to be effective in defusing and preventing potential acts of violence. Violent acts are more likely to develop and escalate when no one of authority is present.

Staff should NEVER get involved in violent acts. Find a safe place and call police to handle the situation.

Burglaries

Burglars are usually after money and inventory, but also steal iPads, POS system hardware, and other electronic devices that are popular in restaurant and bar settings.

Point of Sale (POS) systems can be very expensive, so it is best to leave the cash drawer open and visibly empty to prevent an intruder from breaking the hardware to get the cash drawer open.

Intrusion detection alarm systems should be installed in restaurants and bars to deter burglars. These systems may have panic buttons that staff can use to quickly send signals to police that there is trouble without making a phone call. It may be a good idea to place a panic button in the cooler if it is designated for use as a safe room.
**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**

- ✓ All nooks and crannies (hiding places) on the exterior of the restaurant have been eliminated.
- ✓ Landscaping and plant growth within 4 feet of exterior walkways and doors is no more than 3 feet in height.
- ✓ Trees are trimmed at a height of no less than 6 feet from the ground to the lowest foliage.
- ✓ Outdoor pay telephones have been eliminated.
- ✓ Exterior lighting is bright and covers all outdoor areas.
- ✓ Exterior lighting is on a timer or light sensor system so staff do not have to “turn off” exterior lights.
- ✓ The restaurant property is identified and enclosed with a 3’-4’ high wrought-iron fence, if possible.
- ✓ Video cameras are used to monitor parking lots and other exterior areas.
- ✓ Exterior motion detection lighting systems are employed.
- ✓ Exterior trash or waste containers are located in a locked enclosure.

**Physical Security**

- ✓ Electronic alarm systems are in place and active.
- ✓ Preventative maintenance of alarm is scheduled.
- ✓ Restaurant electronic alarm systems are centrally monitored, which means they are monitored by an off-site alarm monitoring company that can notify key staff and law enforcement quickly.
- ✓ Key staff members have received special training on disabling and activation procedures, including passwords that might be requested by the alarm monitoring company as an “all clear” indicator.
- ✓ Exterior door keys are limited to employees who must have access and keys are marked “Do Not Duplicate.”
CRIME PREVENTION CHECKLIST CONTINUED

Video Surveillance Systems
- Monitors are near cash registers so customers and staff are aware they are being recorded.
- Video recorder (DVR) is out of sight so it is not easily removed or damaged.
- Exterior areas such as parking areas, loading/receiving area, trash disposal area, and exterior doors have good video camera coverage.
- All cash handling areas are monitored by video, including cash transactions as they occur.
- Video system preventive maintenance is scheduled.
- Appropriate restaurant staff are trained in the use of the video system, including how to save copies of incident video to a thumb drive, DVD, or other media.

Freezers and Coolers
- Are ALWAYS able to be unlocked and opened from the inside to prevent entrapment.
- Have an alarm or communication device inside the freezer and cooler.

Restrooms
- Do not have dropped ceilings as they could be used by “stay-behinds.”
- Each stall should be checked before closing.

Exterior Doors
- All solid exterior doors have through-the-door viewers.
- The rear door leading to the trash or waste containers has a buzzer to request re-entry or for deliveries, as well as a peep hole to visually verify who is requesting entry. These doors should NEVER be propped open. An open door may seem like an invitation for someone who doesn’t belong in these areas.
CRIME PREVENTION CHECKLIST CONTINUED

Drive-Thru Windows
- Window is equipped with pull-down "bandit barrier" with bullet-resistant glazing.
- Window is designed to close automatically when not in use.

Roof Access
- Any roof access to the restaurant is locked on the inside of the building.
- Exterior ladders on the side of the building are secured and do not provide access to the restaurant roof.

Safe Management
- The combination to a restaurant safe is changed every time an employee with access to the combination terminates or is terminated.
- The number of people who have access to the safe is limited as much as possible.
- The safe combination is not written anywhere in the proximity to the safe.
- The combination is always scrambled upon closure of the safe.
- Wheels have been removed from the safe and it is bolted into the ground.
- A drop safe is available for staff to drop cash after a certain amount of cash is collected to keep the amount of accessible cash on hand as limited as possible. The policy on cash drop amount has been set and staff have been properly trained on the procedure.