

Personal Safety Tips

Here are some general safety tips to help keep you safe while you are in the U.S.

- Be aware of your surroundings and trust your instincts; they are usually right. If you feel uncomfortable or that something is wrong, leave the area.
- Keep your apartment, dorm room, bicycle and car locked.
- Don't walk alone at night - take a friend or two along.
- Walk in the well-lit areas. Keep a flashlight in your backpack.
- Do not use your passport as an ID. Keep it at home. (You may want to get a SD driver's license or non-driver photo identification card to use as official ID).
- Avoid confrontations through polite refusals. If a stranger is overly friendly or makes a request you don't understand or don't trust, simply say, "I'm sorry. I cannot help you," and walk away.
 - Panhandling or asking for money on the street is common. It is difficult but just keep walking.
- Never use or enter an ATM without checking to see who is around. If you feel uncomfortable, do not enter the ATM area and do not withdraw money.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash with you. It is safer to use checks or debit/credit cards.
- Never open your door to someone you do not know. Official company representatives and service personnel from companies such as Southern Connecticut Gas, Federal Express, Comcast, etc. will wear uniforms and carry official identification. Ask for their ID before allowing them to enter your home.
- If you are offered something on the street or over the telephone and you feel uncomfortable, you can say, "No thanks," and walk away or hang up.
- Never give personal information (e.g. name, address, social security number, credit card number, etc.) over the telephone, or through email.
- Have your keys in your hand and be ready to quickly open the door of your car or apartment.
- If someone approaches you, demands your money, or personal property and threatens to hurt you, do not resist. Give them what they ask for and report the incident to the police immediately.
- Do not leave valuables visible in your vehicle.

Do not leave your books, backpack, purse or other valuables unattended anywhere, including the library or your office.