

Seven Simple Steps To Reporting A Crime or Suspicious Incident

Reporting a crime accurately is essential for law enforcement to effectively respond and investigate. Here are the best steps to follow when reporting a crime:

1. **Ensure Personal Safety**: Prioritize your personal safety and the safety of others involved. If there is an immediate threat or emergency, call emergency services or the appropriate emergency hotline right away. If it's happening now, dial 911.
2. **Call the Appropriate Authorities**: Contact the local law enforcement agency responsible for the area where the crime occurred. Use the designated emergency or non-emergency number provided by the agency. If you are unsure about the appropriate agency to contact, you can ask the emergency operator for guidance.
Bandera County Non-Emergency: 830.796.3771
3. **Provide Key Information**: When reporting the crime, provide the following essential details:

a. **Nature of the Crime**: Describe the type of crime that occurred (e.g., theft, assault, vandalism) and provide any relevant details about what happened.

b. **Location**: Clearly state the exact location of the crime, including the address, landmarks, or any other identifying information to help law enforcement locate the scene.

c. **Time and Date**: Provide the specific date and time when the crime occurred or when you became aware of it. Accuracy in reporting the timeline is crucial for investigation purposes.

d. **Description of Individuals Involved**: Provide a detailed description of any individuals involved in the crime, including their physical appearance (height, weight, hair color, clothing), distinguishing marks or tattoos, and any other relevant details that can help identify them.

e. **Description of Vehicles**: If any vehicles were involved, provide information such as the make, model, color, license plate number, and

any unique features. These details can assist law enforcement in locating and identifying the vehicles. Use your camera; a picture is worth a thousand words.

4. Stick to the Facts: Stick to factual information and avoid speculating or making assumptions about the incident. Provide only information that you personally witnessed or experienced. It is crucial to provide accurate and objective details to aid law enforcement in their investigation.
5. Remain Calm and Cooperate: Stay calm and composed while speaking with law enforcement. Answer their questions to the best of your ability and provide any additional information they may request. Follow their instructions and cooperate fully.
6. Provide Contact Information: Provide your contact information to law enforcement so they can reach out to you for further details or updates regarding the case. If you wish to remain anonymous, let them know, and inquire about any anonymous reporting options available.
7. Document Your Report: If possible, write down the information you provided during the report. This can serve as a reference for future discussions or if additional details need to be provided later. Ask for the report number. Each agency has unique report numbers to track an incident; ask for this and note the officer's name, if possible.

Remember, it is crucial to report any information you have in a timely manner. Prompt reporting increases the chances of successful investigation and apprehension of suspects. Cooperating with law enforcement is vital for ensuring a thorough and accurate report.