



Checklist: Safety During Client Home Visits

This checklist is designed to help you prepare for client home visits. It can be used by staff and volunteers prior to every home visit. Accidents and incidents frequently occur when we become familiar with a client and their neighborhood, so we let our guard down. This checklist is a tool to help staff stay informed and aware. Note that this tool does not give guidance on what to do in case of an emergency or security threat. Be sure you are aware of your organization's safety and security protocols, including how to contact emergency services or other support if needed.

	Task	Sub-task	Check or Initial When Completed
Before the Visit	Call the Client	Take fully charged work cell phone with you	
		Familiarize yourself with your destination, routing, and safe havens	
		Study the neighborhood and home using online resources	
		Confirm client is or will be home by the schedule time	
		Confirm the client's correct address	
		Ask if anyone else will be home during the visit	
		Ask if any community safety issues have arisen recently (crimes, violent incidents, concerns about neighbors, increased police presence)	
	Check You are Comfortable and Have Everything You Need	Wear comfortable shoes that you can walk or run in as needed	
		Wear clothes in which you feel comfortable talking to your client and entering their community	
		Confirm that your phone is charged	
		Confirm that your vehicle's gas tank is at least half-full (if driving)	
		Confirm that you have your work badge/identification	
		Avoid leaving valuables in your car, if you must hide them	

Arriving at the Visit		Park facing the direction you need to leave	
		Park as close to the client's home as possible	
		Avoid parking in-between two vehicles when possible	
		Keep your phone in your pocket or otherwise easily accessible	
		Lock your car doors	
		Look and listen for signs of disturbances, hazardous chemicals, and/or animals	
During the Visit	Safety in the home	Know where all exits are	
		Always know everyone who is in the residence	
		Do not enter areas you cannot safely see into (crawl spaces, attics, outbuildings etc.); use a mirror to look around corners	
		Continually assess everyone's emotional states, including your own	
		Maintain personal and professional boundaries	
		If you sense potential harm or danger exit immediately	
Leaving the Visit		Have your car keys out and ready as you approach your vehicle	
		Pay attention to your surroundings, including people and activity near the residence and your vehicle	
		Observe the back seat before entering your vehicle	
		Lock your doors	
		Do not sit in your car. Leave the area. As needed, find a neutral place to complete paperwork	
		If you are being followed, go to a police or fire station; do not go to your home or office	
		If in danger, move to a safe area before making any calls, including 911 services	
At any point before, during or after a visit you are in danger or sense a potential from harm *Call 911			

This checklist is adapted from NASW (2013) Guidelines for Social Work Safety in the Workplace.