

Retail Pharmacy Robbery Tips and Prevention



Pharmacy burglaries and robberies are on the rise. According to the DEA, in 2018, the United States saw over 676 retail burglaries and 107 armed retail robberies, with California, Maryland, and Texas being the top states with the most incidents.¹

As a pharmacy owner your primary concern is the safety of your pharmacy workers and pharmacy patients. Here are a few tips to protect your customers, coworkers, and your business during a robbery; and steps you can take to keep your pharmacy from being a target in the future.

What To Do During A Robbery

Do not resist! Cooperate fully with the robber and follow their instructions. Remain calm and avoid sudden movements. Do exactly what you are told to do, nothing more and nothing less. Make mental notes of the robber's aspects (ex: clothing, hair length and color, size, build, tattoos, scars, and other body features). Do not attempt to apprehend the criminal yourself.

It's Over... Now What?

Immediately get treatment for anyone who may be injured. Sound the alarm as soon as possible. Call police first, then your supervisor. Lock doors to prevent re-entry and keep them closed until

the police arrive. Request that customers remain in the store to give a statement to the police. Protect the crime scene. Stop others from touching anything touched by the suspect(s). Do not trust your memory. The quicker you write down what you observed, the better.

If controlled drugs were taken, report it to your local DEA Field Office, in writing, within one business day and submit a completed [DEA Form 106](#)², Report of Theft or Loss of Controlled Substances, as soon as possible. Send a copy to your wholesaler. You should also file a report with the State Board of Pharmacy.

Prevention Tips

Install an alarm system and test it often. Install security cameras behind the cash register facing the front counter. Use signage, such as "Premise Under Video Surveillance." Inspect cameras regularly to ensure they are functioning. Properly store recorded data. Install hold-up/duress buttons, door & window bars, pull-down gates, reinforced heavy-duty doors, and frames. Invite local police to conduct a security assessment. Ensure there is adequate outside lighting and leave some lights on after closing.

Change locks, alarm codes, and safe combinations when an employee leaves. Have at least two employees open and close the store. Try to greet customers as they enter your pharmacy. Your attention can discourage a robber. Watch for people hanging around and not buying anything. Beware of suspicious activity outside your business. Secure any wall or window-mounted air conditioners.

Closing Thoughts

In times of a robbery or burglary, it is essential to be prepared. Always be aware of your surroundings and don't get caught off guard. Using these tips and sharing them with your staff can help make sure your business, colleagues, and patients stay safe.

Not sure where to start? Through our partnership with Aspire Health, Keystone can provide the resources and support to assist your pharmacy in times of need. For any questions, please connect with your Keystone Business Consultant via email at info@kpparx.com.

Sources:

- 1) https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/21cfr_reports/theft/tlr_maps.html
- 2) https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/21cfr_reports/theft/DEA_Form_106.pdf