

You can only identify a terrorist threat by observing or hearing about suspicious activity that may lead to a criminal act.

Factors such as race, ethnicity, and/or religious affiliation are NOT suspicious. The public should only report suspicious behavior and situations (e.g., an unattended backpack or package, or someone breaking into a restricted area). Only reports that document behavior that is reasonably indicative of criminal activity related to terrorism will be shared with federal partners.

## REPORTING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

As you go about your daily routine, if you notice things that appear out of the ordinary, contact police.

To report immediate threats or emergencies, call **911**

To report suspicious activity or behavior, call: **(202) 727-9099**

Or report by using MPD's iWATCH website: **iwatchdc.org**

Report by using MPD's Text Tip Line at: **50411**



Text, photo and video messages are monitored by members of the MPD 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you would like a police response for any incident, please call 911. All tips may also be directed to (202) 727-9099 and may be eligible for a reward.



# Citizen's Guide to Suspicious Activity

if you SEE something,  
SAY something.™

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

The key to preventing terrorist incidents in our nation's capital is **cooperation** between law enforcement and the community.

Our nation continues to face domestic and foreign terrorist threats, active shooter scenarios, vehicle ramming into crowds, straight edge attacks and other public acts of violence, citizens are compelled to take a more active role in the observation and reporting of suspicious activity or behavior. As the nation's capital, we have access to some of the country's greatest institutions, monuments, and museums. It is usually an individual such as yourself that will be the first to notice something out of the ordinary. When that happens, it is critical that these suspicions be immediately passed on to law enforcement, so that the information can be examined, evaluated and, if necessary, acted upon.



## What is Suspicious Behavior?

Suspicious activity is any observed behavior that could indicate a person may be involved in a crime or about to commit a crime. Each of us might think of different things when it comes to what appears suspicious. Here are some unusual behaviors that could be indicators of terrorist planning:

**Unusual items or situations:** A vehicle is parked in an odd location, a package/luggage is unattended, a window/door is open that is usually closed, or other out-of-the-ordinary situations occur. Multiple false alarms or fictitious emergency calls to a location or multiple venues of the same type (possibly to test emergency response).

**Eliciting information:** A person questions individuals at a level beyond curiosity about a building's purpose, operations, security procedures and/or personnel, shift changes, etc. Has anyone attempted to gain unusual information in person, by phone, mail, or email regarding your business or a facility nearby?

**Stockpiling Supplies:** Have you observed abandoned vehicles, suspicious materials or trash, or persons loitering in your neighborhood?

**Acquiring Supplies:** Are you aware of anyone trying to improperly acquire explosives, weapons, ammunition, or other dangerous materials that could be used in a terrorist act? A person purchasing items in quantities higher than household use that could be used to construct an explosive device (hydrogen peroxide, acetone, gasoline, propane, or fertilizer) or storing large quantities of these items.

**Surveillance:** Someone pays unusual attention to facilities or buildings beyond a casual or professional interest.

- » concealing the use of a camera or video camera
- » making notes, diagrams, or sketches of an area
- » asking unusual questions about or having a prolonged and unexplained interest in the facility, infrastructure, security.
- » making observations of or asking questions about facility HVAC (ventilation) systems.
- » observing security reaction drills or procedures at a facility
- » attempting unauthorized access to facility areas
- » taking pictures or video of security cameras, loading docks, ingress and egress points, etc.

## What to Do If You Spot Suspicious Behavior

If you see suspicious behavior, **do not confront the individuals involved.**

Contact your local law enforcement agency. Describe specifically what you observed, including:

- » Who or what you saw
- » When you saw it
- » Where it occurred; and
- » Why it's suspicious.

You may report suspicious behavior anonymously.

If suspicious activity is in progress, or an emergency exists, call **911**.

## Important Places to Watch

- » Government buildings
- » Religious facilities
- » Sports/Entertainment venues
- » High-rise buildings
- » Mass-gathering locations — parades, fairs, etc.
- » Schools
- » Hotels
- » Theaters
- » Shopping malls
- » Bridges
- » Public transportation

