

ESCONDIDO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Crime Suppression Division



THEFT PREVENTION FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

I. SHOPLIFTING

Webster's Dictionary defines shoplifting as "to steal goods from a store."

To arrest and prosecute someone for shoplifting, the following elements need to be met before an arrest can be made:

- See the suspect take the merchandise
- See the suspect leave the store without paying for the item

II. REPORTING

Before you (and your business) become the victim of a crime, you must decide which course of action you wish to follow. Whatever policy you choose for your business, be sure to educate your employees on it.

- Prosecution/Police Report
 1. If you wish for the suspect to be arrested and prosecuted, you may detain or have the Police Department detain the suspect.
 2. You will need to be able to identify the suspect to achieve prosecution.
 3. You must also be willing and prepared to testify in court at a future date and time. **If you do not desire prosecution, do not arrest/detain the suspect(s).**

- Incident Report Number

If you wish for the incident to be documented but do not desire prosecution, you may obtain an incident number from the Escondido Police Department Dispatch after reporting the incident.

- No Police Assistance Desired

If you do not want prosecution or need the incident documented, please call the Escondido Police Department anyway to alert us of the incident. It helps us track and pattern criminal activity.

III. TO REPORT A CRIME

If the crime occurred in the **last 10 minutes and you desire prosecution, then call 911 immediately**. If the crime occurred **over 10 minutes ago and/or you do not desire prosecution, then call the Escondido Police Department's non-emergency line at (760) 839-4722**.

Advise Dispatch that you wish to report a shoplift/beer run that occurred in the last (specify) number of minutes. Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Can you identify the suspect and are you willing to prosecute?
- Direction of travel – what direction did the suspect go (north, south, east, or west)? Street names are very helpful.
- Did they leave on foot or in a vehicle? If in a vehicle, make, model, color, number of doors, and license plate number are very important and helpful.
- Description of the suspect(s), including race, sex, approximately age, height (use your door chart), weight, clothing description and color, hair color, length of hair, eye color, facial hair (smooth, beard, fuzz), tattoos or noticeable characteristics.
- Leave Dispatch your name, store name, address, phone number and what was taken.

The Business Liaison Officer will be happy to come out and complete a site survey of your property (760) 839-4948.