

# **MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL SECURITY SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT**

Survey Number:

Date of Survey:

Prepared For:

Address:

Name of  
Reviewing  
Officer:

Preparing  
Entity:

The following survey has been compiled in accordance with commonly accepted multi-residence, security standards. Each section contains explanatory reference material that has been made available to the public courtesy of the San Diego Police Department's community relations and crime prevention program.

The inclusion of this material is not a suggestion of deficiency on the reviewed property but is instead a general review of best practices.

The reviewing officer has included property-specific comments and suggestions at the end of the report.

## **SECTION 1: BUILDING DOORS AND GATES**

Doors or gates that a person would use to enter the building and leave it in an emergency must be readily openable with one motion from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort. These egress doors or gates must open with push bars or lever arms and have EXIT signs.

The reviewing officer will check all items that either meet guidelines or are not applicable.

### **1.1 Access to any exterior lobby doors is limited to residents and their visitors.**

Lobbies typically exist in buildings in which unit doors open to interior hallways. Its doors should be the only ones used by residents and visitors to enter and leave the building. They should be locked on the outside at all times except when a receptionist or security guard is on duty to control entry.

At other times residents should use access cards or fobs to open these doors. Cards or fobs are preferred over keys and keypads for the following reasons: a record can be kept of their use; they can be used on other gates and doors in the building; they can be deactivated when reported lost or stolen, or when the resident leaves; they cannot be duplicated and given to unauthorized persons; and their use can be restricted by day of the week, hours of the day, location in the building, and duration.

An automated entry system should be installed outside the lobby doors to enable visitors, including delivery and service people, to call residents to be "buzzed in" or met to be let in when the doors are locked.

### **1.2 Single entry doors are properly framed so as to prevent outside access. Door release sensors do not pick up activity originating from outside and are connected to a back up power source.**

A door that is opened on the inside by a push bar and has a gap between it and its frame can be opened with an L- shaped bar that is inserted next to the bar, turned 90 degrees, and pulled to depress the bar. This can be prevented by attaching a strip of metal or some other material to the door to cover the gap. It is better if there is no gap between the door and its frame.

A door that is opened on the inside by a press bar, i.e., one that rotates down when pushed, and has a gap underneath it can be opened with a lever-opening tool like the Keedex K-22. This tool has a curved wire that is inserted under the door and raised to hook over the bar on the inside of the door. The wire is then pulled to rotate the bar down and open the door. The easiest way to prevent this is to attach a threshold strip to the floor under the door and use a door with a brush door-sweep on the bottom. This would close the gap and prevent the tool from being inserted.

A door that is opened on the inside by a lever arm and has a gap underneath it can also be opened with a lever- opening tool like the Keedex K-22. Its wire would be inserted under the door and raised to hook over the lever arm on the inside of the door. The wire is then pulled to rotate the lever arm down and open the door. As stated above, use of a threshold strip and brush door-sweep would close the gap and prevent the tool from being inserted. A door with a beveled latch should have a latch guard that extend at least 12 inches above and below the latch. This will prevent a person from sliding something between the door and its frame to push in the latch.

A door that is locked magnetically and does not have a bar that unlocks it from the inside must

open automatically when a person approaches the door from inside to leave the building. The sensor that detects this motion or heat needs to be aimed far enough back from the door so a person outside cannot slip something between the door and its frame to create motion or a heat signature and thereby open the door. Or a strip of metal or other material can be attached to the outside of the door to close the gap and prevent a person from inserting anything between the door and its frame. Another way to prevent this is to replace the sensor with a button that would be pushed to open the door from the inside. Doors with magnetic locks will need backup power to keep them locked and enable the button to work during a power outage.

### 1.3 Double entry doors are framed so as to prevent outside access. Door release sensors do not pick up activity originating from the outside and are connected to a back up power source.

Doors that are opened on the inside by a push bar and have a gap between them can be opened with an L- or T- shaped bar that is inserted next to the bars, turned 90 degrees, and pulled to depress one or both bars. This can be prevented by attaching a strip of metal or some other material to one door to cover the gap. It is better if the doors have no gap or a post between them.

Doors that are opened on the inside by a press bar, i.e., one that rotates down when pushed, and have a gap underneath them can be opened with a lever-opening tool like the Keedex K-22. This tool has a curved wire that is inserted under the door and raised to hook over the bar on the inside of the door. The wire is then pulled to rotate the bar down and open the door. The easiest way to prevent this is to attach a threshold strip to the floor under the door and use a door with a brush door-sweep on the bottom. This would close the gap and prevent the tool from being inserted.

Doors that are locked magnetically and do not have a bar that unlocks them from the inside must open automatically when a person approaches the door from inside to leave the building. The sensor that detects this motion or heat needs to be aimed far enough back from the door so a person outside cannot slip something between the doors to create motion or a heat signature and thereby open the doors. Or a strip of metal or other material can be attached to the outside of one door to close the gap and prevent a person from inserting anything between the doors. Another way to prevent this is to replace the sensor with a button that would be pushed to open the door from the inside. Doors with magnetic locks will need backup power to keep them locked and enable the button to work during a power outage.

### 1.4 Glass doors meet UL standards.

Glass doors usually contain safety glass, which shatters easily when hit with a sharp object. Thus, a burglar can easily smash a hole in the glass to enter the business and carry things out. This can be prevented by using a burglar-resistant material in them that meets Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 972 standards. These materials look like safety glass but will not shatter easily, even after repeated blows.

The following materials can be used:

**Laminated glass** is made with a vinyl or plastic inter-layer sandwiched between two layers of glass. This type of glass adds additional strength to your windows. To gain entry a burglar would have to strike the glass repeatedly in the same spot in order to make a small opening. Most burglars are reluctant to create this type of noise for fear of being detected.

**Tempered glass** is made by placing a piece of regular glass in an oven, bringing it almost to the melting point, and then chilling it rapidly. This causes a skin to form around the glass.

**Fully tempered** glass is four to five times stronger than regular glass.

**Wired glass** adds the benefit of a visible deterrent. Extra effort will be needed to break the glass and then cut through the wire located within the glass in order to gain entry.

**Plastic acrylics** are more than ten times stronger than glass of the same thickness and are commonly called Plexiglas.

**Polycarbonate sheets** are superior to acrylics and are advertised as 250 times more impact resistant than safety glass, and 20 more times than other transparent plastic.

Glass with a security film attached to the inside can also be burglar-resistant. It requires repeated blows to break through, which take time and make noise. A burglar faced with this task might give up and go away or look for another way or place to break in.

## 1.5 Gates discourage unauthorized access from outside.

Some buildings have gates instead of doors. They should be kept locked all the time. Residents would use their access cards or fobs to open them. Visitors would use a telephone-entry system to call to be “buzzed in” or met to be let in.

Wrought-iron gates that are opened on the inside by a lever arm or knob should have shields on them and the adjacent fencing to prevent a person from reaching in to open them. These shields can be solid plastic or metal, or open-metal mesh. Gates with lever-arm locks should also have a cylindrical shield around the arm to prevent a person from opening the gate by inserting a thin wire with a hook at one end through, over, or under the gate to rotate the arm and thus open the gate. Gates with locks that have beveled latches should also have a latch guard to prevent a person from inserting a thin piece of metal or anything else between the frame and the gate to push in the latch. The guard should be centered on the latch and extend at least 12 inches above and below it.

Wrought-iron or chain-link gates that are opened on the inside by a push or press bar should have a solid metal or plastic shield on the inside of the gate that extends at least two feet above and below the bar. The shield should be designed to prevent a person from opening the gate from the outside with a coat-hanger wire that is shaped into a U, inserted through the gate above and below the bar, and pulled against the bar to open the gate. The shield will also prevent a person from reaching in and depressing the bar. Another shield should be installed around the bar. It will prevent the use of the wire and anything else to depress the bar. The gate should also have a latch guard if it has a beveled latch.

All gates should also have springs that close them securely after a person goes through. Also, the gates and the adjacent fencing should be at least 6 feet high.

## 1.6 Doors and gates are alarmed and marked with signage.

Many buildings have problems with unauthorized entries because doors/gates (1) don't close and lock securely when a person enters or leaves the building or (2) they get propped open to allow people to enter the building. To prevent the first, all doors/gates should be well maintained and have strong springs that close and lock them securely when a person enters or leaves the building. While propping doors/gates open cannot be prevented, it can be deterred. Cameras can be installed inside the doors/gates so people who prop them open can be identified. And a rule that prohibits propping should be included in all leases with a warning that violations can lead to eviction. These measures should help deter propping. Propping for delivery or service people who need to make repeated trips into the building would be permitted. The property manager or the person on the property responsible for security should be informed when this occurs.

When deterrence doesn't work, other measures and procedures are needed to deal with the

problem. But first, the property manager or the person on the property who's responsible for its security needs to know a door/gate is not locked. This is possible with an alarm system that will call the cell phone of the manager or person on the property responsible for its security when a door/gate is open for longer than several seconds, i.e., the time it would normally take someone to go in or out. He or she would go and lock it. If a camera is installed its imagery would be reviewed and the cause of the alarm investigated.

This procedure works well when someone is in the building to receive and respond to an alarm. When no one is there when an alarm occurs, another procedure is needed. One that has worked in some buildings is an audible alarm that sounds when a door/gate is unlocked for more than a several seconds. It would keep sounding until someone in the building gets tired of hearing it and goes to lock the door/gate. For this to work the residents will need to be educated in this procedure and convinced that their security is more important than the occasional disturbance caused by the alarm.

Doors/gates that are only emergency exits should have signs saying FOR EMERGENCY USE ONLY. Building newsletters should explain why this is necessary for security. Their use in non-emergencies can be deterred by cameras that record people using them, audible alarms that sound when a door is opened, and delayed-egress door hardware. (The latter would be overridden if there is a fire or smoke alarm, or a loss of power in the building.) In apartment buildings a rule that prohibits the use of emergency exits for other than emergencies should be included in all leases with a warning that violations can lead to eviction.

### 1.7 Emergency responder access protocol in place.

Provisions should be made for access by emergency responders who responding to a call for service or conducting an investigation.

If the entry system has backup power, which would be needed in the event of a power failure to keep it operational, emergency access can be provided with a numerical keypad or a telephone-entry system. An entry code should be provided for use at the building door or gate, elevators, and a perimeter gate if the building is fenced. It would be stored at the police department and transmitted in dispatch messages to officers who need to enter the building.

If the entry system does not have backup power, officers will need a key to open the doors or gates.

Once officers enter the building they will need to go straight to the location of the problem. To make this possible a map showing the locations of all units and a YOU ARE HERE reference point should be posted in the lobby where the officers will be sure to see it. The map should also show all elevators, stairways, entrances and exits, common areas, and other rooms.

## SECTION 2: UNIT DOORS AND WINDOWS

### 2.1 Single doors are properly constructed.

Single-swing wooden doors are either of solid or hollow core construction. All unit doors should be solid, at least 1-3/4 inches thick, and have a deadbolt lock.

### 2.2 Deadbolt locks installed.

Doorknob locks offer no security. Burglars can easily defeat them. All exterior doors and interior doors to garages should have an additional high-quality deadbolt lock.

Deadbolt locks are of two basic types, single-and double-cylinder. The former has a thumb turn on the inside. The latter requires a key to lock or unlock the door from either side. It is not permitted in the Fire Code. Deadbolts should have the following characteristics:

Throw of at least 1 inch

Free-spinning and tapered or angled outer edge of the cylinder guard to make it difficult for a burglar to twist off the lock.

Solid brass, bronze, or steel exterior

Steel rods or bolts at least 1/4-inch in diameter connecting the exterior of the lock to the inside part

5-pin tumbler system locking mechanism and changeable locking cores

Resistant to "bumping"

For rental units landlords should install and maintain an operable deadbolt lock on each main

entrance door, and install and maintain operable window security or locking devices for windows

This has been a sample of the apartment security survey. You may find the complete 14 section survey by downloading the book **How to Get Clients for Your Private Security Agency**.

This book contains detailed instructions on using the survey as a tool for acquiring private security clients in the apartment niche.

It also provides a sample completed survey.

<https://securityofficerhq.com/books/get-clients-security-agency>