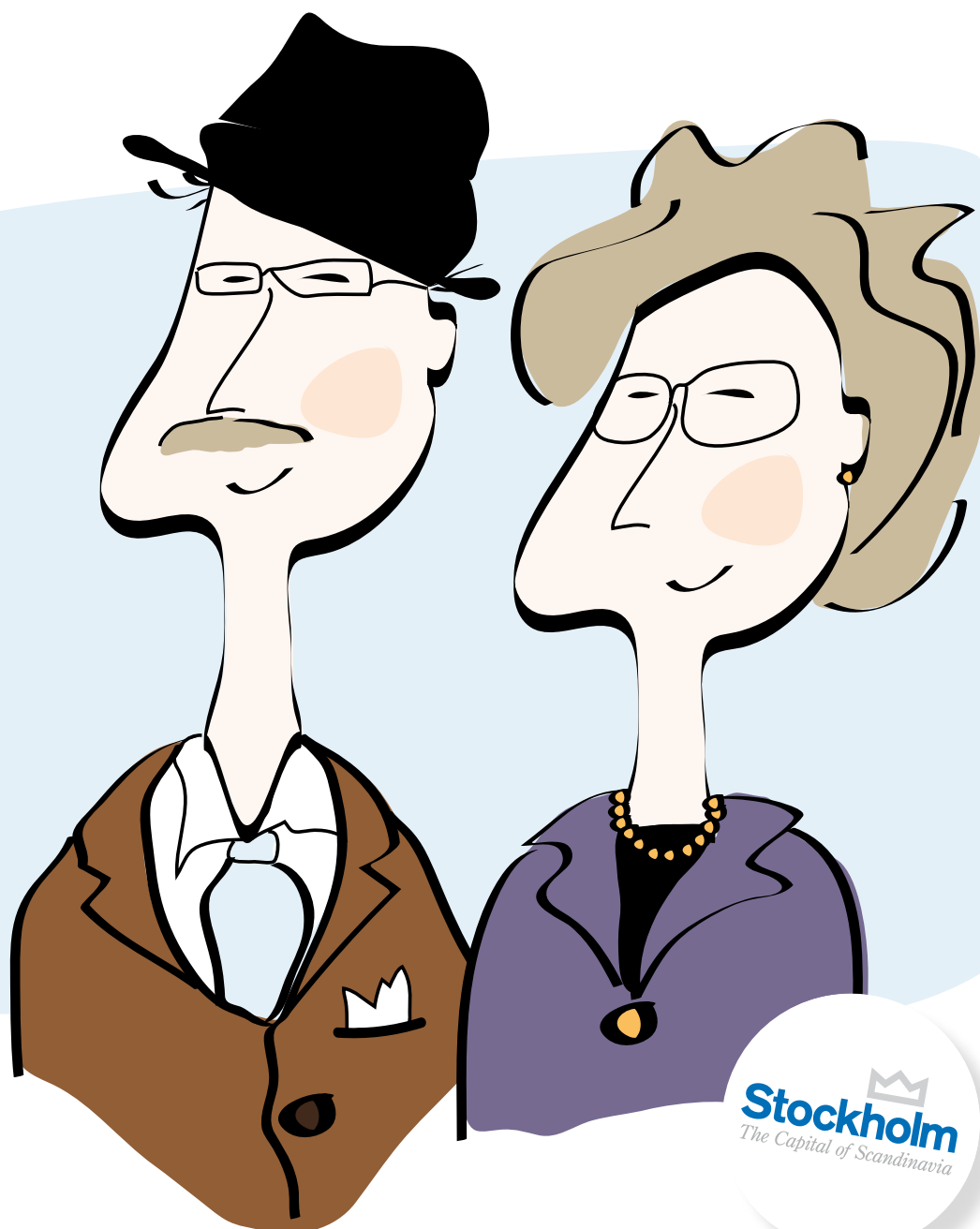


# INCREASING SAFETY

- reducing vulnerability to crime



ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ELDERLY

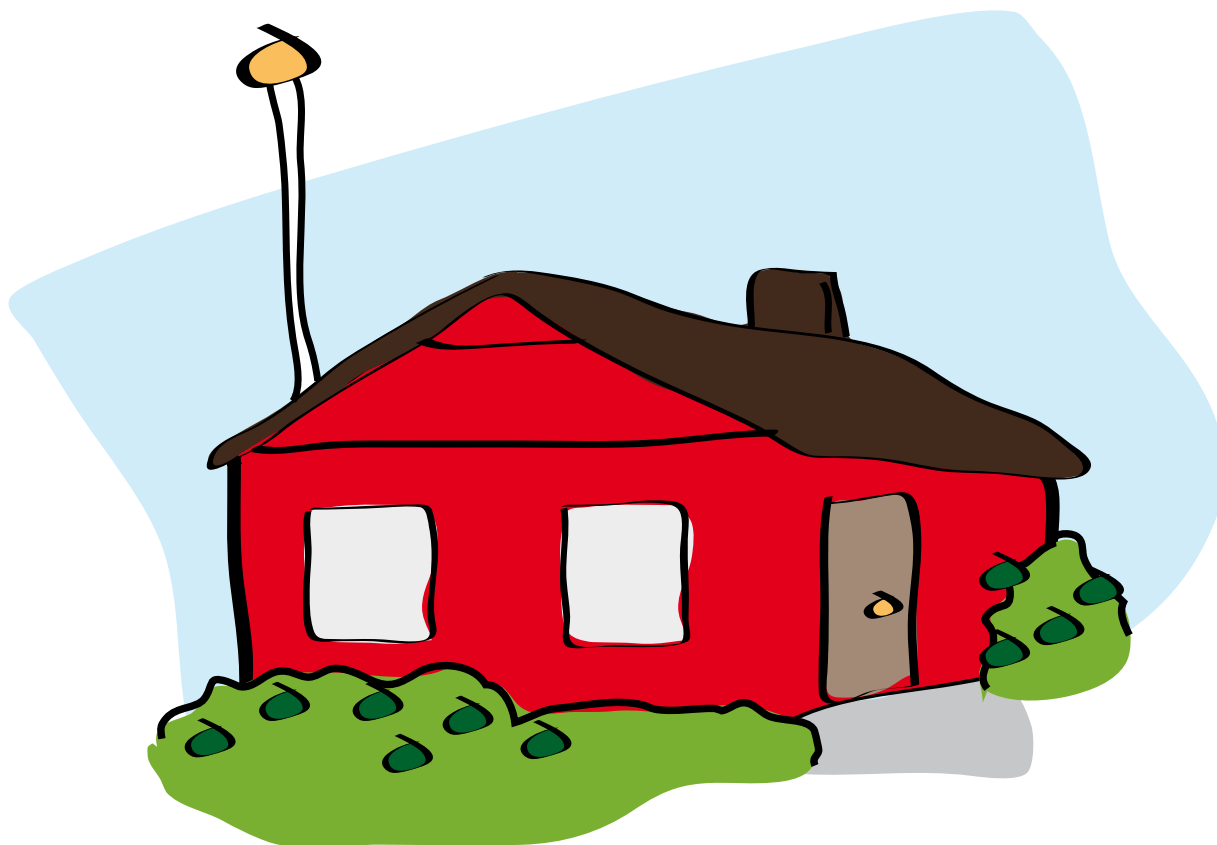
Among the adult population, people over the age of 65 is the group that is the least exposed to violence, threats of violence, theft and vandalism. Nonetheless, crime against the elderly does occur and causes insecurity. The most common crime is theft; carried out by people who pretend to offer some kind of help. However, there are also acts of violence against the elderly. This publication presents some suggestions on how to reduce the risk of being subjected to crime and what you should do if, despite precautionary measures, you have been subjected to a crime.



The most common crimes against the elderly are pickpocketing, bag snatching and thefts in the home. Crimes against the elderly are “thefts without burglary where the thief takes advantage of the elderly person’s possible weakness or reduced power of resistance due to old age.” It is important to keep in mind that those who carry out these crimes are of all ages, can be both women and men, and often give a good and honest impression – all for the purpose of misleading the elderly person by, for example, offering their “help”.

## IF YOU LIVE IN A DETACHED OR TERRACED HOUSE

- Tell your neighbour when you are out of town. Ask your neighbour to move things around in your garden so that it looks like you have been home.
- Only hire craftsmen who possess an F-tax card (registration for corporation tax) and have good references.
- Do not leave tools and ladders lying about.
- Draw up a written agreement of what the craftsmen are assigned to do and what it will cost.
- Use sensors or timers for the outdoor lighting.



There are many simple measures to increase the safety in your home – both when you are home and when you are out of town. Furthermore, check up on companies, for example craftsmen, before hiring them.

# INDOORS

- Have a securing plate and a peephole on your front door; in suitable height if you use a wheel chair. Hire a reputable company to carry out this work. It is also preferable if you are not at home by yourself during the installation!
- If a stranger rings the doorbell – open the door using the safety chain and demand to see their identification before opening the door completely. If a stranger asks for a glass of water or to use to phone, do not let them in!
- If you live on the ground floor, put locks on your balcony and terrace doors and on the windows.
- Always keep you door locked.
- Do not keep large sums of money in your home, and keep your jewellery locked away. You should preferably keep them in a safe-deposit box.
- Use the second lock when leaving the house, but not when you are at home.
- Never leave your handbag or wallet in the hall.
- Make an inventory of all your valuables or take photos of them.
- If a craftsman needs access to your apartment, you landlord should inform you of this in advance.
- The domiciliary and home nursing care services will let you know in advance at what time they will visit you.
- Ask your friends to call before they come over – and arrange a time.
- Pay your bills by Bank giro or Plus giro, or on the Internet.
- Do not "lend" your bank card or credit card to the staff or neighbours.
- Do not disclose your account number or PIN code to anyone who calls and claims to be from a bank or a similar institution. Banks do not have such routines when they contact customers.
- Never buy anything from door-to-door salesmen – that would show that you keep cash in your home.



Do not sign anything unless you are absolutely sure what it means. The same applies to phone salesmen: Do not make any purchases or agreements you are unsure about by telephone.

- Leave some lights and the radio on when leaving the house, so it will seem like you are at home.
- When you are out of town – ask your neighbour to empty your letterbox for you.
- If you plan to be away for a long time, freeze your subscriptions and have your mail forwarded.
- Do not leave a message on your telephone or computer saying that you are away and when you will be back.

## OUTDOORS

- If a stranger offers to help you carry your bags/handbag/walking frame for you by the entrance door or staircase - decline.
- Be discreet when withdrawing money from a cash point. Do not let strangers help you.
- Do not show your money or your pin code, and do not keep your pin code in your wallet.
- Do not bring more money than necessary when leaving the house.
- Do not keep all your money in one place – keep smaller amounts in several places.
- Make sure you receive the correct

change, for example that you do not get change for a hundred kronor note if you paid with a five hundred kronor note.

- Keep your wallet in your inner pocket, not in your back pocket.
- Do not keep both your keys and your money in your handbag.
- Keep your glasses in your pocket, so that you do not have to open your bag to take them out.
- Carry your handbag with the lid towards you and closed, across your chest.
- Never leave a bag containing your wallet inside a shopping trolley or on your walking frame.
- Be extra watchful in places where there are a lot of people, such as on the bus, the underground and while waiting in line in a shop.



Pickpockets operate by trying to distract you. Their most common method is to have one person distracting you while the other person steals your wallet. Be extra watchful when there are a lot of people around, for example when you are getting off the bus or waiting in line in a shop.

## **WHEN A CRIME HAS BEEN COMMITTED**

- If you suspect that a stranger is in your home – do not enter. Call the police by dialling 112.
- Try to remember as many details as possible so that you can describe the perpetrators and the situation to the police.
- File a police report at the police station, on telephone 114 14 or online at [www.polisen.se](http://www.polisen.se).
- Do not touch or move any of the things that the burglar may have touched. The police might find traces that can lead to him or her getting arrested.
- If your wallet has been stolen – freeze your credit cards and identification documents immediately.
- If you have been scammed by a salesman or craftsman – contact the consumer adviser in your municipality.

## **BAG SNATCHING**

Bag snatching is when someone takes your bag while moving at speed – while running or on a bike or moped.

- Do not struggle! Money cannot replace a broken femur neck or shattered ribs.

**FOR CRIMES IN PROGRESS, DIAL 112**

# WHY YOU SHOULD REPORT A CRIME

- It is a prerequisite for the crime to be solved.
- It is often a requirement in order to receive compensation from your insurance company.
- It makes it easier for you to get the stolen items in return if the police find them.



# WHERE YOU CAN RECEIVE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

## **Police volunteers**

Police volunteers are recruited and trained by the police authority in crime victim issues.

If you are in need of support or help when filing a report, the police will arrange for a police volunteer.

## **The Swedish Association for Victim Support 0200-21 20 19**

- Emotional support and practical advice.
- Help with contacting the authorities and insurance companies.
- Support in connection with trials.
- Someone to talk to who understands the situation of crime victims.

## **Women's shelters**

Protected housing for women exposed to violence is offered by the Swedish Social Services, voluntary organisations, private companies and Ersta diakoni. If you are in need of protected housing due to violence at home – contact the emergency social services office on telephone 508 40 000.

**THE SWEDISH ASSOCIATION FOR VICTIM  
SUPPORT: 0200-21 20 19**

# HOW DO I REPORT A CRIME?

## **Crimes in progress**

If the crime is currently in progress, dial 112.

## **Crimes that have already been committed and other non-emergency matters**

You can report a crime in several different ways:

- Call the police, phone number 114 14.
- Visit your nearest police station.
- Report the crime online, [www.polisen.se](http://www.polisen.se).

You can ask someone you trust for help.

## **Keep the following information available**

- The personal identity number of the person reporting the crime.
- The personal identity number of the person who was subjected to the crime (plaintiff).
- The plaintiff's insurance company.
- Production number, frame number, IMEI number (for mobile phones) or similar of the stolen items.
- The time and location of the crime, as accurately as possible.

**FOR NON-EMERGENCY MATTERS,  
DIAL 114 14**

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After the police have received your report, you will be called in for questioning. It is important that you tell them what happened in as much detail as possible. Which form of threat, violence or other crime was committed against you? Do you know who did it? Has this been going on for a long time? Are there any witnesses?

If you seek compensation for damages connected to a crime, you should let this be known during the police questioning.

### **What should I do if I have been injured?**

If you have been assaulted, you should go see a doctor to get possible injuries documented. Photographs are useful when issuing forensic medical reports and can be used as evidence by the prosecutor to prove the crime. Photographs should be taken by the police or the medical care staff.

### **Can I bring someone with me to the police questioning?**

Yes, you may be accompanied by a friend during questioning. For certain crimes, you also have the right to an aggrieved person counsel (målsägandebiträde). (In these cases, you are the plaintiff). The aggrieved person counsel is usually a lawyer assigned to provide you with help and support during the preliminary investigation, during a potential trial, and when claiming for damages. This support will not cost you anything.

**If you have been subjected to violence, it is important that you seek medical attention and make sure that the injuries are documented. This will be required in order to receive compensation or damages.**

# WHAT HAPPENS DURING A TRIAL?

When the police have finished the preliminary investigation, the prosecutor decides whether the suspect will be prosecuted or not. A prosecution will lead to an oral hearing in the district court (trial). You, the defendant and possible witnesses will be heard during the trial. Then, the court will decide on the case and pass a sentence. If you are not pleased with the district court's judgement, you can appeal to the court of appeal.

## **What is witness support?**

During the trial you can receive help from a witness support person. This is a volunteer who provides you with practical information and help in connection with the trial.

## **Do I need to speak Swedish?**

No, you have the right to an interpreter if you require one, both during the preliminary investigation and during the trial. You are also allowed to use an interpreter when contacting other public authorities, for example the social services.

## **If I am threatened, can I receive protection?**

The police will assess the risk of you being subjected to another crime. The purpose is to obtain data in order to take safety measures that prevent repeated crime and serious harassment. These protective measures are always adapted according to the individual's specific needs and can involve anything from alarms to various contact persons. The threatened person can also apply for blocked access to your personal information (spärrmarkering) in the tax authorities' national register. The blocked access prevents personal and address information from being divulged. If you are forced to move to an undisclosed location, you can also request unchanged information or personal information (kvarskrivning), which means that you remain registered at your old address while the tax authorities forward your mail to your new home.

**During a trial, you can receive help from a witness support person. You also have the right to an interpreter during the police investigation as well as during the trial.**

## **THE POLICE**

Dial 112 if you want the police to come immediately.

Dial 114 14 if you need advice or if it is not an emergency matter.

## **FREEZE YOUR CARD**

Depending on which bank you have, the freezing of bankbooks, bank cards etc. may be done differently. Call your bank or the police and ask.

## **INSURANCE**

Find out what your insurance coverage is, first and foremost via your home insurance.

## **THE STOCKHOLM EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED**

Dial 508 40 700 if you are in immediate need of care.

## **THE CITY OF STOCKHOLM OMBUDSMAN FOR THE ELDERLY**

The ombudsman for the elderly is impartial and independent and can provide advice and support in vulnerable situations. Call 508 36 210 or send an e-mail to [aldreombudsmannen@aldre.stockholm.se](mailto:aldreombudsmannen@aldre.stockholm.se).

## **ELDERLY DIRECT**

You can turn to Elderly Direct for all questions about elderly care in the City of Stockholm. Call 80 65 65.

## **MORE ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS**

You can receive more information and advice about everyday safety via the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, the MSB [www.msbmyndigheten.se](http://www.msbmyndigheten.se), and from Skyddsnätet, which is a collaboration between a number of public authorities and organisations. You can find Skyddsnätet at [www.skyddsnetet.se](http://www.skyddsnetet.se).

This brochure was produced in the autumn of 2009 by the Elderly Services Administration in the City of Stockholm, in collaboration with the police authorities in Stockholm County, the Swedish Association for Victim Support, Micasa Fastigheter and the Swedish Pensioners' Organisations PRO, RPG, SPF, SPRF and SKPF. It is based on material from Gothenburg 2005, Örebro 2006 and Canada 2008.



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