As a reminder, the Department of Administrative Services, Statewide Security Unit would like to offer the following practical suggestions concerning personal safety and security that you can and should make a part of your normal routine regardless of where you are, whether it’s work time or personal time.

- Do not walk alone. Instead walk in groups with co-workers as there is strength in numbers.
- Convey a sense of confidence and do not present yourself as timid or lost while walking.
- Dress appropriately, wear shoes that you can run in, if necessary.
- Do not display your valuables such as watches and jewelry in plain view. For example if you wear a diamond ring, turn the stone inward towards the palm of your hand while walking.
- Always be alert to your surroundings. Look around and be observant and do not become distracted by telephone conversations, window shopping, etc.
- Walk in well lit and high traffic areas where you can both see and be easily seen.
- Use sidewalks and stay near the street away from dark building entryways.
- Avoid shortcuts through alleys and wooded areas.
- Have a cell phone and keep it readily available such as in your hand (but again don’t allow yourself to become distracted by texting, checking Facebook etc.) or in a pocket.
- Immediately report all suspicious activities to the police and security.
- Whether you are driving or walking you should always be cognizant of where you are so that if you have to call the police or other authorities for assistance you can quickly provide accurate information as to your location.
- If you are being followed by someone on foot, immediately cross the street and proceed to a location where there are likely to be other people such as into a business.
• If you are on foot and are being followed by someone in a vehicle immediately turn and proceed in the opposite direction that they are traveling in and again go to a location where there are likely to be other people.

• If you are driving in a car and think you are being followed immediately proceed to the nearest police station, fire station or to a well-lit, high traffic area such as a convenience store or gas station where you can blow your horn to get the attention of others in the area.

• When going to your vehicle always have your keys ready in your hand.

• As you approach your vehicle in a parking lot glance underneath and around your vehicle while still some distance away to determine whether anyone is lurking around your car and if so, do not continue to proceed to your vehicle but instead seek help.

• If you do become a victim of a crime, promptly report it to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and your agency administration as soon as it is safe to do so.

• Do not keep valuable items in your vehicle where they can be easily seen. Laptops, briefcases, GPS systems, PDAs, etc., should be secured in your trunk whenever you leave your vehicle unattended.

• GPS systems in particular are becoming a popular target of thieves as of late. Again, these units should be secured in the trunk of your vehicle when not in use. Furthermore the suction cups or other similar devices commonly used to keep the GPS unit on your windshield or dashboard also serve as a telltale sign that there may be a GPS unit in the car so even if the unit itself is not visible thieves will break into the vehicle to find it. Therefore whenever you secure the GPS unit, also secure its holder and in addition if it’s a suction cup be sure to always have wipes in your car so that you can wipe the marks on the windshield left by the suction cup.

• Purses and other valuables should be tucked under the seat while driving so as to avoid smash and grab thefts wherein someone will approach your vehicle at a stop light and upon seeing the purse or other potentially valuable item in plain sight and easily accessible on the car seat will smash a window, reach in and take the item.

• Above all else always trust your instincts; they are usually correct, so if something doesn’t seem right, remove yourself from the situation immediately.

Remember that personal safety and security is everyone’s responsibility.