

REALTOR® SAFETY

AWARENESS,
PREVENTION &
SELF-DEFENSE



Shannon Diiorio, REALTOR®
First-Degree Black Belt (Shodan) in Aikido



Michael McClain, REALTOR®
Retired Police Officer with 20+ Years Experience

Why Are We Talking About This?

"How many of you have ever walked into a property and immediately thought: Something doesn't feel right?"

Real estate professionals routinely face unique risks:

- Meet complete strangers
- Enter unfamiliar, often vacant properties
- Work alone, including evenings and weekends
- Host open houses open to the public

Safety isn't about being afraid. It's about being prepared.



The Numbers Don't Lie

22%

experienced a situation that caused them to fear for their personal safety
or the safety of their personal information.

WHERE AGENTS FELT UNSAFE:

34%

During an open house

31%

During a showing

28%

First meeting at secluded property

The Reality of Working Alone

86%

Reported showing a property
alone.

40%

Met a new or prospective client
alone at a **secluded location**.

48%

Showed vacant properties in
areas with **poor/no phone
coverage**.

"You are often the only person responsible for your own safety."

My Background: What Law Enforcement Taught Me

Michael McClain

Retired Philadelphia Police Officer (~30 years experience)

- 👤 Dealing with unpredictable people
- 👁️ Reading behavioral warning signs & recognizing threats
- 🗣️ Interviewing & interaction under stress
- 🕵️ Extensive undercover roles and surveillance while in the narcotics unit
- 🕒 Understanding how situations change quickly
- 🛡️ Learning the best confrontation is the one you prevent

"Experience taught me that awareness usually gives you more options than reaction does."

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The Survival Mindset



1. OBSERVE

Notice exactly what is happening in your environment.



2. ASSESS

Determine whether the behavior or situation is normal or abnormal.



3. DECIDE

Quickly identify what options you have to improve your safety.



4. ACT

Take action before the situation deteriorates further.

Do not wait until something becomes obviously dangerous before making a decision.

The Gut Check Decision Model



GREEN

Normal behavior observed.

→ **Continue**



YELLOW

Something feels off or intuition flares.

→ **Slow down, increase distance, reassess**

RED

Threatening behavior or blocked exits.

→ **Leave immediately**

"You don't have to prove someone is dangerous before you decide to disengage."



Showing Property Safely

Shannon Diiorio

From Pre-Qualifying & Meeting New Clients To Showing Homes Professionally and Safely

- Pre-qualifying and verifying clients
- Meeting new clients for the first time
- Office policies and showing protocols
- Transportation considerations
- Maintaining awareness inside vacant properties
- Positioning yourself for safety

Preparing Before The Showings Begin

- ❑ Know Your Office Policy & Have A Personal Policy
- ❑ Use Forewarn!
- ❑ Meet In Person, In Public. Introduce Them To Someone
- ❑ Pre-approved & Verified, BAC Signed, Check ID
- ❑ If Already Approved, Speak To Their Lender
- ❑ Don't Agree To Put Clients in Your Vehicle
- ❑ Don't Be Afraid To Turn Down A Buyer
- ❑ Share Your Tour Plans With A Trusted Friend Including Buyer's Full Name, Copy of ID and Contact Info
- ❑ Have A Plan If Cell Service Fails
- ❑ Keep Your Devices Fully Charged
- ❑ Inquire With Listing Agents About Animals On The Premises



Best Practices During Showings

- Park On The Street
- Keep Lockbox Combo Confidential
- Knock First, Open Door & Announce Yourself
- Follow, Don't Lead, Position Yourself Between The Client And The Exit
- Avoid The Dead Ends
- Maintain Physical Distance
- If You Avoid The Basement-You Can Always Return Later
- Have A Quick Exit Strategy

Trust Your Instincts!

- Step Outside To "Take A Call"
- Contact Your Trusted Friend And Use The Code Word/Phrase
- Engage In Specific Talk About The Property
- Hand Them A Flyer (they'll have to show you their hands)
- Say You Need To Grab Something From Your Car
- Mention Another Arrival
- You Have A Family Emergency and Need To Wrap Up Early

Recognizing suspicious or unusual behavior

- Keep Hands Hidden-Wear Gloves
- Ask You To Show Them Something In The Basement/Bedroom
- Unusual Questions About The Seller
- Disinterested In Normal Features
- Invading Your Personal Space
- Avoids Eye Contact
- Teaming Up-One Distracts You While The Other Walks Through Alone
- Asks Personal Questions About You Or The Seller
- Makes A Bee-Line For A Specific Spot In The House
- Has "a friend" Who Will Be Arriving Shortly



Follow Your Gut & Don't Be Afraid To Turn Down A Client.

- Check With Broker For Policy
- Have A Personal Policy & Follow It Across The Board
- Be Mindful Of Fair Housing



A photograph of a modern kitchen interior. On the left, there are dark blue cabinets with brass handles and a wooden upper cabinet. A white marble countertop runs along the wall. In the center, a large white marble island with a thick top is surrounded by wooden chairs with woven backs. Two large, dark-framed windows are visible in the background, and two large, dark, dome-shaped pendant lights hang over the island. The floor is made of light-colored wood.

Open House Awareness

Shannon Diiorio

Setting Up, Conducting the OH, and Closing Down With Confidence

- Preparing before the open house
- Letting others know your schedule and location
- Setting up the home with safety in mind
- Greeting and engaging visitors
- Recognizing suspicious or unusual behavior
- Handling uncomfortable situations professionally
- Closing procedures and leaving safely

Preparing Before The Open House

- ❑ Bring A Buddy-Lender, Inspector, Title Agent
- ❑ Park On The Street
- ❑ Alert The Neighbors-5/5/10
- ❑ Keep Doors Locked While You're Setting Up
- ❑ Know Your Office Policy
- ❑ "Pet Bells" On the Doors
- ❑ Set Up A Code Word/Phrase
- ❑ Identify Dead Ends
- ❑ Open All Blinds/Unlock All Doors Just Before Start
- ❑ Dress To Be Able To Move Quickly, Pockets For Phone/Keys Etc
- ❑ Leave Purse At Home
- ❑ Have Seller Remove Or Lock Up All Valuables
- ❑ Don't Leave Potential Weapons Lying Around (knives)
- ❑ Fully Charge Your Devices
- ❑ Share Your Location With Trusted Family/Friends/Co-workers
- ❑ Scramble The Lockbox Code



Greeting and Engaging Visitors

- Set Up Near The Front Door
- Position Yourself Between The Customer & The Exit
- Sign In Requirements-Consider Asking For ID
- Follow, Don't Lead
- Avoid The Dead Ends
- Maintain Physical Distance
- Avoid Disclosing Seller Details
- Avoid Disclosing Personal Details

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Closing procedures and leaving safely

- Pay Close Attention To Attendees & Their Whereabouts-Someone Could Hide Until The End
- Verify The House Is Empty
- Close Up A Few Minutes Early
- If Your Were Alone, Have A Friend Or Neighbor Meet You At The End
- Lock All Doors First
- As You Turn Out Lights, Make Sure Windows Are Locked
- Keep Your Phone, Keys, and All Personal Belongings On You While Locking Up
- Pack Up Your Signs/Car Quickly & Efficiently
- Once Safely In Your Locked Car, Notify Your Safety Partner



Recognizing Pre-Incident Warning Signs

One behavior doesn't automatically mean danger, but **patterns matter**.

- 🔍 Unusual fixation on you (not the house)
- 🗣️ Aggressive or inappropriate questioning
- 👋 Refusal to respect boundaries
- 🛡️ Unwanted physical proximity

- 🚧 Blocking movement or exits
- 👤 Attempts to isolate you
- 📈 Sudden emotional escalation
- 🔄 Repeatedly changing plans/locations

Talk Your Way Out

Principles of De-Escalation:

- 💬 Keep voice calm; avoid arguing
- 🧑🧑 Give the other person physical space
- 👉 Don't insult, challenge, or corner them
- 🚶 Create a neutral, polite reason to leave

Focus on ending the interaction, not winning it.

NEUTRAL EXIT PHRASES:

"I think we should pause here."

"Let me step outside and make a quick phone call."

"I don't think this property is going to work for you."

"Let's reschedule this when we have more time."

Don't Let Your Ego Become The Problem

Agents often feel pressure to finish the showing, close the deal, avoid offending a client, or avoid appearing "unprofessional."

"No commission is worth staying in a situation that feels unsafe."



"Winning the interaction isn't the objective. Getting home is."

What To Do After An Incident

-  **Get to a safe location** immediately.
-  **Call 911** if appropriate.
-  **Notify your broker/office.**
-  **Document what happened** while details are fresh (vehicle info, descriptions).
-  **Preserve relevant communications** (emails, texts, voicemails).
-  **Do not retaliate** or confront the person afterward.



Report to Protect Others

Consider reporting the incident to the appropriate association, platform, or property owner. Your report can help protect other agents.

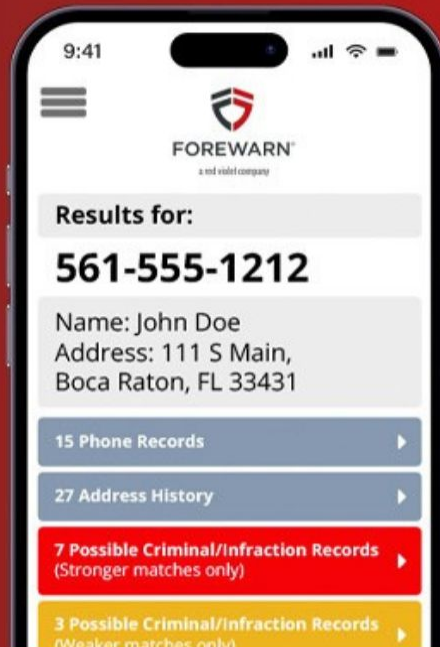


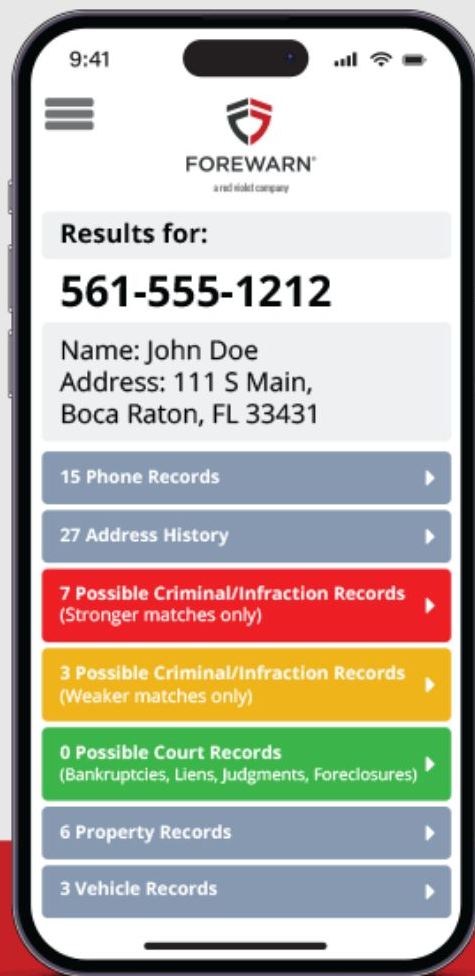
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FOREWARN®

BE SAFER THAN EVER





**Reverse incoming call
to verify prospect**
(name, phone, and address)



**Instantly search
for criminal history**
(criminal records)



Verify financial risks
(bankruptcies, liens, judgments, and foreclosures)



Verify current assets
(properties and vehicles)

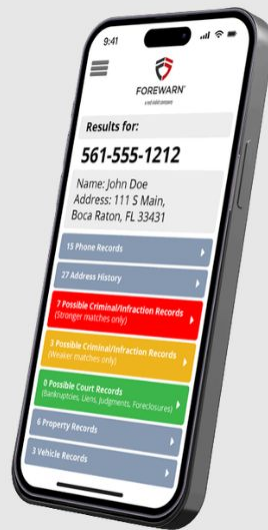
**Know your prospect...
*in seconds***



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Hands On Self Defense Techniques

Shannon Diiorio

Objectives:

1. Don't Be An Easy Target
2. Do Just Enough To Get Away (If You Can Take Them Down, Even Better!)

General Concepts

1. Keep Your Arms & Hands In Front Of Your Body And Close To Your Center
 2. Make Yourself Heavy-Lower Your Weight
 3. Anything You're Holding Can Be A Weapon
-

Potential items to use as a weapon

- Phone
 - Keys
 - Heels
 - Your Palm
 - Your Knee
 - Your Elbow
-

Techniques 1 & 2:

Escaping From A Wrist Grab

Technique 5:

Escaping From A Bear Hug

Techniques 3 & 4:

Escaping From A Knife Attack