

# Improving Neighborhood Safety

The U.S. criminal justice system has always depended on the civilian population working together with law enforcement and public prosecutors. Here are the ways citizens help keep neighborhoods safe.

- I. **The single most important thing** that improves safety is an **active Neighborhood Watch** on each block. If your block does not have one, activate (or re-activate) one. It's FREE and it works. Contact: [sfsafe.org](http://sfsafe.org)
- II. Castro Community on Patrol (CCOP) volunteers have provided a visible safety presence since 2006 in the form of walking patrols and free training of the public. Join or support Castro Patrol to keep this service effective: [castropatrol.org](http://castropatrol.org)
- III. SFPD assigns resource based on calls for service. Report every crime:
  - a. Call or file online reports:
    - i. Dial 911 for "Crime in Progress" (suspect still on scene)
    - ii. Use non-emergency to report crimes after suspect is gone (415-553-0123)
    - iii. File car break-ins, harassing calls, lost property, or vandalism online: [sanfranciscopolice.org/reports](http://sanfranciscopolice.org/reports)
  - b. When calling, always ask the dispatcher for the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) number and record details to allow follow-up or tying related cases together:
    - i. CAD Number
    - ii. Date and Time
    - iii. Description of suspect(s) or photos from security camera
    - iv. Description of what happened
    - v. Work with Castro Patrol or Castro Business Watch to tie cases together
  - c. Agree to speak with officers if they need additional details (NOTE: This does NOT mean the officers report back to you what took place)
  - d. If you speak with an officer, tell them you will press charges (they CANNOT make an arrest unless they saw the crime take place) and ask for a CASE number (this will be a different number than the CAD number)
  - e. Agree to press charges if a suspect is detained (this means signing the "Citizen's Arrest" form, but you can decide later if you want to go to court)
  - f. Identify witnesses willing to work with the police or District Attorney
  - g. If an arrest is made, work with the prosecutor to move the case through the court system as far as possible
  - h. If the suspect(s) are found guilty, provide the court with a victim's statement (in person if possible) as this will encourage proper sentencing.
  - i. If you need help working with the police or District Attorney, contact Castro Patrol at: [info@castropatrol.org](mailto:info@castropatrol.org)

