



# KERN COUNTY ELDER NEWS

## Kern County DEAR/EDRT TEAM

(Dependent/Elder Abuse Review) Team/EDRT (Elder Death Review Team)

### Monthly Information Article

# February 2023

## Carjacking Safety

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### Agency Partners

Bakersfield Police Department

California Dept. of Insurance

CSUB



Dept. of Social Services Licensing

GBLA

Independent Living Center of KC

Kaiser Permanente

Kern Co. Aging & Adult Services

Kern Co. BHRS



Kern Co. Coroner

Kern Co. District Attorney

Kern Co. DA Victim Services

Kern Co. Family Law Facilitator

Kern Co. Public Health

Kern Regional Center

Kern Co. Sheriff's Office

Kern Co. Veteran Services

Social Security Administration

Strata Credit Union



The world is a rapidly changing place. Sometimes older people from previous generations are extremely trusting. That is a nice place to be, unfortunately it is not reality in today's world. Criminals regularly take advantage of trusting and vulnerable people.

In recent months, the Kern County District Attorney's Office has seen several cases involving older victims who tried to lend a hand and offer a ride to a stranger. These victims found themselves in the middle of carjackings.

The term "carjacking" was not even coined until the early 1990's. Some older folks may not even be aware of this relatively new word. Detroit News writers Scott Bowells and EJ Mitchell were looking for an easier way to describe the crime which was previously referred to as "**robbery armed unlawful driving away and automobile.**"

The word "carjacking" is a portmanteau, which describes a way of combining two words – car and hijack.

According to the Department of Justice, nearly 50,000 carjackings occur each year in the United States. Over 90% of carjacking attempts are when there is a lone driver in the vehicle. Some carjack perpetrators will resort to violence and fear to get what they want. Carjackers, as with other criminals look for easy targets such as older adults, physically disabled or other vulnerable individuals.

### Methods Used:

- ◆ **Vehicle Blocking** – a vehicle or vehicles block you in, perpetrators then jump into action, you have nowhere to go from being blocked in.
- ◆ **Good Samaritan** – the perpetrator will appear to need assistance; either appear to be injured or broke down. You offer to help and they swoop in with the carjacking.
- ◆ **The Bump** – the carjackers will cause a minor accident such as a bump from behind forcing you to become a victim when you stop due to the "accident."
- ◆ **Halted Traffic** – stopped traffic has you sandwiched in, the criminal has planned this crime, usually approaching via motorcycle or on foot.

### Quick Facts:

- ◆ Males make up **90%** of all carjacking perpetrators.
- ◆ Over **90%** of carjackings take place in cities as well as suburbs; most occur in metropolitan areas.
- ◆ There are nearly **50,000** carjackings annually.
- ◆ About **75%** of the time a weapon is used during a carjacking.
- ◆ Well over half of carjackings occur within five miles from the victim's home.
- ◆ Almost half of carjackings involve firearms, another nearly **30%** involve knives or some other weapon.



## Tips:

- ◆ Immediately lock all doors when entering your vehicle.
- ◆ Do not place purse or valuables on the passenger seat.
- ◆ Passenger window should always be rolled up.
- ◆ Do not stop to assist or pick up strangers.
- ◆ Drive well lit and familiar streets in the evening hours.
- ◆ Park in well lit places, as close as possible to the business
- ◆ Avoid parking near walls, bushes, large trees, or dumpsters.
- ◆ Always be ready to enter your car.
- ◆ Avoid traveling alone, the Buddy System is always best.
- ◆ Don't be distracted, always stay alert:
  - \*Getting gas
  - \*Using the ATM
  - \*At the Car Wash
  - \*Loading and unloading packages



When stopped in traffic allow enough room to move around other vehicles. A good rule of thumb is to make sure you can see the tires of the vehicle in front of you. If an accident occurs in a isolated area, drive to an open business, a fire station or police station before exiting your car.

Make it a habit to not linger in your car, get in quickly, lock your doors, start your vehicle and drive to your next location. Be wary of persons handing out flyers or selling merchandise in parking lots. Never enter or stay in a vehicle with a carjacker, it could be the last ride you take. Throw your keys or fob and RUN yelling for help. Never hesitate to ask store security to walk you to your vehicle. Always wear your seatbelt and TRUST your instincts.

Insure your vehicle for theft, this reduces the impact financially of having your vehicle stolen or damaged. Be aware of your vehicle's unique identifier know as a VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) as well as your make, model, year and license plate number

## *If you are carjacked...*

Of utmost importance is a vehicle is a **THING**, which can be **replaced**. ***YOU can't be replaced.*** Give up your vehicle and get out of the way. **Immediately call 9-1-1** to report you have been carjacked. If possible, give a direction of travel and a suspect description.

## *Stay aware, stay safe!!!*

### Sources:

[www.police.escondido.org](http://www.police.escondido.org)

Safety Tips for Older Adults

[www.dallaspolice.net](http://www.dallaspolice.net)

Crime Prevention Tips Preventing Carjacking

Government of the District of Columbia

Metropolitan Police Department

*Avoid Becoming a Victim of Carjacking Brochure*

[www.policyadvice.net/insurance/guides/what-is-carjacking](http://www.policyadvice.net/insurance/guides/what-is-carjacking)

<https://carsurance.net/guides/what-is-carjacking/>

<https://www.globalsecurityexperts.com/blogs/security-tips/dossier-carjacking-facts>

