

## Safety Tips

### Preparation for home visit:

Review file; know who lives there, be aware of past problems; be educated

Check the address, check directions (mapquest is not always right); make a test drive

Be on time

Check place and hours of employment; don't make them take off work; don't want people coming and going

Review counseling/psychological info; look for violent behavior (triggers); criminal history; family history

Ensure staff knows when/who you are visiting; have a "no later than" return home time; need a phone # to call in case of emergency

Have a purpose/agenda for visit; have your visit planned out and ready; be in control; be ready for the unexpected

Physical safety & reputation safety: "We want to keep this on a professional basis so let's not talk about that"

What to wear: males - no ties; females- slacks, no purse, no bag, no sandals, no coat (in bad cases of fleas, roaches, etc.); take your cell phone-have emergency contact on speed dial--you can also use cell phone as a little flashlight

Making the visit: map, picture, ask for dog's name if they have a dog; make visit in daylight hours; if it doesn't feel right--don't do it

Park on street, face away with driver's door away from house so car can be between you and house; don't park in driveway -- you could get blocked.

Walking to the residence: be aware of your surroundings; dogs; number of vehicles; neighbors; people outside of home; movement in the windows

Knocking on the door: positioning-stand on doorknob side so dog does not have a straight shot at you

In the house: ask for lights to be turned up/on; people/pets; ask for pets to be moved to other room; watch for insects/mice; ask for tv/radio to be turned off; keep furniture (e.g. coffee table) between you and other people; don't be afraid to say "Please step back--I need some space"; don't put hands/belongings on countertops (roaches); Positioning: keep direct and clear path to door; maintain barrier; back to the wall, away from inside doors; keep keys accessible; keep cell phone accessible; be aware of exits

Communication; tone of voice - business - keep to the point of visit; if it gets loud you have 2 options -- start over or end conversation and do later; either way you maintain control; body language; facial expressions; eye contact; enunciation; terminology-avoid acronyms; volume- do not compete.

Home tour; last part of visit; have your material ready to leave; let client be tour guide; you decide who will guide you; female-female; male-male; they should be in front of you; stay at doorway if possible and just look in room; step back and allow client to leave first.

Flourescent lights vertical - probably growing pot

Visit over, make sure you have all your stuff, get in car, leave; don't do paperwork in car there

Don't ever confront people about what you find in their house: "Is that a meth lab?" or "Not much of a housekeeper are ya?" Keep it professional, ask your questions, look around, say thanks and leave.