



Citizens Training Bulletin



Shoplifting

Over the last year the City of Hampton has seen an increase in the number of shoplifting apprehensions businesses have made. To ensure the proper information is captured to attain successful prosecution, the Hampton Police Division has developed this training bulletin. Its purpose is to educate employees about the legal definition and elements of shoplifting, decrease the amount of time it takes to file a shoplifting report, and potentially increase the amount of shoplifting convictions.

Shoplifting is defined by the Code of Virginia as:

18.2-103. Concealing or taking possession of merchandise; altering price tags; transferring goods from one container to another; counseling, etc., another in performance of such acts.

Whoever, without authority, with the intention of converting goods or merchandise to his own or another's use without having paid the full purchase price thereof, or of defrauding the owner of the value of the goods or merchandise, (i) willfully conceals or takes possession of the goods or merchandise of any store or other mercantile establishment, or (ii) alters the price tag or other price marking on such goods or merchandise, or transfers the goods from one container to another, or (iii) counsels, assists, aids or abets another in the performance of any of the above acts, when the value of the goods or merchandise involved in the offense is less than \$200, shall be guilty of petit larceny and, when the value of the goods or merchandise involved in the offense is \$200 or more, shall be guilty of grand larceny. The willful concealment of goods or merchandise of any store or other mercantile establishment, while still on the premises thereof, shall be prima facie evidence of an intent to convert and defraud the owner thereof out of the value of the goods or merchandise.

(Code 1950, § 18.1-126; 1960, c. 358; 1970, c. 652; 1975, cc. 14, 15; 1994, c. 706.)

After making an apprehension or when filing a shoplifting police report, employees should ensure that the following information is relayed to the report taking party:

Date: The exact date and time of the crime.

Location: Exact location to include business name and street address. (example: business name, business location.)

- Property:** List item's taken in shoplifting, the value of property (not including tax), whether or not property was recovered, and if so was the item resalable.
- Witness:** Name of employee, position/title at business, and contact information. (example: Mr. Sam Jones the store loss prevention officer for insert business name and phone number here.)
- Suspect:** When an arrest is made or criminal summons is issued provide the suspect's Full Name (example John Williams Smith), Address, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, Sex, Race, and a detailed clothing description. When no arrest is made give a complete description of the suspects to include a detailed clothing description and any possible vehicles involved.
- Summary:** Include suspect's exact actions and exactly what was witnessed by whom. An example is "Mr. Sam Jones observed suspect pick-up a blue shirt and concealed it by placing it in the front of his pants. The suspect then exited the store without paying for the items. Suspect was held by Mr. Jones until officers arrived".

If you have any questions or would like assistance please contact the Community Relations Unit at 727-6574.

Additionally, the Community Relations Unit provides Hampton businesses and residents with complimentary security surveys. These surveys review your business/residence's inner and outer security measures, landscapes, and environment. Afterwards, the Unit will make recommendations that will improve your security and reduce the chances of a crime from occurring. To schedule your security survey, contact the Community Relations Unit at 727-6574.