



CYRUS R. VANCE, JR.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY – NEW YORK COUNTY

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AS SUMMER APPROACHES, MANHATTAN DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT OPPORTUNITY THEFT

Opportunity Theft is the Most Frequently Reported Crime in Manhattan



Campaign Includes Social Media Graphics, Drink Coasters, and Napkins Printed with Reminders to #WatchYourStuff



Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., today announced the launch of a new campaign to raise public awareness of opportunity theft in New York City. The two-week, street-level campaign, which runs from May 30th to June 13th, is designed to prevent opportunity theft by informing New Yorkers and visitors about common hot spots, frequently targeted items, and tips to avoid becoming victims.

“Opportunity theft is the most frequently reported crime in Manhattan,” said District Attorney Vance. “Common hot spots include restaurants, bars, stores, gyms, parks, and tourist attractions, where belongings

may be left unattended or may not be watched closely by their owners. A crime prevented is always better than a crime prosecuted and, as summer approaches, I encourage New Yorkers and visitors alike to be mindful of their belongings—especially in public areas and shared spaces—so that the theft of a wallet, phone, or bag doesn’t ruin an otherwise perfect day in the City. I’d like to thank the businesses, community organizations, and NYPD partners participating in our #WatchYourStuff campaign for their ongoing collaboration to prevent opportunity crime and keep our neighborhoods vibrant and safe.”

In Manhattan, grand larcenies comprise nearly 60 percent of index crimes. In addition to the usual locations for this type of activity, opportunity theft is likely to be committed in dense areas with high pedestrian traffic. In Midtown, for example, more than 50 percent of grand larceny incidents involve the theft of unattended property, and more than 20 percent of incidents involve thefts from a person. Targeted items often include wallets, smartphones, bags, and laptops, and in addition to the loss of property, the theft of identification, credit cards, and other personal information can lead to other serious complications, such as identity theft and fraud.



The Manhattan District Attorney’s Office is encouraging New Yorkers and visitors to be mindful of their belongings, especially in crowded public areas. New Yorkers and visitors should avoid:

- Hanging bags on the back of chairs
- Using personal belongings to save seats, and
- Leaving bags open or unzipped.

The Manhattan District Attorney’s Office has created a set of printed materials to be distributed among campaign partners, stakeholders, and their neighbors, including a drink coaster, cocktail napkin, and palm

card printed with reminders to keep an eye on personal belongings. You can read more about the campaign on the District Attorney’s Office’s [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts.

District Attorney Vance thanked the Lincoln Square BID, Manhattan Community Board 4, Midtown South Community Council, Midtown Community Court, as well as NYPD Midtown South Precinct, Midtown North Precinct, and Times Square Unit, Pier 40 (Hudson River Park Trust), Safe Horizon, and Times Square Alliance, for their partnership in the campaign.

Lincoln Square BID President Monica Blum said: “As a neighborhood that attracts more than 25 million visitors every year and has a large residential population, the Lincoln Square BID is pleased to be working with the Manhattan District Attorney’s office on this clever

campaign to raise the public’s awareness about opportunity thefts. Home to some of New York City’s most iconic cultural and shopping destinations, from Lincoln Center to Time Warner Center, this campaign will help keep locals and visitors conscious and confident and ensure that their experience in Lincoln Square is a positive one.”

Manhattan Community Board 4 Chair Delores Rubin said: “Manhattan Community Board 4 appreciates the #WatchYourStuff campaign as many of the NYPD precincts within our district report steady rates of opportunity theft. With greater awareness, this type of crime is preventable. This effort by the District Attorney’s office will be a good reminder for visitors and citizens of our heavily trafficked neighborhoods to use common sense measures which will deter thieves and prevent these crimes of opportunity. MCB4 thanks Cy Vance and his team for this proactive approach.”

Midtown South Community Council President John Mudd said: “Reducing crime through this campaign is a major part of the Midtown South Community Council’s vision to improve quality of life for our communities. I look forward to the #WatchYourStuff program in helping us to cut down on grand larcenies.”

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