

Flash Mob Safety

A flash mob describes a group of people who assemble suddenly in a public place to perform an unusual act, such as a pillow fight or singing a song, and then disperse. Social media is often used to announce a time and place for the mob to meet. Flash mobs, which are illegal in some areas, can become out of control with upwards of hundreds to thousands of people participating. They can be a nuisance to innocent bystanders and area businesses. While a majority of flash mobs are for entertainment purposes, some have been known to be dangerous.

Key Concerns

- Safety of participants and bystanders - Those involved, as well as non-participants, may be injured during the performance.
- Lack of event control - Especially for events in which there is no warning.
- Property and/or assets could be damaged or destroyed.

Protect Yourself

- If you are sent a message to join a flash mob, alert local authorities so they are aware and can prepare to secure the area.
- Stay away from the area. People involved tend to block the way of innocent bystanders, causing a hazard.
- If you have to be in the area and are aware that a flash mob is set to take place, arrive early and stay in a safe area away from the performance.
- Do not attempt to stop a flash mob.

If You are at Work

- If you notice an unusually large amount of people gathering around your place of employment, lock all windows and doors. Contact local authorities.
- Assess if the situation presents a hazard to co-workers and customers. Authorities will work to contain the mob into one area, preventing it from growing larger.
- Inform co-workers and customers of what may happen so they are aware of the situation.
- Have a plan for what you and co-workers should do to protect themselves and customers if a flash mob occurs near you.

Examples of Flash Mobs

- Hallelujah chorus - Safety hazards include multiple people standing on chairs.
- Freeze flash mob - Safety hazards include people who froze at the base of the escalator, blocking patrons. In addition, people had to maneuver their way around the participants.
- Mall dancers - This emphasizes the need for bystanders to avoid confrontation unless the flash mob participants are endangering others.



For more information, visit www.AUS.com/Tips