

Staff Alert: Hotel Panic Buttons

1.

What is Staff Alert?

2.

When are the local law and brand requirement deadlines?

3.

How does it work?

4.

What are the best practices?



WHAT IS STAFF ALERT?

Employee Safety Devices, Hotels and
The Call to Action

BACKGROUND: THE PROBLEM

Due to the nature of their jobs, hotel employees often work alone and work late hours. Consequently, they are vulnerable to sexual assaults and workplace violence. 58% of hotel workers disclosed that they have been sexually harassed or assaulted during the course of their work. 49% of hotel workers reported that guests have subjected them to some form of indecent exposure when they opened guestroom doors and nearly 15% said they have been in situations where they have been trapped by guests.

PANIC BUTTONS: THE SOLUTION

Staff Alert are employee safety devices that are more commonly known as hotel panic buttons, that can be carried by employees and dispatches emergency alerts that provide exact locations, allowing responders to reach employees within minutes. Panic buttons can be worn around the neck, they can be attached to belts or anywhere on the employee's clothing that is easily accessible in the event of an emergency.



5 STAR PROMISE: THE HOTEL RESPONSE

According to the AHLA, almost 60 hotel companies representing 20,000 properties have made the pledge to equip employees with panic buttons/ safety devices as a part of the AHLA's 5-star promise. It has been estimated that 5,000 hotels have already issued safety devices/ hotel panic buttons to employees, but over 10,000 hotels have yet to comply.

**GET A
QUOTE**





For the safety of all employees,
our hotel commits to:

- ★ Build on our People Culture
 - ★ Mandatory anti-sexual harassment policies
 - ★ Ongoing employee training and education
 - ★ Employee safety devices
 - ★ Vital partnerships with national organizations
-

Current Mandates

State and Local Laws requiring Panic Buttons have been in place since 2013. Unions in various regions have also climbed on board. And hotel brands have 2020 and 2021 mandates.



The states of Illinois, New Jersey, Washington and Massachusetts have all passed laws requiring employee safety devices.

The requirements differ state-to-state, but typically include a panic button for each lone worker and monitoring in all public areas of their workplace.



Miami Beach and several cities in California have enacted local legislation around this initiative dating back to 2015.

In addition to public areas, most of these cities require coverage in public restrooms and housekeeping closets.



Las Vegas, New York City and several others have union-led initiatives and have collaborated with local businesses to protect their employees.

All casinos in Las Vegas require a staff alert panic button system.



Hilton, Hyatt, Marriott, IHG, Wyndham, Choice, Best Western, Accor and all major independent hotel brands have gotten behind the 5 Star Promise and are actively deploying panic buttons.

Hilton, in particular, has a 12/31/2021 deadline for franchise hotels to become compliant.

HOW IT *works*



Button Pressed

In an emergency event, staff will press and hold the button until activated.



Signal Received

A bluetooth signal is immediately sent to the nearest beacons to triangulate the staff's location.



Alert Sent

The beacon sends an alert over Wi-Fi/Cellular to the main server.



Alert Received

Once the server registers the alert, all mobile, pc and web-based recipients will get the alert.



Security Response

Security or related personnel responds as trained.



Continuous Tracking

The location and alert is constantly updated until the issue is resolved.



Incident Report

A detailed report of the incident is automatically generated for records.



Data Collection

In order to identify multi-property trends and/or problems that arise over time, the system records regular stats and insights.

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BEST PRACTICES

A host of great solutions have emerged to answer to the call to action towards protecting our most vulnerable and valuable hotel staff. Here are a few best practices to consider.

1

REDUNDANCY

Most solutions have 1 primary network (Wi-Fi, Cellular, Etc.) they use deliver the signal from the panic button to the beacons and out to the head-end for alerts. It's important to ask how providers handle redundancy in areas where that network fails.

2

NETWORK

There are essentially 2 options when choosing a Panic Button's network: Integrated or Separate. For integrated solutions like Wi-Fi, the solution will have fewer points of failure. For those with a separate network, there will be less interference.

3

NO NOISEMAKERS

In Miami Beach and other jurisdictions, "noisemakers" have been outlawed as they've been proven time and again to be ineffective behind closed doors. Choose a provider that leverages a network with multiple types of alerts.

4

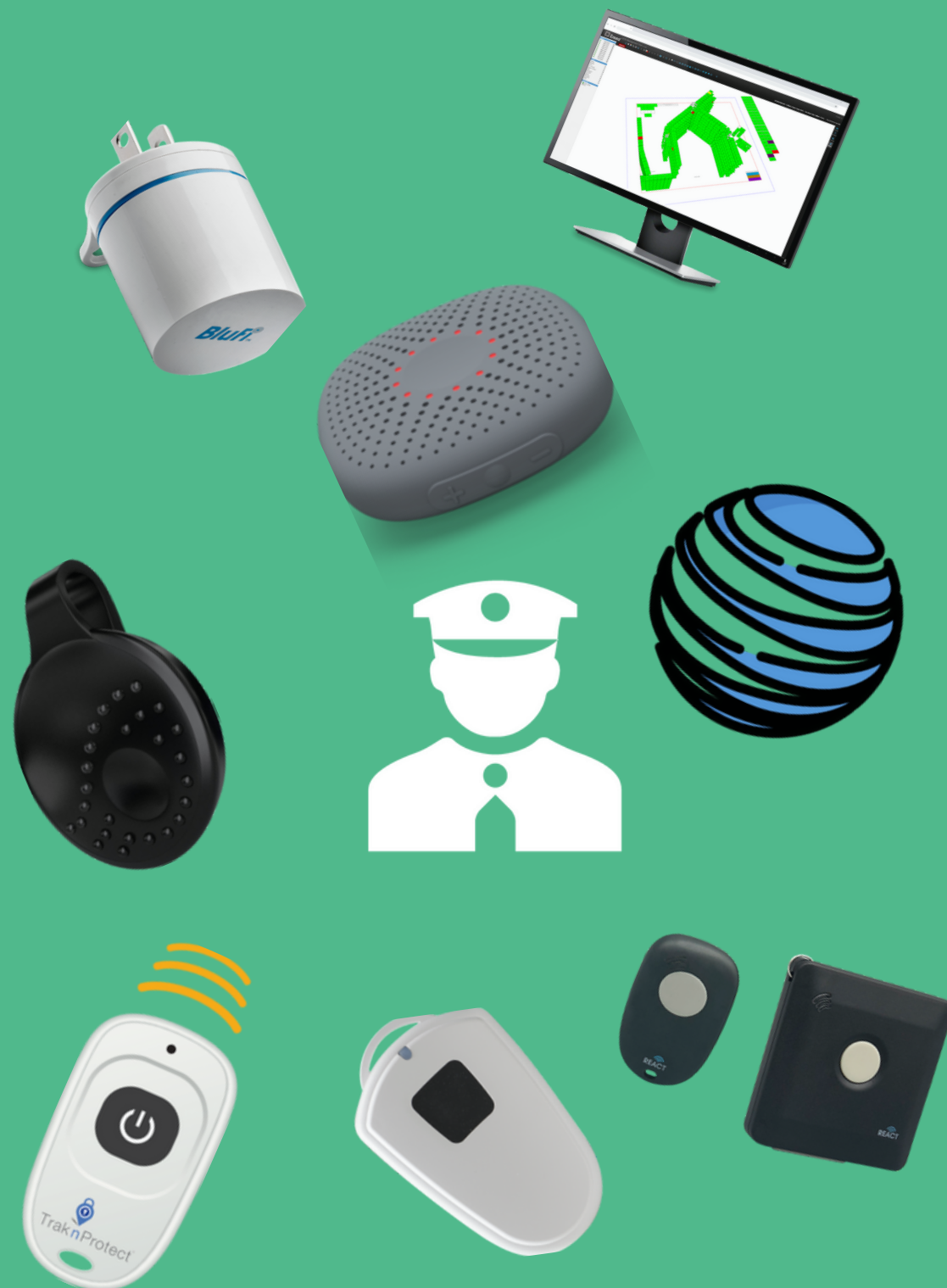
LIABILITY

Although covering stairwells and parking garages may support staff in those areas, it's important for the hotel to consider which places can be adequately covered 100% to avoid signal issues, while still meeting the law/brand requirements.

5

PHONE PAIRING

Several providers have launched a Panic Button paired with a mobile device. While this is convenient, it may present difficulty if the user has to activate their alarm via an app behind a password-protected main screen.



6

DEDICATED MONITORING

Depending on your hotel's size, you may opt for a solution that is accompanied by a dedicated computer or tablet. For smaller hotels, software-only solutions with web and mobile apps may make more sense to monitor alerts.

7

IOT

Remember, by their nature, Panic Buttons are an IoT device. A handful of the top providers can scale this IoT network to include other devices as well as the hotel needs them, including HVAC, Asset Tracking, etc.

8

ROI

As an unexpected expense, it's important to look at ways in which the Panic Button can actually add value to the bottom line. Some solutions can be offered together with a TV upgrade, double as a walkie talkie or offer other cost-saving benefits.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Keith Konicki enjoys 25+ years experience within the Hospitality Technology, Gaming and Healthcare verticals and F1000 companies. An active member in HTNG Workgroups, AHLA, HFTP and other hospitality associations and educational events and a sought-after Technology Consultant to all leading Hotel Brands, along with numerous Ownership Groups and Hotel Management Companies. In his capacity as President of JET Hotel Solutions, Mr. Konicki acts as the Owner's Advocate to simplify Hotel Technology selection, cut unnecessary costs, mitigate risk and craft a unique and inspiring guest experience.

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