

Workplace Violence Should Not Be Part of Your Job!

Many times, a violent act is preceded by a threat. The threats can be explicit or veiled, spoken or unspoken, specific or vague. Observed behavior might suggest the potential for some type of violent act to occur. Off-handed remarks or comments made to people close to the individual may suggest problematic behavior. Dealing with threats or threatening behavior, whether that is detecting, evaluating or finding ways to address it, may be the most important steps to prevent violence. Workplace violence is now recognized as a specific category of violent crime that calls for distinct responses from employees, employers, law enforcement, and the community. The majority of incidents employees and managers have to deal with on a daily basis are cases of assault, domestic violence, stalking, threats, harassment (including sexual harassment), and physical and / or emotional abuse. Common types of workplace violence:

Violence by criminals

otherwise unconnected to the workplace accounts for the vast majority—nearly 80 percent—of workplace homicides. In these incidents, the motive is usually theft, and in a great many cases, the criminal is carrying a gun or other weapon, increasing the likelihood that the victim will be killed or seriously wounded.

PREVENTION is through increased physical security measures. Employees should not leave doors open or hold doors for outsiders to have access. This is not about being kind. If the person doesn't work there, they should not have access to restricted space.

Assaults on an employee

by a customer, patient, or someone else receiving a service are also common. In general, the violent acts occur as workers are performing their normal tasks. Employees experiencing assaults in the workplace commonly work in Healthcare.

PREVENTION is through awareness of the surroundings, behaviors of people, and increased physical security as a deterrent. There is safety in numbers, so a few people together are less of a threat. People should not be left alone with strangers or other potential questionable situations. Pay attention to your surroundings and always be aware of what is going on around you.

Violence by past or present employees

and acts committed by **domestic abusers** are arising from other personal relationships that follow an employee into the workplace. When the violence comes from an employee, there is a much greater chance that some warning sign will have reached the employer in the form of observable behavior.

PREVENTION is through knowledge of potential risks and appropriate prevention programs that employees are trained on. Terminations are difficult and many times there are no concerns, but sometimes there are indicators of risks that should be addressed. Maybe it results in a physical security presence, awareness to key leaders of the organization and alerts to the local law enforcement to ensure protective measures are in place.