

Workplace Violence Prevention Program



*A comprehensive guide to
understanding workplace
violence and what you need to
do to keep your workplace safe.*

Workplace Violence Prevention Program

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Introduction and Implementation

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A Workplace Violence Prevention Program as outlined herein can only be effective if taken seriously and followed through. Each company is unique. The needs of your company should be examined and implemented into the program in order to make it successful. It is essential that the employer demonstrate at all times their personal concern for their employees and the priority placed on them in your workplace. The policy must be clear. The employer shows its importance through their own actions.

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Introduction to Workplace Violence

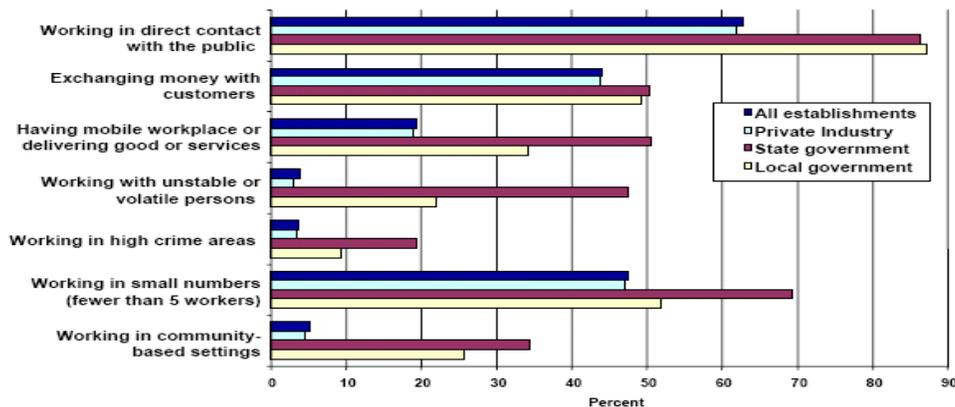
On August 20, 1986, in Edmond, Oklahoma, a part-time postal worker by the name of Patrick Sherrill walked into the post office where he was employed. Knowing that he was facing possible termination, he killed 14 employees, wounded 6 others, before he turned the gun on himself and committed suicide. This incident raised public awareness about workplace violence and began investigations into what prompted violence and steps employers could take to prevent it from occurring. Prior to this, there were few studies and not enough preventive measures focused on protecting employees. Workplace violence is now recognized as a specific category of violent crime that calls for distinct responses from employers, law enforcement, and the community.

Workplace violence is defined as aggression or the threat of violence against workers. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide, one of the leading causes of job-related deaths. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide.

Some 2 million American workers are victims of workplace violence each year. Workplace violence can strike anywhere, and no one is immune. Some workers, however, are at increased risk. Among them are workers who exchange money with the public, deliver passengers, goods, or services, or work alone or in small groups, during late night or early morning hours, in high-crime areas, or in community settings and homes where they have extensive contact with the public. This group includes health-care and social service workers such as visiting nurses, psychiatric evaluators, and probation officers; community workers such as gas and water utility employees, phone and cable TV installers, and letter carriers; retail workers; and taxi drivers.

Each week in the United States, an average of 33,000 workers are assaulted on the job and 17 are murdered. Homicide remains among the leading causes of workplace violence for both men and women. From 1993 to 1999, workplace violence accounted for 18% of all violent crime. More than half of all workplace homicides occur in retail or service settings such as convenience stores, taxicab services, and gas stations. Homicide is the leading cause of death in these industries.

Percent of establishments by potentially hazardous work environment characteristics, by ownership, United States, 2005



The higher reported incidence of workplace violence in State and local government workplaces may be attributed to their work environments. State and local governments report much higher percentages of working in direct contact with the public, working in small numbers or in community-based settings, and other potentially hazardous conditions than did private industry.

Laws and regulations regarding workplace violence vary by locality. Although OSHA does not have a specific regulation covering workplace violence, the "General Duty Clause," Section 5(a)(1) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the Act), requires each employer to, "furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm." OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and NIOSH have published voluntary guidelines and recommendations for taxi services, late-night retail establishments, and health care and social service agencies.

Two states, California and Washington, have OSHA plans that enforce regulations requiring comprehensive safety programs in all workplaces that address preventing assaults on workers. These states have also enacted specific legislation to protect health care workers. Washington, Virginia and Florida have passed state laws aimed at preventing robbery-related homicides in late-night retail establishments.

In addition to legal obligations, employers have an ethical obligation to promote a work environment free from threats and violence. Employers can also face economic loss as the result of violence in the form of lost work time, damaged employee morale and productivity, increased workers' compensation payments, medical expenses, and possible lawsuits and liability costs. Some of the ways that employers can address violence prevention include:

- Create and disseminate a policy to managers and employees that expressly disapproves of workplace violence, verbal and nonverbal threats, and related actions.
- Provide regular training in preventive measures for all new/current employees, supervisors, and managers.
- Take all violent and threatening incidents seriously, investigate them, and take appropriate corrective action.
- Outline a comprehensive plan for maintaining security in the workplace.

- Assign responsibility and authority for the program to individuals or teams with appropriate training and skills. This means ensuring that all managers and employees understand their obligations.
- Provide necessary authority and resources for staff to carry out violence prevention responsibilities.
- Hold managers and employees accountable for their performance. Stating expectations means little if management does not track performance, reward it when competent, and correct it when it is not.
- Take appropriate action to ensure that managers and employees follow the administrative controls or work practices.
- Institute procedures for prompt reporting and tracking of violent incidents that occur in and near the establishment.
- Encourage employees to suggest ways to reduce risks, and implement appropriate recommendations from employees and others.
- Ensure that employees who report or experience workplace violence are not punished or otherwise suffer discrimination.
- Work constructively with other parties such as landlords, lessees, local police, and other public safety agencies to improve the security of the premises.
- Support, don't punish, victims of workplace or domestic violence.
- Adopt and practice fair and consistent disciplinary procedures.
- Foster a climate of trust and respect among workers and between employees and management.
- When necessary, seek advice and assistance from outside resources, including threat-assessment psychologists, psychiatrists and other professionals, social service agencies, and law enforcement.

A successful workplace program is one that has been carefully planned. Too often, employers take a reactive approach to violence and focus on the problem only after a tragedy has occurred. If employers can examine their worksite and involve their managers and employees in the planning process then they stand a good chance of being able to defuse a problem before it ever gets a chance to develop. When forming an effective workplace violence strategy, important principles should include:

- There must be support from the top. If a company's senior executives are not truly committed to a preventive program, it is unlikely to be effectively implemented.
- There is no one-size-fits-all strategy. Effective plans may share a number of features, but a good plan must be tailored to the needs, resources, and circumstances of a particular employer and a particular work force.
- A plan should be proactive, not reactive.
- A plan should take into account the workplace culture: work atmosphere, relationships, traditional management styles, etc. If there are elements in that culture that appear to foster a toxic climate—tolerance of bullying or intimidation; lack of trust among workers, between workers and management; high levels of stress, frustration and anger; poor communication; inconsistent discipline; and erratic enforcement of company policies—these should be called to the attention of top executives for remedial action.

- Planning for and responding to workplace violence calls for expertise from a number of perspectives. A workplace violence prevention plan will be most effective if it is based on a multidisciplinary team approach.
- Managers should take an active role in communicating the workplace violence policy to employees. They must be alert to warning signs, the violence prevention plan and response, and must seek advice and assistance when there are indications of a problem.
- Practice your plan! No matter how thorough or well-conceived, preparation won't do any good if an emergency happens and no one remembers or carries out what was planned. Training exercises must include senior executives who will be making decisions in a real incident. Exercises must be followed by careful, clear-eyed evaluation and changes to fix whatever weaknesses have been revealed.
- Reevaluate, rethink, and revise. Policies and practices should not be set in concrete.
- Personnel, work environments, business conditions, and society all change and evolve.

Implementation Procedures

1. The initial step in developing a workplace violence prevention program is to designate a Threat Assessment Team. The Team should assess the worksite's vulnerability to workplace violence and reach an agreement on what preventive actions should be taken. They should also be responsible for:

- recommending/implementing employee training programs on workplace violence;
- implementing plans for responding to acts of violence;
- communicating internally with employees.

Threat Assessment Team members should include representatives of the following:

- senior management;
- operations;
- employees or their representatives;
- security;
- finance;
- legal;
- human resources.

2. Conduct a workplace assessment using the checklist provided in Chapter 2 of this manual. Once the areas of strengths and weaknesses of the worksite have been identified, the Threat Assessment Team can implement general and physical maintenance controls to increase safety. For example, trimming back bushes so that the front office is visible or installing an alarm system.

3. Read through Understanding Workplace Violence in Chapter 3 of this manual to educate yourself and your managers about violence and what how to prevent it from happening in your workplace.

4. Have the Threat Assessment Team outline work practice controls and procedures such as the following:

- Procedures for reporting threats and threatening behavior.
- Procedures for addressing threats and threatening behavior.
- Procedures for investing and recordkeeping.
- Develop internal communication systems to respond to emergencies.
- Develop policy on how to deal in emergency or hostage situations.
- Develop and implement security procedures for:
 - employees who work late or off hours;
 - accounting for field staff;
 - when to involve in-house security or local law enforcement in an assault incident;
 - banning weapons in facilities unless authorized; and
 - how the employer will respond to assault incidents.
- Develop procedures for employees to follow when entering any locations where they feel threatened or unsafe.

- Provide information and give assistance to employees who are victims of domestic violence and develop procedures to ensure confidentiality and safety for affected employees.
- Security measures for employees such as identification cards or badges and when and wear they will be required to be worn as well as how non-employees will be signed in and out of the premises.

The primary consideration in developing procedures is to make sure that they encourage employees to report all incidents, even minor ones. Credibility for any reporting system will be dependent upon whether reports are handled quickly and effectively. Word spreads quickly among employees when a report is made and nothing is done, when a report is handled improperly, or when the allegations are not treated confidentially. Therefore, before a reporting procedure is announced to employees, ensure that the staff who will be responding to reported incidents are trained and able to handle any reported incidents.

Take threats seriously. Employees may not step forward with their concerns if they think that management will minimize these concerns.

5. Using the sample workplace violence policy statements in Chapter 4 of this manual, construct a policy statement that incorporates the needs of your company. A zero-tolerance policy should be firmly established.

6. Using the Fill-in-the-blanks Prevention Program in Chapter 5 of this manual, begin establishing your written program. The completed written program can be kept under Chapter 5 as your custom written prevention program or it may be incorporated into an existing accident prevention program, employee handbook, or manual of standard operating procedures. It is critical to ensure that all employees know the policy and understand that all claims of workplace violence will be investigated and remedied promptly.

7. Post the Preventing Workplace Violence poster contained in this manual in a prominent place frequently inhabited by your employees. For additional copies of this poster, contact Personnel Concepts at 800-333-3795.

8. Conduct training on a regular basis to all new and current employees as well as supervisors and managers. Use the training sheets in Chapter 6 as guides. Training should include such topics as:

- Understanding workplace violence
- The workplace violence prevention policy, including reporting requirements.
- Risk factors that can cause or contribute to threats and violence.
- Early recognition of warning signs of problematic behavior.
- Where appropriate, ways of preventing or defusing volatile situations or aggressive behavior.
- A standard response action plan for violent situations, including availability of assistance, response to alarm systems, and communication procedures.
- The location and operation of safety devices such as alarm systems, along with the required maintenance schedules and procedures.

- Ways to protect oneself and coworkers, including use of a “buddy system.”
- Policies and procedures for reporting and record-keeping.
- Policies and procedures for obtaining medical care, counseling, workers’ compensation, or legal assistance after a violent episode or injury.
- Phone numbers for quick reference during a crisis or emergency situation.

9. Should an incident occur or be reported, a detailed investigation and accurate recordkeeping is imperative. All incidents, including near misses, should be investigated as soon as possible. A delay of any kind may cause important evidence to be removed or destroyed whether intentionally or unintentionally. Utilize the OSHA LOG 301 found in Chapter 7 of this manual as well as the Incident Report, Investigation Documentation and Follow-up Report found in Chapter 8.

10. Regularly discuss and update the program. A prevention program should change and evolve with the company.

Workplace Assessment

Workplace Assessment

*Periodic inspections for security hazards include identifying and evaluating potential workplace security hazards and changes in employee work practices which may lead to compromising security. Please use the following checklist to identify and evaluate workplace security hazards. **FALSE** answers indicate areas where corrective action should be taken if appropriate for the worksite:*

TF This industry seldom confronts violent behavior and/or assaults of employees.

TF No violence has occurred on the premises or in conducting business in the past 3 years.

TF Customers, clients, or coworkers have not assaulted, threatened, yelled, pushed, or verbally abused employees or use racial or sexual remarks in the last 3 years.

TF Employees are required to report incidents or threats of violence, regardless of injury or severity, to employer.

TF Employees have been trained by the employer to recognize and handle threatening, aggressive, or violent behavior.

TF Violence is **never** accepted as "part of the job" by some managers, supervisors, and/or employees.

TF The area in which the business is located is **not** known for regular occurrences of violence.

TF Access and freedom of movement within the workplace is restricted to only those who have a legitimate reason for being there.

TF The workplace security system is adequate, such as functioning door locks, secure windows, physical barriers and containment systems.

TF Employees or staff members have never been assaulted, threatened, or verbally abused by recipients of service.

TF Employees are trained in conflict resolution and in nonviolent response to threatening situations.

TF Medical and counseling services have been offered to employees who have been assaulted.

TF Alarm systems such as panic alarm buttons or personal electronic alarm systems have been installed to provide prompt security assistance

TF There is regular training provided on correct response to alarm sounding.

TF Alarm systems are tested on a monthly basis to assure correct function.

- TF Security guards are employed at the work place.
- TF Personal protective devices are provided and must be worn or used.
- TF Closed circuit cameras and mirrors are used to monitor dangerous areas.
- TF Hand held or other metal detectors are available and used in the facility.
- TF Employees have been trained in recognition and control of hostile behavior, escalating aggressive behavior, and management of assaultive behavior.
- TF Employees do have the option of adjusting work schedules to use the "Buddy system" for visits to clients in areas where they feel threatened.
- TF Cellular phones or other communication devices are made available to field staff for requesting aid.
- TF Vehicles are maintained on a regular basis to insure reliability and safety.
- TF Equipment is provided that may add to the security officer's safety and ability to do the job, such as closed circuit cameras, silent alarms.
- TF Employees work with others where assistance is immediately present, in detention, in caregiver or other potentially hazardous work settings.
- TF Employees, supervisors and managers have been effectively informed about the establishment's anti-violence policy.
- TF It is known how employees feel about management treatment of employees or personnel policies.
- TF Employees, supervisors, and managers have been trained to recognize warning signs of potential workplace violence.
- TF Access to and freedom of movement within the workplace by non-employees is restricted, including persons who have threatened employees.
- TF Employees are never threatened by supervisors or other employees with physical or verbal abuse.
- TF Threats and violent acts, damage, or other signs of strain or pressure in the workplace are always handled effectively by management, i.e.; recorded, investigated, and action taken to correct.
- TF There is a policy to assure that employee disciplinary and discharge procedures are handled fairly and effectively, recognizing the employee's rights and every effort's made to assist the employee in transition.
- TF There is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or other mental health assistance provided for employees who may be experiencing personal problems, who may have exhibited aggressive behavior, or who have made other employees fearful of being assaulted.

Additional questions for inspections of retail establishments or those who might experience robbery or criminal activity.

TF The entrance to the building is easily seen from the street and free of heavy shrub growth.

TF Security cameras and mirrors placed in locations that would deter robbers or provide greater security for employees.

TF Signs are posted notifying the public that limited cash, no drugs, or other valuables are kept on the premises.

TF Drop safes or time access safes are utilized.

TF The site has a policy limiting the number of cash registers open during late-night hours.

TF The site has a policy to maintain less than \$50 in the cash register.

TF Lighting is bright in the parking and adjacent areas.

TF All indoor lights are working properly.

TF There is a second room in which one or more employees may be working unknown to the attacker.

TF Windows and view outside and inside are clear of advertising or other obstructions.

TF The cash register is in plain view of customers, police cruisers, etc. to deter robberies.

TF Employees work with at least one other person.

TF The facility is closed during the night or during the high risk hours of 9pm-6am.

TF Emergency telephone numbers for law enforcement, fire and medical services are posted in areas where employees have access to a telephone with an outside line.

TF Employees have been trained in the proper response during a robbery or other criminal act.

TF Employees have been trained in procedures to use for reporting suspicious persons or activities.

TF There are procedures in place to assure the safety of employees who open and close.

Additional questions for inspections of healthcare facilities.

T F Do workers feel safe walking to and from the workplace?

T F Are entrances visible to security personnel and are they well lit and free of hiding places?

T F Is there adequate security in parking or public transit waiting areas?

T F Is public access to the building controlled, and is this system effective?

T F Can exit doors be opened only from the inside to prevent unauthorized entry?

T F Is there an internal phone system to activate emergency assistance?

T F Have alarm systems or panic buttons been installed in high-risk areas?

T F Given the history of violence at the facility, is a metal detector appropriate in some entry areas? Closed-circuit TV in high-risk areas?

T F Is there good lighting?

T F Are fire exits and escape routes clearly marked?

T F Are reception and work areas designed to prevent unauthorized entry? Do they provide staff good visibility of patients and visitors? If not, are there other provisions such as security cameras or mirrors?

T F Are patient or client areas designed to minimize stress, including minimizing noise?

T F Are drugs, equipment, and supplies adequately secured?

T F Is there a secure place for employees to store their belongings?

T F Are "safe rooms" available for staff use during emergencies?

T F Are door locks in patient rooms appropriate? Can they be opened during an emergency?

T F Do counseling or patient care rooms have two exits, and is furniture arranged to prevent employees from becoming trapped?

T F Are lockable and secure bathrooms that are separate from patient-client and visitor facilities available for staff members?

Understanding Workplace Violence

Violence in the Workplace

Violence in the workplace is a serious [safety and health](#) issue. The most extreme form of workplace violence, homicide, is the second-leading cause of death in the United States. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide. However it manifests itself, [workplace violence](#) is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide.

While multiple homicides are what get media attention, they represent a very small number of workplace violence incidents. The majority of incidents that employees/managers have to deal with on a daily basis are lesser cases of assaults, domestic violence, stalking, threats, [harassment](#) (including [sexual harassment](#)), and physical and/or emotional abuse that do not make the headlines. Many of these incidents are not reported to company officials, let alone to police. This makes knowing the exact extent of workplace violence difficult but based on responses to the National Crime Victimization Survey, a Justice Department report estimated that an average of 1.7 million “violent victimizations,” 95 percent of them simple or aggravated assaults, occurred in the workplace each year from 1993 through 1999.

Like all violent crime, workplace violence creates ripples that go beyond what is done to a particular victim. It damages trust, community, and the sense of security every worker has a right to feel while on the job. Everyone loses when a violent act takes place, and everyone has a stake in efforts to stop violence from happening. Estimates of the costs, from lost work time and wages, reduced productivity, medical costs, workers' compensation payments, and legal and security expenses run into many billions of dollars.

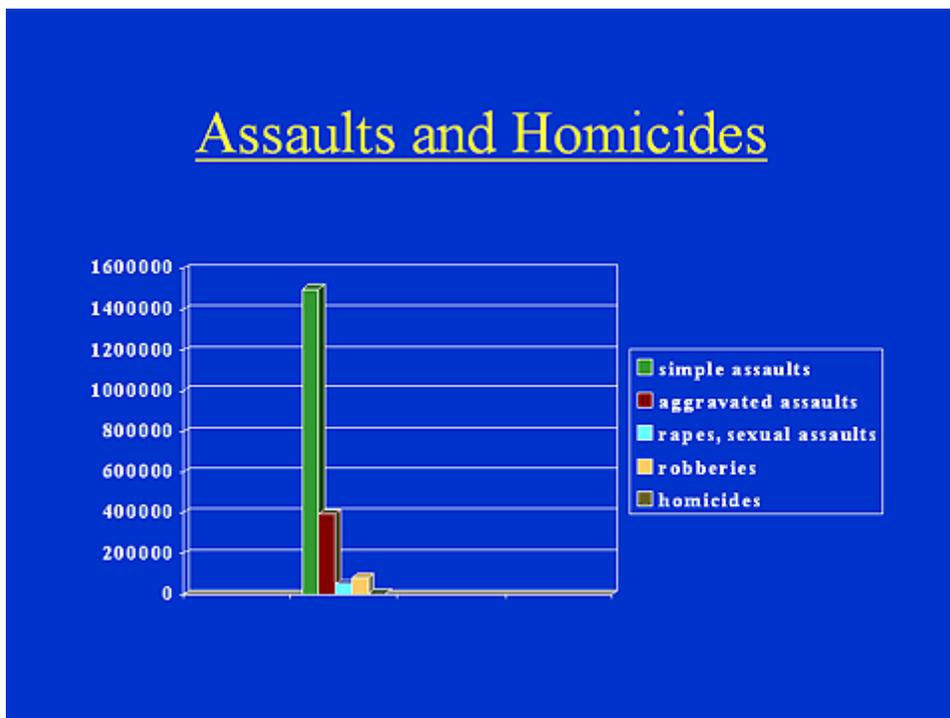
Workplace violence includes any type of aggression, threat, intimidation or other disruptive behavior in the workplace. It can be any inappropriate behavior, verbal or nonverbal communication, or expression that would lead to the reasonable belief that an act has occurred or may occur which may lead to physical and/or psychological harm to the person making threats, to others, or to property. It can take many forms including:

- Beatings
- Stabbings
- Suicides
- Shootings
- Rapes
- Near-suicides
- Psychological traumas
- Threats or obscene phone calls
- Intimidation
- Harassment of any nature
- Being followed, sworn or shouted at

Examples include:

- Verbal threats to inflict bodily harm; including vague or covert threats

- Attempting to cause physical harm; striking, pushing and other aggressive physical acts against another person
- Verbal harassment; abusive or offensive language, gestures or other discourteous conduct towards supervisors, fellow employees, or the public
- Disorderly conduct, such as shouting, throwing or pushing objects, punching walls, and slamming doors
- Making false, malicious or unfounded statements against coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates which tend to damage their reputations or undermine their authority
- Inappropriate remarks, such as making delusional statements
- Fascination with guns or other weapons, bringing weapons into the workplace



As the above chart depicts, incidents of assaults and threats of violence in the workplace number almost 2 million a year with simple assaults being the most common at 1.5 million a year. Aggravated assaults occur at the rate of about 396,000 a year while sexual assaults number 51,000. Robberies account for 84,000 of annual workplace violence incidents and homicides come in at nearly 1,000 cases a year.

A number of factors may increase a worker's risk for workplace assault. These factors include the following:

- Contact with the public
- Exchange of money
- Delivery of passengers, goods, or services
- Having a mobile workplace such as a taxicab or police cruiser
- Working with unstable or volatile persons in health care, social service, or criminal justice settings

- Working alone or in small numbers
- Working late at night or during early morning hours
- Working in high-crime areas
- Guarding valuable property or possessions
- Working in community-based settings

Profile of Workplace Violence

To gain a better understanding of where and to whom workplace violence is occurring, NIOSH did a 12 year study based on homicide in the workplace. It is based on studies in the United States from 1980-92 and was compiled into a report in 1995.

Workplace homicides by industry and sex

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Male Emp</u>	<u>Female Emp</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Retail	45.5	36.1	38
Services	16.0	22.2	17.2
Public Admin	10.5	2.9	8.9
Transportation/utilities	10.6	3.8	9.2
Manufacturing	7.0	4.9	6.5
Construction	4.1	.6	3.4
Agriculture/Forestry/Fish	2.7	.6	2.2
Finance/insurance/Real Est	2.4	6.8	3.3
Wholesale Trade	1.7	1.1	1.6
Mining	.1	.6	0.5
Not Classified	8.5	11.7	9.1

Workplace Homicides by Region

<u>Region</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
North Central	18.1
North East	10.5
South	48.5
West	22.9

Workplace Homicides by Method

<u>Method</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Firearm	76.4
Cutting/Stabbing	12.4
Strangulation	1.9
Other	9.4

Circumstances of Workplace Homicides (1994)

<u>Circumstance</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Robbery/Crime	73
Business Dispute	9

Coworker	5
Customer	4
Police in line of duty	7
Security	7
Acquaintance	4

Source: NIOSH 1995
Data for New York City and Connecticut were not available for 1992.
Percentages add to more than 100% because of rounding.

Job Stress

One of the important factors that can lead to violence in the workplace is stress. In a survey conducted by Northwestern National Life, 40% of employees said that their job is “very or extremely stressful” and 25% view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives. Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker.

The concept of job stress is often confused with challenge, but these concepts are not the same. Challenge energizes us psychologically and physically, and it motivates us to learn new skills and master our jobs. When a challenge is met, we feel relaxed and satisfied which is why challenge is an important ingredient for healthy and productive work.

The kinds of job conditions that may lead to stress include:

The Design of Tasks

Heavy workload, infrequent rest breaks, long work hours and shift work; hectic and routine tasks that have little inherent meaning, do not utilize workers’ skills, and provide little sense of control.

Management Style

A lack of participation by workers in the decision making process, poor communication in the organization, or lack of family friendly policies. Management styles that are arbitrary, over-monitor, corrections or reprimands in front of other employees or inconsistent discipline.

Interpersonal Relationships

A poor social environment and lack of support or help from coworkers and supervisors. Labor disputes and poor labor management relations.

Work Roles

Conflicting or uncertain job expectations, too much responsibility, too many “hats to wear.” Understaffing which leads to work overload or too much overtime. Poorly defined job tasks that lead to frustrations.

Career Concerns

Job insecurity and lack of opportunity for growth, advancement, or promotion; rapid changes for which workers are unprepared. Downsizing or reorganization.

Environmental Conditions

Unpleasant or dangerous physical conditions such as crowding, noise, air pollution, or ergonomic problems. Inadequate security.

Early Warning Signs of Job Stress include:

- Headache
- Sleep disturbances
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Short temper
- Upset stomach
- Job dissatisfaction
- Low morale

Some employers think that stressful working conditions are just a reality of the working world and a necessary evil to remain profitable and productive in today's economy. However, studies show that employees who set aside health concerns and work under stressful conditions have an increase in absenteeism, tardiness and desire to quit their jobs all of which have a negative effect on the bottom line.

According to NIOSH, recent studies of "healthy organizations" suggest that policies benefiting employee health actually benefit the bottom line. A healthy organization is defined as one that has low rates of illness, injury, and disability in its workforce and is also competitive in the marketplace. NIOSH research has identified organizational characteristics associated with both healthy, low-stress work and high levels of productivity. Examples of these characteristics include the following:

- Recognition of employees for good work performance
- Opportunities for career development
- An organizational culture that values the individual worker
- Management actions that are consistent with organizational values

Because every company is unique, a stress prevention program should be designed to fit the needs of the individual company. The program design and appropriate solutions will be influenced by several factors including the size and complexity of the organization, available resources, and especially the unique types of stress problems faced by the organization. In all situations, the process for stress prevention programs involves three distinct steps: problem identification, intervention, and evaluation. At a minimum, preparation for a stress prevention program should include the following:

- Building general awareness about job stress (causes, costs, and control)
- Securing top management commitment and support for the program
- Incorporating employee input and involvement in all phases of the program
- Establishing the technical capacity to conduct the program (e.g., specialized training for in-house staff or use of job stress consultants)

Steps to Preventing Stress in the Workplace

Low morale, health and job complaints, and employee turnover often provide the first signs of job stress. But sometimes there are no clues, especially if employees are fearful

of losing their jobs. Lack of obvious or widespread signs is not a good reason to dismiss concerns about job stress or minimize the importance of a prevention program. Every workplace should examine their environment and see what stress exists and then work to remedy it. Since stress is often a catalyst for workplace violence, companies that take steps to reduce employee stress reduce their risk for violence. NIOSH has identified the following as steps that employers should take to prevent stress in the workplace:

Step 1 - Identify the Problem. The best method to explore the scope and source of a suspected stress problem in an organization depends partly on the size of the organization and the available resources. Group discussions among managers, labor representatives, and employees can provide rich sources of information. Such discussions may be all that is needed to track down and remedy stress problems in a small company. In a larger organization, such discussions can be used to help design formal surveys for gathering input about stressful job conditions from large numbers of employees.

Data from discussions, surveys, and other sources should be summarized and analyzed to answer questions about the location of a stress problem and job conditions that may be responsible. For example, are problems present throughout the organization or confined to single departments or specific jobs?

Step 2 - Design and Implement Interventions. Once the sources of stress at work have been identified and the scope of the problem is understood, the stage is set for design and implementation of an intervention strategy.

Certain problems, such as a hostile work environment, may be pervasive in the organization and require company-wide interventions. Other problems such as excessive workload may exist only in some departments and thus require more narrow solutions such as redesign of the way a job is performed. Still other problems may be specific to certain employees and resistant to any kind of organizational change, calling instead for stress management or employee assistance interventions. Some interventions might be implemented rapidly (e.g., improved communication, stress management training), but others may require additional time to put into place (e.g., redesign of a manufacturing process).

Step 3 - Evaluate the Interventions. Evaluation is an essential step in the intervention process. Evaluation is necessary to determine whether the intervention is producing desired effects and whether changes in direction are needed.

Time frames for evaluating interventions should be established. Interventions involving organizational change should receive both short- and long-term scrutiny. Short-term evaluations might be done quarterly to provide an early indication of program effectiveness or possible need for redirection. Many interventions produce initial effects that do not persist. Long-term evaluations are often conducted annually and are necessary to determine whether interventions produce lasting effects.

Evaluations should focus on the same types of information collected during the problem identification phase of the intervention, including information from employees about working conditions, levels of perceived stress, health problems, and satisfaction. Employee perceptions are usually the most sensitive measure of stressful working

conditions and often provide the first indication of intervention effectiveness. Adding objective measures such as absenteeism and health care costs may also be useful. However, the effects of job stress interventions on such measures tend to be less clear-cut and can take a long time to appear.

Indicators of Potential Violence

While employers can strive to make the work environment as stress free as possible, that does not mean that incidents of violence cannot occur. Sometimes the catalyst for violence is not the environment at work but rather a psychological problem, family crisis, or addiction issue. The employee might also be dealing with unavoidable work situations such as feeling like they were overlooked in not receiving a desired promotion, or being angry about departmental layoffs.

Although uncharacteristic behavior is not always a sign of potential violence, the following may be possible indications of violent behavior:

- Direct or indirect threats of harm (whether made at work, at home, in person, through letters, telephone calls, or electronic mail);
- Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying, stalking, or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior;
- Physical assault;
- Physically aggressive acts, such as shaking fists at another person, kicking, pounding on desks, punching a wall, angrily jumping up and down, screaming at others;
- Throwing or striking objects and/or damaging, destroying, or sabotaging property;
- Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees;
- Bringing a weapon to the workplace, brandishing a weapon in the workplace, making inappropriate references to guns, or fascination with weapons;
- Statements showing fascination with incidents of workplace violence, statements indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve a problem, or statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace homicides;
- Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide;
- Verbal abuse including offensive, profane and vulgar language;
- Drug or alcohol abuse; and
- Extreme changes in behaviors

Types of Workplace Violence

Specialists have come to a consensus that workplace violence falls into four broad categories. They are:

TYPE 1: Violent acts by criminals, who have no other connection with the workplace, but enter to commit robbery or another crime.

TYPE 2: Violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, or any others for whom an organization provides services.

TYPE 3: Violence against coworkers, supervisors, or managers by a present or former employee.

TYPE 4: Violence committed in the workplace by someone who doesn't work there, but has a personal relationship with an employee—an abusive spouse or domestic partner.

Type 1, 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 many cases, the criminal is carrying a gun or other weapon, increasing the likelihood that the victim will be killed or seriously wounded. This type of violence falls heavily on particular occupational groups whose jobs make them vulnerable such as taxi drivers, late-night retail or gas station clerks, and others who are on duty at night, who work in isolated locations or dangerous neighborhoods, and who carry or have access to cash.

Employees or proprietors who have face-to-face contact and exchange money with the public, work late at night and into the early morning hours, and work alone or in very small numbers are at greatest risk of a Type 1 event. While the assailant may feign being a customer as a pretext to enter the establishment, he or she has no legitimate business relationship to the workplace.

Retail robberies resulting in workplace assaults usually occur between the hours of eleven in the evening and six in the morning and are most often armed (gun or knife) robberies. In addition to employees who are classified as cashiers, many victims of late night retail violence are supervisors or proprietors who are attacked while locking up their establishment for the night and janitors who are assaulted while cleaning the establishment after it is closed.

Preventive strategies for Type 1 include an emphasis on physical security measures, special employer policies, and employee training. In fact, it is suggested that one of the reasons for the decline in workplace homicides since the early 1990s is due to the security measures put in place by businesses that may be vulnerable to this type of activity.

Because the outside criminal has no other contact with the workplace, the interpersonal aspects of violence prevention that apply to the other three categories are normally not relevant to Type 1 incidents. The response after a crime has occurred will involve conventional law enforcement procedures for investigating, finding and arresting the suspect, and collecting evidence for prosecution.

Type 2 cases typically involve assaults on an employee by a customer, patient, or someone else receiving a service. Generally, the violent acts occur as workers are performing their normal tasks. In some occupations, dealing with dangerous people is inherent in the job, as in the case of a police officer, correctional officer, security guard, or mental health worker. For other occupations, violent reactions by a customer or client are unpredictable, triggered by an argument, anger at the quality of service or denial of service, delays, or some other precipitating event. Such occupations include municipal bus or railway drivers, health care and social service providers, teachers, sales personnel, and other public or private service sector employees who provide professional, public safety, administrative or business services to the public.

Employees experiencing the largest number of Type 2 assaults are those in healthcare occupations—nurses in particular, as well as doctors, nurses and aides who deal with psychiatric patients; members of emergency medical response teams; and hospital employees who work in admissions, emergency rooms, and crisis or acute care units.

Employers concerned with Type 2 events need to be aware that the control of physical access through workplace design is also an important preventive measure. This can include controlling access into and out of the workplace and freedom of movement within the workplace, in addition to placing barriers between clients and service providers. Escape routes can also be a critical component of workplace design. In certain situations, the installation of alarm systems or "panic buttons" may be an appropriate back-up measure. Establishing a "buddy" system to be used in specified emergency situations is often advisable as well. The presence of security personnel should also be considered where appropriate.

Type 3 and Type 4 incidents involve violence by past or present employees and acts committed by domestic abusers or arising from other personal relationships that follow an employee into the workplace. When these events lead to a fatality, they often attract significant media attention and are incorrectly characterized by many as representing "the" workplace violence problem. In fact, it is their media visibility which makes them appear much more common than they actually are.

Most commonly, the primary target of a Type 3 event is a co-employee, a supervisor or manager of the assailant. In committing a Type 3 assault, an individual may be seeking revenge for what he or she perceives as unfair treatment by a co-employee, a supervisor or a manager.

There had been an increasing number of Type 4 events involving domestic or romantic disputes in which an employee is threatened in their workplace by an individual with whom they have a personal relationship outside of work.

Usually Type 3 and 4 event result in nonfatal injury or in no physical injury at all but instead involve threats and other forms of verbal harassment.

Violence in these categories is no less or more dangerous or damaging than any other violent act. But when the violence comes from an employee or someone close to an employee, there is a much greater chance that some warning sign will have reached the employer in the form of observable behavior. That knowledge, along with the appropriate prevention programs, can at the very least mitigate the potential for violence or prevent it altogether.

Type 4 workplace violence events affect women disproportionately. Domestic violence is now spilling over into the workplace and employers need to take appropriate precautions to protect at-risk employees. For instance, when an employee reports threats from an individual with whom he or she has (or had) a personal relationship, employers should take appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of the threatened employee, as well as other employees who are in the zone of danger and who may be harmed if a violent incident occurs in the workplace.

In situations where a disruption has occurred on the job, or where there is a belief that the potential for violence exists, a supervisor may need to keep an employee away from the worksite to ensure the safety of employees while conducting further investigation and deciding on a course of action.

Negligent Hiring

Under OSHA's General Duty Clause employers are accountable for recognizing and preventing known hazards. However, employers can also be held liable for negligent hiring practices, negligent training, negligent retention and negligent supervision (Kenwood Group, 1994; and OSHA, 1970). Negligent hiring is one of the fastest growing areas of employment litigation and especially relevant when discussing workplace violence.

Every employer has legal duty to exercise due diligence in hiring. An employer can be sued for negligence if they hire someone who they knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known, was dangerous or unfit for the particular job. For example, if a company hires a security guard but fails to do a background check, puts him in a uniform and that guard then uses his trusted position to attack women, the company could be sued for negligence if it is later found that this particular employee had a history of abusing women that was never uncovered because the employer failed to perform a background check.

If someone is harmed, and the employer is sued, per a recent California survey, employers lose approximately 60 percent of negligent hiring cases with verdicts averaging about \$3 million. The average settlement is \$500,000 and attorney fees.

Employers are at a disadvantage in litigation for several reasons:

- Cases will normally have some sort of serious harm (death, assault, rape, sodomy, child molest, theft, embezzlement, identity theft)
- Employers have the ability, duty and resources to prevent harm through due diligence
- Jurors are often employees themselves
- Unless the employer has a compelling reason why the injury is not their fault, employers usually lose
- Employers cannot claim too costly or difficult

The Catch 22 is that there is no National Criminal/Credentials Database. The problem is that contrary to popular belief, there is no national database available to private employers to check criminal records or false credentials. Fingerprint checks from the FBI are only available when mandated by law (e.g. teachers/childcare workers). Therefore, the primary method for obtaining criminal records is to physically look at each relevant courthouse which is too cumbersome. There are over 10,000 courthouses in America with court records in over 3200 jurisdictions. Although criminal searches are crucial for due diligence, they are subject to human error as well.

However, there are things that employers can do that demonstrate that they are practicing due diligence. The first stage is to implement a Safe Hiring Program. The

critical elements of a Safe Hiring Program are the Application, Interview and Reference Checking process, all of which cost the employer nothing.

The second stage is to conduct Background Checks. These are typically only performed on finalists for a position. Firms that utilize safe hiring tools typically have a lower “hit” rate when background screening done, since troublesome or fraudulent applicants are filtered out at a much higher rate. Background screening should consist of checking public and private records as well as verifying information such as past employers and schools.

Some employers argue that because of the laws surrounding references and what past employers can and cannot say that it is a waste of time to call past employers of potential hires. But background checks are a critical step in the safe hiring process. A call to a past employer can still provide you with:

- Verification of dates of employment and job title
- Verification of locations to search for criminal records
- Elimination of unexplained gaps and reduction of the possibility spent time in custody for serious offense
- Verification of accuracy of application
- Demonstration and documentation of due diligence

Pre-employment screening should also be utilized where applicable as it discourages applicants with something to hide, encourages honesty, demonstrates due diligence and helps to hire based upon facts and not just instinct.

Employers must be aware that EEOC rules under Title VII exist that govern criminal conviction and arrests. Title VII allows background checks, including checks of conviction or arrest records, but they must be conducted in a non-discriminatory manner. Under Title VII, if an employer’s use of conviction or arrest records were to have a disparate impact – for example, if they disproportionately excluded applicants on the basis of race, national origin, or gender – then reliance on the records would be lawful only if they contained information that was related to the job in question and consistent with business necessity. Employers must consider the time that passed since the conviction and/or completion of the sentence, the nature and gravity of the offense, and the nature of the job held or sought. With respect to using arrest records in hiring, employers must evaluate whether the applicant or employee actually engaged in the misconduct. Employers should examine the surrounding circumstances, offer the applicant or employee the opportunity to explain, and, if he or she denies the conduct, make follow-up inquiries to assess his or her credibility. See EEOC Policy Guidance: Consideration of Arrest Records in Employment Decision under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (9/7/90).

Credit reports are also coming under EEOC review. Rejecting applicants on the basis of financial criteria such as poor credit ratings has sometimes been found to disproportionately exclude minority groups. For example, in *United States v. City of Chicago*, 385 F. Supp. 543, 557 (N.D. Ill. 1974), the court held that a police department could use financial information in background checks of applicants only if using the information does not have an "adverse impact" or is job related and consistent with business necessity. Note that courts will not assume that an employer's exclusion based

upon financial criteria disproportionately excluded a protected class. That would have to be proved.

Even if such "adverse impact" on a protected group is proven, Title VII is not violated if the employer can show that requiring the financial criteria is job related and consistent with business necessity. For example, in *EEOC v. United Virginia Bank/Seaboard National*, 1977 WL 15340, 21 FEP Cases 1392 (E.D. Va. 1977), the court concluded that a bank had a business need to conduct pre-employment credit checks because employees handle large amounts of cash.

An applicant's legal and privacy rights are also protected under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). Employers must have authorization and separate disclosure to run a credit check. Users of credit information for employment purposes have the following responsibilities under the FCRA:

1. They must notify the consumer when an adverse action is taken on the basis of such reports.
2. Users must identify the company that provided the report, so that the accuracy and completeness of the report may be verified or contested by the consumer.

In addition to FCRA, numerous states have specific laws governing both the pre-employment screening procedures and the use of information in their state. California, for example has a number of special laws on the screening process and a substantial penalty for violation in which an employer can be sued for \$10,000 per occurrence (Civil Code 1786 et. al.).

Since there is significant public concern with loss of personal and confidential data and ID theft, it is critical that any screening process respects the privacy rights of the applicants. Employers need to have procedures in place to avoid loss of data, such as paperless systems, and limiting circulation of screening reports.

Although it is often difficult to detect a violent nature while interviewing a potential employee, there are a few red flags to look for that may present themselves:

- A history of drug or alcohol abuse
- Past conflicts (especially if violence was involved) with coworkers
- Past convictions for violent crimes
- A defensive or hostile attitude
- A history of frequent job changes
- A tendency to blame others for problems

As an employer, the more steps you can take to show due diligence in hiring trusted employees, the better off you are. Not only will your workplace be safer, but you will also be able to better mitigate lawsuits that claim negligence in hiring. No single tool can be relied upon. It is most beneficial to use a series of overlapping tools such as the following:

Have consent for background check

Use an application form

Ask about criminal convictions in application

Include other critical language in application

Review application carefully for “red flags”
Check past employers/schools
Check vendors and temporary workers as well
Check for criminal records and understand the rules for using criminal records
Conduct I-9 verification

Preventing Workplace Violence

The best protection that employers can offer their employees is to establish a zero tolerance policy toward workplace violence. Implementing a workplace violence prevention program that is communicated to all employees is also critical. Employees need to understand the policy and be assured that all claims of violence will be promptly investigated and remedied.

There are also strategies that employers can implement around the workplace to increase employee safety and discourage violence. These strategies for preventing workplace violence fall into three categories:

Environmental
Administrative
Behavioral

Environmental strategies involve changing the physical presence of the workplace in order to minimize the risk of violence. Environmental controls are often found in workplaces where cash is exchanged. Measures such as using locked drop safes, keeping small amounts of cash on hand, and posting signs to this effect are used to deter robbery.

Acceptance of credit and debit cards also reduces the amount of available cash, especially in retail settings and taxicabs. Some safety advocates have proposed using prepaid cab fare cards similar to those used in subways.

Physical separation of workers from customers and the general public should also be considered. Creating distance between workers and others may reduce the chances of a physical attack. One way to achieve this is to increase the height and depth of counters. Bullet-resistant enclosures and barriers provide physical protection in a range of environments, from taxicabs to emergency rooms and social services agencies. When selecting methods of separation, companies must take into account the need to conduct business in a reasonable fashion. A safety device that is obtrusive or impractical may be self-defeating because it frustrates workers and customers.

There are also many security devices that can be used to reduce the risks of violence as well as facilitate the identification and apprehension of perpetrators. These include closed-circuit cameras, alarms, two-way mirrors, electronic control access systems, panic-bar doors locked from the outside only, and trouble lights or geographic locating devices in taxicabs and other mobile workplaces.

Visibility and lighting are also important environmental considerations. High-risk areas should be made clearly visible to as many people as possible. Ample outdoor lighting is also essential. Access to the workplace needs to be addressed as well. Obviously,

access to work areas by non-employees should be restricted. Some things to consider include the number of entry and exit points, the use of panic-bar doors that allow doors to be locked from the outside but still allow exit, and areas on the premises where potential attackers can hide. Keep in mind that a trespasser can be hidden by a variety of environmental characteristics such as landscaping, signage and outlying buildings. And of course there are numerous safety devices on the market to help secure the work environment. For example: closed-circuit cameras, alarms, key-card entry systems in fixed workplaces, cell phones and other communication equipment in mobile workplaces, and trouble lights and geographic locating devices in cabs.

Administrative controls are workplace policies and practices designed to reduce the risk of violence. An example of this would be to make sure that the workplace has the appropriate staffing. Security experts recommend the use of guards or receptionists to screen visitors and otherwise control access to work areas. In retail, service, and health care settings, increasing the number of workers on duty at certain times should be considered.

Work practices that increase the risk of assault on workers should be thoroughly examined and revised as needed. These practices include carrying money or valuables, opening and closing procedures, and disposing of or storing materials in outlying areas of the worksite. Implementing practices such as escorting patients and employees instead of letting them walk unintended is recommended.

Another administrative tool is to develop an overall policy on workplace violence that has a clear message: violence will not be tolerated and is never a part of doing business. This policy should provide for reporting violent incidents and threats, and behaviors whether they originate outside the organization or within. Methods for defusing potentially violent situations and instruction on how to use security devices should also be covered.

Administrative controls are effective only if they are followed and used properly. Regular monitoring helps ensure that employees continue to use proper work practices. Giving periodic, constructive feedback to employees helps to ensure that they understand these procedures and their importance.

Behavioral controls are those which educate the employees how to handle a workplace violence situation. Providing employees with training in nonviolent response and conflict resolution is believed to reduce the risk that volatile situations will escalate to physical violence. An effective training program will address hazards associated with specific tasks and appropriate prevention strategies. Ensuring that all employees know how to use safety devices properly is also critical. Increased employee knowledge and adherence to administrative controls will result in behavior that contributes to a safer workplace.

Responding to violence

Workplaces are prone to disruptive incidents that are often a result of unresolved conflict and poor communication. Conflict at work is normal, but must be addressed promptly and effectively, not avoided or suppressed. Whenever possible, diffuse tension before it builds into a dangerous situation. The following are responses to potentially troublesome behavior:

Confusion

Person may appear baffled or distracted. They may be unsure of the next course of action.

- Listen to their concerns.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Give them factual information.

Frustration

Person may be reacting or resisting information. They may appear impatient or feeling a sense of defeat. It is possible that they will try and provoke you.

- Relocate to quiet location or setting
- Reassure them.
- Make a sincere attempt to clarify concerns.

Blame

Person may be placing responsibility for problems on everyone else or accusing or holding you responsible. They could appear to be on the verge of potentially hazardous behavior.

- Disengage and bring second party into the discussion.
- Use teamwork approach.
- Draw person back to facts.
- Use probing questions.

Anger

Person has a sudden change in body language and disposition. They may begin pointing fingers, shouting or screaming.

- Use venting techniques.
- Don't offer solutions.
- Don't argue with comments made.
- Prepare to evacuate or isolate.
- Contact supervisor and/or security.

Hostility

Person exhibits behavior in which physical actions or threats appear imminent. They may begin inflicting physical harm or property damage. Their behavior is out-of-control.

- Disengage and evacuate.
- Attempt to isolate person if it can be done safely.
- Alert supervisor and contact security immediately.

If an incident escalates to a violent situation, a supervisor or employee should never put themselves in harms way. While staying as calm as possible, help should be sought and the area secured.

Immediately after an assault occurs, an employer should focus first on providing for the medical and psychological needs of affected employees. Other immediate steps include:
1. Report the incident to the local police department and support law enforcement activities (for example, crime scene investigation; interviewing witnesses, victims and others).

2. Secure work areas where disturbances occurred.
3. Account for all employees and others and ensure the physical safety of those remaining in the area as soon as possible.
4. Provide for site security and ensure that no work area is left short-staffed while others assist the victim or help in securing the area.
5. Quickly assess the work area, if it was disturbed or damaged during an incident, to determine if it is safe.
6. Provide critical incident debriefing to victims, witnesses, and other affected employees (these conversations must be strictly confidential).
7. Provide accurate communication to outside agencies, media and law enforcement.

Disciplining a Violent Employee

When a supervisor possesses information regarding violent, harassing, threatening, and other disruptive behavior, they must determine the appropriate disciplinary action. Actions can range from reprimands, warnings and suspensions to termination. It may be that a short term solution is necessary while the details of the violent act are investigated. Or the act itself may only warrant a cooling off period in which time the employee is able to remove themselves from a situation.

An immediate, short-term action is to place the employee on an excused absence or administrative leave. By putting the employee on a paid, non-duty status, they are safely removed from the worksite without monetary damage until a more permanent solution is reached. Likewise, an employee may be allowed work at home while on excused leave.

Another short term solution is to put the employee in another position. This will only be useful if there is another position where the employee can work safely without disrupting other workers.

Supervisors are sometimes faced with a situation where there is insufficient information available to determine if an employee poses a safety risk, has actually committed a crime, or has a medical condition which might make a long term disciplinary action necessary. In this case, it might be necessary to indefinitely suspend an employee until and investigation into the allegations of misconduct or criminal proceedings have been completed.

In any case, the employer must give the reasons for the proposed action in the written notice and provide the employee an opportunity to respond. The employer must consider the employee's response and notify the employee when a decision has been made. If the company's final decision is to take a long term action, the employee must be advised of their rights to which they are entitled.

Disabilities as a Defense Against Alleged Misconduct

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued important guidance that specifically addresses potentially violent misconduct by employees with disabilities. Although this guidance deals specifically with psychiatric disabilities, it applies generally to other disabling medical conditions. It advises that employers may discipline an employee with a disability who has violated a rule (written or unwritten) that is job-related and consistent with business necessity, even if the misconduct is the result of the

disability, as long as the agency would impose the same discipline on an employee without a disability. The guidance specifically states that nothing in the Rehabilitation Act prevents an employer from maintaining a workplace free of violence or threats of violence.

"... reasonable accommodation is always prospective. Thus, an agency is never required to excuse past misconduct as a reasonable accommodation."

Ordering a Psychiatric Examination.

Under Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR Part 339), an agency may order a psychiatric examination, or psychological assessment, under very rare circumstances. The only time an employee can be ordered to undergo a psychiatric examination is:

- If he or she occupies a position requiring specific medical standards and the results of a current general medical exam which the agency has the authority to order show no physical basis to explain actions or behavior which may affect the safe and efficient performance of the individual or others, or
- If a psychiatric examination is specifically required by medical standards or a medical evaluation program.

Offering a Psychiatric Examination.

Under 5 CFR Part 339, an agency may offer a psychiatric evaluation or psychological assessment (or it may ask the employee to submit medical documentation) in any situation where it is in the interest of the Government to obtain information relevant to an individual's ability to perform safely and efficiently, or when the employee has requested, for medical reasons relating to a psychiatric condition, a change in duty status, working conditions, or any other benefit or reasonable accommodation. If the employee decides not to be examined or to submit medical documentation, the agency should act on the basis of the information available.

The Aftermath

During the performance of an investigation at a workplace at which local police agencies are also conducting an investigation, compliance personnel shall work cooperatively with all police personnel investigating the same event. When feasible, compliance personnel shall also supplement their own accident investigation report by obtaining a copy of the police investigator's report.

Encourage employees to report and log all incidents and threats of workplace violence.

Provide prompt medical evaluation and treatment after the incident.

Report violent incidents to the local police promptly.

Inform victims of their legal right to prosecute perpetrators.

It is also important that management communicates with their employees about what has happened and encourages them to share information and seek support. This can be done by taking the following steps:

Ensure a management presence in the worksite

Managers need to spend ample time with their employees, in the work-site or wherever they may be. Employees need to be reassured of their concern, and they need to be able to ask questions. Senior management should ensure that immediate supervisors are supported in this role, relieved of unnecessary duties, and not pulled away from their subordinates to write lengthy reports or prepare elaborate briefings.

Share information with employees

Employees will have many questions, and they need the answers -- often more than once -- if they are to resolve the experience for themselves. Information will develop over time, so information strategies need to be simple and fluid. A notice board at the elevator, or a recorded message on a "hotline" number may suffice for the basics, and a user-friendly system for individual questions needs to be established.

Include union leadership

Union representatives can help in reassuring employees after an incident and in getting information to employees.

Bring in crisis response professionals

Before an incident ever occurs, the planning group should identify trained mental health professionals in the agency's Employee Assistance Program or the community who would be available to respond in the event of an incident. When an incident occurs, involve these emergency mental health consultants as soon as possible. They will generally meet with management first, working down the chain, and then with line employees. Based on what the consultants learn, they will offer services such as debriefings and informal counseling, perhaps in the work area.

Support informal debriefing

The formal debriefing doesn't end the recovery process. Provide opportunities for employees to talk informally with one another when they feel a need to discuss the experience. A comfortable break area and flexibility about break times may be all that is needed.

Support caregiving within work groups

Keep work groups together as much as possible, and try not to isolate employees from their normal support groups at work. Show respect and support for employees' efforts to care for one another.

Handle critical sites with care

Initially, the site of a violent incident will be secured as a crime scene. After the authorities are finished with it, management needs to be sensitive to a number of issues. It is helpful if employees don't have to come back to work and face painful reminders such as blood stains or broken furniture. But on the other hand, the area should not be so "sanitized" that it gives the appearance that management is pretending nothing happened. If someone has died, that person's work area will be a focus of grieving, and it needs to be respected as such.

Buffer those affected from post-event stresses

Effective coordination with the media and timely dissemination of information can help reduce media pressure on those who are the most vulnerable. Assistance with benefits and other administrative issues can reduce the burden on victims and families.

Help employees face feared places or activities

Returning soon, if only briefly, to a feared site can help prevent lasting effects such as phobic responses. Having a friend or loved one along, or being supported by close work associates, may make the first step much easier.

Remember the healing value of work

Getting back to work can be reassuring, and a sense of having a mission to perform can help the group recover its morale. But the return to work must be managed in a way that conveys appropriate respect for the deceased, the injured, and the traumatized.

Healthcare workers

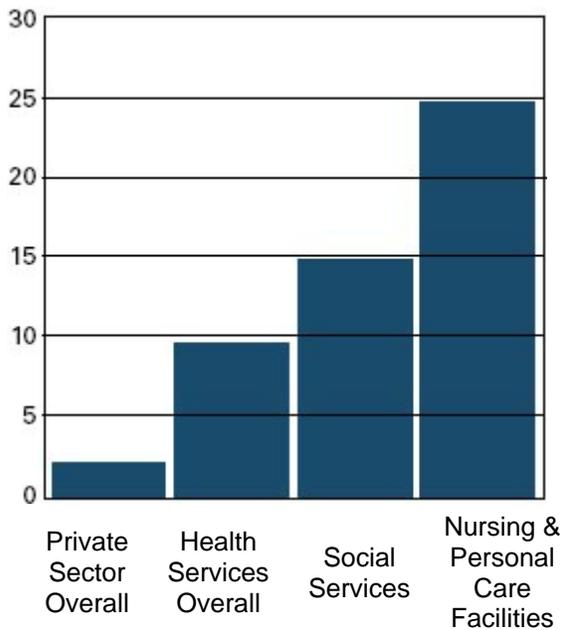
Studies have shown that employees in the health field are at the greatest risk for workplace violence. The University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center’s 2001 “Report to the Nation” on workplace violence observed that in some psychiatric units, assault rates on staff are greater than 100 cases per 100 workers per year. And a study conducted by the Emergency Medical System of Virginia reported that “violence associated with patient care is the primary source of non-fatal injury in all health care organizations today.” The Virginia report also noted that “hospital based medical workers currently have the highest rate of non-fatal assaults over all other sectors of employment.”

Nurses experience the most assaults, but physicians, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, physicians’ assistants, nurses’ aides, therapists, technicians, home healthcare workers, social/welfare workers, and emergency medical care personnel are all at risk of violence by patients or a patient’s friends or relatives. Psychiatric units are particularly dangerous, as are emergency rooms, crisis and acute care units, and admissions departments.

BLS data shows that in 2000, 48 percent of all non-fatal injuries from occupational assaults and violent acts occurred in health care and social services. Most of these occurred in hospitals, nursing and personal care facilities, and residential care services. Nurses, aides, orderlies and attendants suffered the most non-fatal assaults resulting in injury.

Incidence rates for nonfatal assaults and violent acts by industry, 2000

Incidence rate per 10,000 full-time workers



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2001). *Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, 2000*.

Several studies indicate that violence often takes place during times of high activity and interaction with patients, such as at meal times and during visiting hours and patient transportation. Assaults may occur when service is denied, when a patient is involuntarily admitted, or when a health care worker attempts to set limits on eating, drinking, or tobacco or alcohol use.

Violence may occur anywhere in the hospital, but it is most frequent in the following areas:

- Psychiatric wards
- Emergency rooms
- Waiting rooms
- Geriatric units

The risk factors for violence vary from hospital to hospital depending on location, size, and type of care. According to OSHA, common risk factors for hospital violence include the following:

- The carrying of handguns and other weapons by patients, their families, or friends.
- The use of hospitals by police and the criminal justice system for the care of acutely disturbed, violent individuals.
- The increasing number of acute and chronically mentally ill patients being released from hospitals without follow-up care, who now have the right to refuse medicine, and who can no longer be hospitalized involuntarily unless they pose an immediate threat to themselves or others.
- The availability of drugs or money at hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies making them likely robbery targets.
- Factors such as unrestricted movement of the public in clinics and hospitals; the presence of gang members, drug or alcohol abusers, trauma patients, or distraught family members and long waits in emergency or clinic areas, leading to frustration among patients and accompanying relatives or friends.
- Lack of training of staff in recognizing and managing escalating hostile and assaultive behavior.
- Low staffing levels during times of increased activity such as mealtimes, visiting times and when staff are transporting patients.
- Isolated work with clients during examinations or treatment.
- Solo work, often in remote locations with no backup or way to get assistance, such as communication devices or alarm systems (this is particularly true in high-crime settings).
- Poorly lit parking areas.

Recommendations for reducing violence include:

Environmental Controls

- Review workplace layout to find existing or potential hazards; install and maintain alarm systems and other security devices such as panic buttons, handheld alarms or noise devices, cellular phones, and private channel radios where risk is apparent or may be anticipated; and arrange for a reliable response system when an alarm is triggered.
- Use metal detectors to screen patients and visitors for guns, knives, or other weapons.
- Use a closed-circuit video recording for high-risk areas on a 24-hour basis. Public safety is a greater concern than privacy in these situations.
- Institute a sign-in procedure with passes for visitors, especially in a newborn nursery or pediatric department. Enforce visitor hours and procedures.
- Review and revise visitor check systems, when necessary. Limit information given to outsiders about hospitalized victims of violence.
- Institute a sign-in procedure with passes for visitors and compiling a list of "restricted visitors" for patients with a history of violence.
- Control access to facilities other than waiting rooms, particularly drug-storage or pharmacy areas.
- Place curved mirrors at hallway intersections or concealed areas.
- Enclose nurses' stations and install deep service counters or bullet-resistant, shatter-proof glass in reception, triage and admitting areas or client service rooms.
- Provide employee "safe rooms" for use during emergencies.
- Establish "time-out" or seclusion areas with high ceilings without grids for patients who "act out" and establish separate rooms for criminal patients.
- Provide comfortable client or patient waiting rooms designed to minimize stress.
- Ensure that counseling or patient care rooms have two exits.
- Arrange furniture to prevent entrapment of staff.
- Use minimal furniture in interview rooms or crisis treatment areas and ensure that it is lightweight, without sharp corners or edges and affixed to the floor, if possible. Limit the number of pictures, vases, ashtrays or other items that can be used as weapons.
- Provide lockable and secure bathrooms for staff members separate from patient/client and visitor facilities.
- Lock all unused doors to limit access, in accordance with local fire codes.
- Install bright, effective lighting, both indoors and outdoors.
- Replace burned-out lights and broken windows and locks.
- Keep automobiles well maintained if they are used in the field.
- Survey the facility periodically to remove tools or possessions left by visitors or maintenance staff that could be used inappropriately by patients.

Administrative Controls

- Provide management support during emergencies. Respond promptly to all complaints.
- Adopt a written violence-prevention program, communicate it to all employees, and designate a "Patient Assault Team," task force or coordinator to implement it.
- Advise all patients and visitors that violence, verbal and nonverbal threats, and related behavior will not be tolerated.
- Set up a trained response team to respond to emergencies.
- Provide medical and psychological counseling and debriefing for employees experiencing or witnessing assaults and other violent incidents.
- Ensure that adequate and qualified staff are available at all times. The times of greatest risk occur during patient transfers, emergency responses, mealtimes and at night. Areas with the greatest risk include admission units and crisis or acute care units.
- Encourage employees to promptly report incidents and to suggest ways to reduce or eliminate risks.
- Establish liaison with local police and state prosecutors, report all incidents of violence, and provide police with floor plans of facilities to expedite emergency response or investigations.
- Develop policies and procedures covering home health care providers, such as contracts on how visits will be conducted, the presence of others in the home during the visits and the refusal to provide services in a clearly hazardous situation.
- Establish a daily work plan for field staff to keep a designated contact person informed about their whereabouts throughout the workday. Have the contact person follow up if an employee does not report in as expected.
- Provide staff with identification badges, preferably without last names, to readily verify employment.
- Ensure that adequate and properly trained staff are available to restrain patients or clients, if necessary.

Behavioral Controls

- Use chart tags, logbooks, or other means to identify patients and clients with assaultive behavior problems.
- Lock doors to staff counseling rooms and treatment rooms to limit access.
- Lock automobiles at all times.
- Use the "buddy system," especially when personal safety may be threatened. Home health care providers, social service workers and others should avoid potentially threatening situations.
- Use properly trained security officers to deal with aggressive behavior. Follow written security procedures.
- Provide sensitive and timely information to people waiting in line or in waiting rooms. Adopt measures to decrease waiting time.
- Supervise the movement of psychiatric clients and patients throughout the facility.
- Do not work alone in emergency areas or walk-in clinics, particularly at night or when assistance is unavailable. Do not to enter seclusion rooms alone.

- Determine the behavioral history of new and transferred patients to learn about any past violent or assaultive behaviors.
- Treat and interview aggressive or agitated clients in relatively open areas that still maintain privacy and confidentiality (such as rooms with removable partitions).
- Use case management conferences with coworkers and supervisors to discuss ways to effectively treat potentially violent patients.
- Prepare contingency plans to treat clients who are "acting out" or making verbal or physical attacks or threats. Consider using certified employee assistance professionals or in-house social service or occupational health service staff to help diffuse patient or client anger.
- Transfer assaultive clients to acute care units, criminal units or other more restrictive settings.
- Ensure that nurses and physicians are not alone when performing intimate physical examinations of patients.
- Do not wear necklaces or chains to help prevent possible strangulation in confrontational situations. Carry only required identification and money.
- Do not carry keys, pens or other items that could be used as weapons.
- Utilize security escorts to parking areas in evening or late hours. Ensure that parking areas are highly visible, well lit and safely accessible to the building.
- Exercise extra care in elevators, stairwells and unfamiliar residences; leave the premises immediately if there is a hazardous situation; or request police escort if needed.

Late Night Retail

The wide diversity within the retail industry results in substantial variation in levels of risk of violence. Homicides in convenience and other grocery stores, eating and drinking places, and gasoline service stations constituted the largest share of homicides in retail establishments (BLS, 1997). From 1990 to 1992, the highest annual homicide risks among retail industries were as follows (NIOSH, 1992):

- Liquor stores
- Gasoline service stations
- Jewelry stores
- Grocery stores (including convenience stores)
- Eating and drinking places

The retail sector accounted for 21 percent of nonfatal assaults in 1992, second only to the general services sector. Within that 21 percent, grocery stores experienced 6 percent of assaults, eating and drinking places had 5 percent, and other general retail establishments had 10 percent (NIOSH, 1996).

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has identified a number of factors that may increase a worker's risk for workplace assault. Those pertaining to late-night retail include:

- Contact with the public
- Exchange of money
- Delivery of passengers, goods, or services
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Working late night or early morning hours
- Working in high-crime areas

Several studies have examined risk factors for robbery in retail establishments. In a 1975 study, researchers interviewed ex-convicts to determine which stores were most "attractive" to robbers (Crow and Bull). The stores that were most attractive had large amounts of cash on hand, an obstructed view of counters, poor outdoor lighting, and easy escape routes. Subsequent studies have confirmed that robbers do not choose targets randomly but, instead, consider environmental factors (Southland Corporation, Athena Research Corporation). Risk factors for robbery include easy access or escape, and low risk of recognition or detection of robbers (such as lack of cameras, lack of customers or nearby businesses, and poor visibility from outside the store).

The time of day also affects the likelihood of robbery. Studies have consistently found that retail businesses face a greater risk of robbery during the nighttime hours. Retail robberies generally occur in the late evening and early morning hours because it is dark and fewer people are on the streets (Bellamy, 1996). Risks at night may vary by the number of neighboring businesses open late, the amount of traffic and the level of lighting (among other factors). While the risk of robbery is greater at night, the risk during the daytime also exists especially in establishments that have a low amount of traffic and visibility.

Changing physical and behavioral elements at an establishment can substantially reduce the frequency of robberies. A test group of 7-Eleven stores that eliminated or reduced several risk factors experienced a 30-percent drop in robberies compared to a control group. Target-hardening efforts, including a basic robbery deterrence package, were implemented in 7-Eleven stores nationwide in 1976. The 7-Eleven programs tried to make the store a less attractive target by reducing the cash on hand, maximizing the take/risk ratio, and training employees. After implementing the program throughout the company, the robbery rate at 7-Eleven stores decreased by 64 percent over 20 years.

Other deterrents that may reduce the potential for robbery include:

Engineering controls

- *Improve visibility* as visibility is important in preventing robbery in two respects: First, employees should be able see their surroundings, and second, persons outside the store, including police on patrol, should be able to see into the store. Employees in the store should have an unobstructed view of the street, clear of shrubbery, trees or any form of clutter that a criminal could use to hide. Signs located in windows should be either low or high to allow good visibility into the store. The customer service and cash register areas should be visible from outside the establishment. Shelves should be low enough to assure good visibility throughout the store. Convex mirrors, two-way mirrors, and an elevated vantage point can give employees a more complete view of their surroundings.
- *Maintain adequate lighting* within and outside the establishment to make the store less appealing to a potential robber by making detection more likely. The parking area and the approach to the retail establishment should be well lit during nighttime hours of operation. Exterior illumination may need upgrading in order to allow employees to see what is occurring outside the store.
- *Use fences* and other structures to direct the flow of customer traffic to areas of greater visibility.
- *Use drop safes* to limit the availability of cash to robbers. Employers using drop safes can post signs stating that the amount of cash on hand is limited.
- *Install video surveillance equipment* and closed circuit TV (CCTV) to deter robberies by increasing the risk of identification. This may include interactive video equipment. The video recorder for the CCTV should be secure and out of sight. Posting signs that surveillance equipment is in use and placing the equipment near the cash register may increase the effectiveness of the deterrence.
- *Put height markers on exit doors* to help witnesses provide more complete descriptions of assailants.
- *Use door detectors* to alert employees when persons enter the store.
- *Control access* to the store with door buzzers.

- *Use silent and personal alarms* to notify police or management in the event of a problem. To avoid angering a robber, however, an employee may need to wait until the assailant has left before triggering an alarm.
- *Install physical barriers* such as bullet-resistant enclosures with pass-through windows between customers and employees to protect employees from assaults and weapons in locations with a history of robberies or assaults and located in high-crime areas.
- *Post emergency police and fire department numbers* and the store's address by the phone.

Administrative Controls

- *Integrate violence prevention activities* into daily procedures, such as checking lighting, locks, and security cameras, to help maintain worksite readiness.
- *Keep a minimal amount of cash* in each register (e.g., \$50 or less), especially during evening and late-night hours of operation. In some businesses, transactions with large bills (over \$20) can be prohibited. In situations where this is not practical because of frequent transactions in excess of \$20, cash levels should be as low as is practical. Employees should not carry business receipts on their person unless it is absolutely necessary.
- *Adopt proper emergency procedures* for employees to use in case of a robbery or security breach.
- *Establish systems of communication* in the event of emergencies. Employees should have access to working telephones in each work area, and emergency telephone numbers should be posted by the phones.
- *Adopt procedures for the correct use of physical barriers*, such as enclosures and pass-through windows.
- *Increase staffing levels* at night at stores with a history of robbery or assaults and located in high-crime areas. It is important that clerks be clearly visible to patrons.
- *Lock doors* used for deliveries and disposal of garbage when not in use. Also, do not unlock delivery doors until the delivery person identifies himself or herself. Take care not to block emergency exits—doors must open from the inside without a key to allow persons to exit in case of fire or other emergency.
- *Establish rules* to ensure that employees can walk to garbage areas and outdoor freezers or refrigerators without increasing their risk of assault. The key is for employees to have good visibility, thereby eliminating potential hiding places for assailants near these areas. In some locations, taking trash out or going to outside freezers during daylight may be safer than doing so at night.

- *Keep doors locked before business* officially opens and after closing time. Establish procedures to assure the security of employees who open and close the business, when staffing levels may be low. In addition, the day's business receipts may be a prime robbery target at store closing.
- *Limit or restrict areas of customer access*, reduce the hours of operation, or close portions of the store to limit risk.
- *Adopt safety procedures and policies for off-site work*, such as deliveries.

Behavior Controls

- *Keep an eye on what is going on outside the store* and report any suspicious persons or activities to the police.
- *When there are no customers in the store*, keep yourself busy with other tasks away from the cash register.
- *Use only one register after dark* and leave unused registers open with empty cash drawers tilted up for all to see.

Event Measures

- If you are robbed at gunpoint, stay calm and speak to the robber in a cooperative tone. Do not argue or fight with the robber and offer no resistance whatsoever. Hand over the money.
- Never ever pull a weapon during the event--it will only increase your chances of getting hurt.
- Always move slowly and explain each move to the robber before you make them.

Post-Event Measures

- Make no attempt to follow or chase the robber.
- Stay where you are until you are certain the robber has left the immediate area, then lock the door of your store and call the police immediately.
- Do not touch anything robber has handled.
- Write down everything you remember about the robber and the robbery while you wait for the police to arrive.
- Do not open the door of the store until the police arrive.

Sample WPV Policies

Policy Statements

The best protection employers can offer is to establish a zero-tolerance policy toward workplace violence against or by their employees. The employer should establish a workplace violence prevention policy or incorporate the information into an existing accident prevention program, employee handbook, or manual of standard operating procedures. It is critical to ensure that all employees know the policy and understand that all claims of workplace violence will be investigated and remedied promptly.

A workplace violence policy statement should convey that:

- All employees are responsible for maintaining a safe work environment;
- The policy covers not only acts of physical violence, but harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior;
- The policy covers incidents involving coworkers and incidents involving individuals from outside the agency perpetrating violence against agency employees;
- The agency will respond appropriately to all reported incidents;
- The agency will act to stop inappropriate behavior; and
- Supervisors and all of the offices involved in responding to incidents will be supported by agency management in their efforts to deal with violent and potentially violent situations.

The best plans for threat assessment and response will be useless if employers or those assigned to respond to workplace violence don't know that a threat has been made. The success of workplace violence prevention program depends largely on employees reporting incidents of violence or threats before they escalate into a dangerous situation.

Along with encouraging employees to report violence or threats, employers also have to inform them where to report and what to report. Just as important as knowing how to report incidents is knowing that reports will be heard and responded to.

The following are examples of some policies that can be used in whole or in part and customized to fit your workplace. It is important that all employees are aware of the policy so it is a good idea to not only have it accessible to employees whether by posting it, having it read and signed by new hires, or passed out in memo format but that it is reinforced at least annually to remind employees of its importance.

Example 1

[Insert Company name] recognizes that violence in the workplace is a growing problem necessitating a considered response. The costs of workplace violence are great, both in human and financial terms. Therefore, this Company has adopted this policy regarding workplace violence.

The safety and security of the Company's employees is of primary importance. Acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment and/or coercion, which involve or affect the Company or the Company's employees will not be tolerated.

This prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in the operation of [insert Company name] including, but not limited to, employees, contract and temporary workers, and anyone else on workplace premises. Violations of this policy by any individual on Company property or while acting as a representative of our Company while off Company property will result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

Workplace violence is any intentional conduct which is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to cause an individual to reasonably fear for their personal safety or the safety of their family, friends, and/or property such that employment conditions are altered or a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment is created for one or several employees. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, threats or acts of violence:

- occurring on workplace premises, regardless of the relationship between the Company and the parties involved in the incident;
- occurring off workplace premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of the Company;
- occurring off workplace premises involving a Company employee if the threats or acts affect the business interests of the Company;
- occurring off workplace premises when a Company employee is a victim if the Company determines that the incident may lead to an incident of violence on workplace premises;
- or resulting in the conviction of an employee or agent of the Company, or of an individual, performing services for the Company on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence which adversely affect the legitimate business interests of the Company.

Specific examples of conduct which may be considered threats or acts of violence under this policy include, but are not limited to:

- threatening physical or aggressive contact directed toward another individual;

- threatening an individual or their family, friends, associates, or property with physical harm;
- intentional destruction or threat of destruction of Company property or another's property;
- harassing or threatening phone calls, voicemails, or emails;
- surveillance or stalking;
- and/or veiled threats of physical harm or like intimidation.

Workplace violence does not refer to occasional comments of a socially acceptable nature. Such comments may include references to legitimate sporting activities, popular entertainment, or current events. Rather, it refers to behavior that is personally offensive, threatening, or intimidating.

If you become aware of any threat or violent conduct of the type listed above, you should immediately report the conduct to your supervisor or Human Resources. Any person who engages in a threat or violent action non Company property may be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and may be required, at management's discretion, to remain off of workplace premises pending the outcome of an investigation into the incident. [insert Company name] expressly reserves its rights to secure the assistance of any appropriate law enforcement agency in addressing any situation involving any potentially violent circumstances at the Company.

When threats are made or acts of violence are committed by an employee, a judgment will be made by management as to what actions are appropriate for corrective action.

Under this policy, decisions may be made to prevent a threat from being carried out or a violent act from occurring. No existing Company policy or procedure should be interpreted in a manner that prevents this from occurring.

Any employee who applies for a temporary or permanent protective or restraining order which lists any Company location as a protected area must provide a copy of the order to Human Resources. Such information will be kept confidential to the extent possible without compromising the safety and security of the Company and its employees.

Example 2

It is the policy of _____ that each of our employees has the right to a workplace free from violence. Furthermore, every employee has the right to seek assistance through the EAP to deal with any issues of violence, wherever they happen, including outside of the workplace. For purposes of this policy, violence is defined as any act in which one person seeks to hurt or intimidate another through the use of physical contact or verbal harassment or manipulation. This includes actions of employees, supervisors, customers, suppliers or any other person.

_____ shall:

- Seek to eliminate the potential for violence in and around the workplace.
- Seek to eliminate the potential for violence by affecting the attitudes and behavior of our customers and suppliers.

We will use a variety of methods to accomplish the above including:

1. We will disseminate to all employees/supervisors/managers a statement against all acts of violence, including family violence. This statement will be posted in prominent locations accessible to customers and suppliers.
2. Our opposition to all forms of sexual harassment will be made clear by disseminating to all employees/supervisors/managers our policy prohibiting sexual harassment. Copies of the policy, informational posters or other media will be prominently displayed in areas accessible to our customers and suppliers.
3. We will provide information to all employees about services available through our EAP including those designed to help employees deal with any issues related to workplace or family violence.
4. We will regularly review our workplace environment and minimize wherever possible physical attributes which may expose our employees, customers or suppliers to violent acts.
5. Employees with questions or complaints about workplace behaviors which fall under this policy may discuss them with _____. Concerns will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken. This may include disciplinary action for an employee who is a perpetrator of a violent act.

Everyone with whom we come into contact in our work deserves to be treated with courtesy and respect. This means that we treat each other, our customers, our suppliers and all others in this fashion and that we can expect the same treatment in return.

It is our belief that by helping to prevent violence in the workplace and in the family, our company is helping to foster a safer, better society.

Example 3 – Memo Format

(Can be sent out as an annual reminder of company policy)

MEMORANDUM FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF _____

FROM: DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY HEAD

SUBJECT: Workplace Violence

It is [*insert Company name*]'s policy to promote a safe environment for its employees. This Company is committed to working with its employees to maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior. While this kind of conduct is not pervasive at our workplace, no company is immune. Every company will be affected by disruptive behavior at one time or another.

Violence, threats, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior in our workplace will not be tolerated; that is, all reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. Such behavior can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm. Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from the premises and may be subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties, or both.

We need your cooperation to implement this policy effectively and maintain a safe working environment. Do not ignore violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior. If you observe or experience such behavior by anyone on agency premises, whether he or she is an agency employee or not, report it immediately to a supervisor or manager. Supervisors and managers who receive such reports should seek advice from _____ at xxx-xxxx regarding investigating the incident and initiating appropriate action.

PLEASE NOTE: Threats or assaults that require immediate attention by security or police should be reported first to _____ at xxx-xxxx or to police at 911.

I will support all efforts made by supervisors and personnel in dealing with violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating or other disruptive behavior in our workplace and will monitor whether this policy is being implemented effectively. If you have any questions about this policy statement, please contact _____ at xxx-xxxx.

Example 4

This organization does not tolerate workplace violence. We define workplace violence as actions or words that endanger or harm another employee or result in other employees having a reasonable belief that they are in danger. Such actions include:

- Verbal or physical harassment
- Verbal or physical threats
- Assaults or other violence
- Any other behavior that causes others to feel unsafe (e.g. bullying, sexual harassment)

Company policy requires an immediate response to all reports of violence. All threatening incidents will be investigated and documented by the employee relations department.

If appropriate, the company may provide counseling services or referrals for employees. The following disciplinary actions may also be taken:

- Oral reprimand
- Written reprimand
- Suspension
- Termination

It's the responsibility of all employees to report all threatening behavior to management immediately. The goal of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of all people in our workplace.

Sample workplace weapons policy

In order to ensure a safe environment for employees and customers, our establishment, [Employer Name] prohibits the wearing, transporting, storage, or presence of firearms or other dangerous weapons in our facilities or on our property. Any employee in possession of a firearm or other weapon while on our facilities/property or while otherwise fulfilling job responsibilities may face disciplinary action including termination. A client or visitor who violates this policy may be removed from the property and reported to police authorities. Possession of a valid concealed weapons permit authorized by the State of _____ is not an exemption under this policy.

Definition

Firearms or other dangerous weapons mean:

- any device from which a projectile may be fired by an explosive
- any simulated firearm operated by gas or compressed air
- sling shot
- sand club
- metal knuckles
- any spring blade knife
- any knife which opens or is ejected open by an outward, downward thrust or movement
- any instrument that can be used as a club and poses a reasonable risk of injury

Exemptions

This policy does not apply to:

- any law enforcement personnel engaged in official duties
- any security personnel engaged in official duties
- any person engaged in military activities sponsored by the federal or state government, while engaged in official duties

Notification

“No Firearms or other Dangerous Weapons” signs shall be conspicuously posted within all [Employer Name] facilities and in parking areas and grounds surrounding our facilities. These signs will clearly indicate that firearms and other weapons are not to be carried onto our property or into our facilities.

Reporting

Staff or security personnel will request any visitor found in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon to remove it from the facility and local law enforcement authorities will be notified promptly.

Sample policy addressing domestic violence in the workplace

Domestic violence is abusive behavior that is physical, sexual and/or psychological, intended to establish and maintain control over a partner. Domestic violence is a serious problem that affects people from all walks of life. It can adversely affect the well-being and productivity of employees who are victims, as well as their coworkers. Other effects of domestic violence in the workplace include increased absenteeism, turnover, health care costs and reduced productivity.

Policy statement

The [Employer Name] will not tolerate domestic violence including harassment of any employee or client while in our facilities or vehicles, on our property or while conducting business. This includes the display of any violent or threatening behavior (verbal or physical) that may result in physical or emotional injury or otherwise places one's safety and productivity at risk.

Any employee, who threatens, harasses or abuses someone at our workplace or from the workplace using any company resources such as work time, workplace phones, fax machines, mail, e-mail or other means may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Corrective or disciplinary action may also be taken against employees who are arrested, convicted or issued a permanent injunction as a result of domestic violence when such action has a direct connection to the employee's duties in our company.

The [Employer Name] is committed to working with employees who are victims of domestic violence to prevent abuse and harassment from occurring in the workplace. No employees will be penalized or disciplined solely for being a victim of harassment in the workplace. Our company will provide appropriate support and assistance to employees who are victims of domestic violence. This includes: confidential means for coming forward for help, resource and referral information, work schedule adjustments or leave as needed to obtain assistance, and workplace relocation as feasible.

Employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence are also encouraged to seek assistance. Our company will provide information regarding counseling and certified treatment resources, and make work schedule arrangements to receive such assistance.

Managers/supervisors or human resource professionals in our company should receive domestic violence training. Our company should also:

- Be responsive when an employee who is either the victim or perpetrator of domestic violence asks for help.
- Maintain confidentiality. Information about the employee should only be given to others on a need-to-know basis.
- Work with the victim, personnel office, manager, employee advisory service/resource, available security staff, law enforcement and community domestic violence programs, if necessary, to assess the need for and develop a workplace safety plan for the victim. Victims of domestic violence know their abusers better than anyone else. When it comes to their own personal safety, offer to assist them in developing a workplace safety plan, but allow them to decide what goes in it. If it is determined that other employees or clients are at risk, it is essential to take measures to provide protection for them.
- Adjust the employee's work schedule and/or grant leave if the employee needs to take time off for medical assistance, legal assistance, court appearances, counseling,

relocation or to make other necessary arrangements to create a safe situation. Be sure to follow all applicable personnel rules.

- Maintain communication with the employee during the employee's absence. Remember to maintain confidentiality of the employee's whereabouts.
- Post information about domestic violence in your work area. Also, have information available where employees can obtain it without having to request it or be seen removing it, such as restrooms, lunchrooms or where other employee resource information is located.
- Honor all civil protection orders. As appropriate, participate in court proceedings in obtaining protection orders on behalf of the employee.
- Maintain a list of services available to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. This list should include: employee advisory service/resource, local shelters, certified domestic violence treatment programs available to perpetrators, information about how to obtain civil orders of protection and any available community resources.
- Advise and assist supervisors and managers in taking corrective or disciplinary actions against perpetrators of domestic violence.

Options for employees who are victims of domestic violence

- Tell a trusted coworker, supervisor or manager and ask for help.
- Contact your personnel officer for assistance.
- Contact the employee advisory service/resource
- Call the local police.
- Notify your supervisor of the possible need to be absent. Find out what work schedule or leave options are available to you. Be clear about your plan to return to work and maintain communications with your supervisor during your absence.
- If appropriate, and safety is a concern, submit a recent photograph of the abuser and a copy of your protection order to your supervisor. This assists your employer in identifying the abuser should he/she appear in the workplace.

Options for employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence

- Tell a trusted coworker, supervisor or manager and ask for help.
- Contact your personnel officer for assistance.
- Contact the employee advisory service/resource.
- Obtain a referral to a certified domestic violence perpetrators treatment program.

Fill-in-the-Blanks Prevention Program

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Effective Date for Program

Our establishment, [**Employer Name**] is concerned and committed to our employees' safety and health. We refuse to tolerate violence in the workplace and will make every effort to prevent violent incidents from occurring by implementing a Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WPVP). We will provide adequate authority and budgetary resources to responsible parties so that our goals and responsibilities can be met.

All managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing and maintaining our WPVP Program. We encourage employee participation in designing and implementing our program. We require prompt and accurate reporting of all violent incidents whether or not physical injury has occurred. We will not discriminate against victims of workplace violence.

A copy of this Policy Statement and our WPVP Program is readily available to all employees from each manager and supervisor.

Our program ensures that all employees, including supervisors and managers, adhere to work practices that are designed to make the workplace more secure, and do not engage in verbal threats or physical actions which create a security hazard for others in the workplace.

All employees, including managers and supervisors, are responsible for using safe work practices, for following all directives, policies and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

The management of our establishment is responsible for ensuring that all safety and health policies and procedures involving workplace security are clearly communicated and understood by all employees. Managers and supervisors are expected to enforce the rules fairly and uniformly.

Our Program will be reviewed and updated annually.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

A Threat Assessment Team will be established and part of their duties will be to assess the vulnerability to workplace violence at our establishment and reach agreement on preventive actions to be taken. They will be responsible for auditing our overall Workplace Violence Program.

The Threat Assessment Team will consist of:

Name: _____ Title: _____ Phone: _____

The team will develop employee training programs in violence prevention and plan for responding to acts of violence. They will communicate this plan internally to all employees. The Threat Assessment Team will begin its work by reviewing previous incidents of violence at our workplace. They will analyze and review existing records identifying patterns that may indicate causes and severity of assault incidents and identify changes necessary to correct these hazard. These records include but are not limited to, OSHA 200 logs, past incident reports, medical records, insurance records, workers compensation records, police reports, accident investigations, training records, grievances, minutes of meetings, etc. The team will communicate with similar local businesses and trade associates concerning their experiences with workplace violence.

Additionally, they will inspect the workplace and evaluate the work tasks of all employees to determine the presence of hazards, conditions, operations and other situations with might place our workers at risk of occupational assault incidents. Employees will be surveyed to identify the potential for violent incidents and to identify or confirm the need for improved security measures. These surveys shall be reviewed, updated and distributed as needed or at least once within a two year period.

Periodic inspections to identify and evaluate workplace security hazards and threats of workplace violence will be performed by the following representatives of the Assessment Team, in the following areas of our workplace:

Representative: _____ Area _____

Representative: _____ Area _____

Representative: _____ Area _____

Periodic inspections will be performed according to the following schedule:

Frequency (Daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

HAZARD ASSESSMENT

On [Date], the Threat Assessment Team completed the hazard assessment. This consisted of a records review, inspection of the workaday and employee survey.

Records Review - The Threat Assessment Team reviewed the following records:

- OSHA 200 logs for the last three years
 - Incident reports
 - Records of or information compiled for recording of assault incidents or near assault incidents
 - Insurance records
 - Police reports
 - Accident investigations
 - Training records
 - Grievances
 - Other relevant records or information: _____
-

From these records, we have identified the following issues that need to be addressed:

-
-
-

WORKPLACE SECURITY ANALYSIS

Inspection - The Threat Assessment Team inspected the workplace on [Date]. From this inspection the following issues have been identified:

-

-
-

Review of Tasks - The Threat Assessment Team also reviewed the work tasks of our employees to determine the presence of hazards, conditions, operations and situations which might place workers at risk of occupational assault incidents. The following factors were considered:

- Exchange of money with the public
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Working late at night or early in the morning hours
- Working in a high crime area
- Guarding valuable property or possessions
- Working in community settings
- Staffing levels

From this analysis, the following issues have been identified:

-
-
-

WORKPLACE SURVEY

Under the direction of the Threat Assessment Team, we distributed a survey among all of our employees to identify any additional issues that were not noted in the initial stages of the hazard assessment.

From that survey, the following issues have been identified:

-
-
-

WORKPLACE HAZARD CONTROL AND PREVENTION

In order to reduce the risk of workplace violence, the following measures have been recommended:

Engineering Controls and Building and Work Area Design:

-
-
-

Management has instituted the following as a result of the workplace security inspection and recommendations made by the Threat Assessment Team:

-
-
-

These changes were completed on [Date].

Policies and Procedures developed as a result of the Threat Assessment Team's recommendations:

-
-
-

TRAINING AND EDUCATION Training for all employees, including managers and supervisors, will be given during employee orientation. This training will be repeated every two years.

Training shall include:

- a review and definition of workplace violence;
- a full explanation and full description of our program;
- instructions on how to report all incidents including threats and verbal abuse;
- methods of recognizing and responding to workplace security hazards;
- training on how to identify potential workplace security hazards (such as no lights in parking lot while leaving late at night, unknown person loitering outside the building, etc.);
- review of measures that have been instituted in this organization to prevent workplace violence including:

- use of security equipment and procedures;
- how to attempt to diffuse hostile or threatening situations;
- how to summon assistance in case of an emergency or hostage situation;
- post-incident procedures, including medical follow-up and the availability of counseling and referral.

Training will be conducted by _____ and will be repeated every two years.

All training records will be filed with _____.

A general review of this program will be conducted every two years. Our training program will be updated to reflect changes in our Workplace Prevention Program.

INCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

All incidents must be reported within [Time Frame]. An "Incident Report Form" will be completed for all incidents. One copy will be forwarded to the Threat Assessment Team for their review and a copy will be filed with [Job Title]. You can obtain a Form from [Name].

Each incident will be evaluated by the Threat Assessment Team. The team will discuss the causes of the incident and will make recommendations on how to revise the program to prevent similar incidents from occurring. All revisions of the Program will be put into writing and made available to all employees.

RECORDKEEPING

We will maintain an accurate record of all workplace violence incidents. All incident report forms will be kept for a minimum of [Time], or for the time specified in the Statute of Limitations for our local jurisdiction.

Any injury which requires more than first aid, is a lost-time injury, requires modified duty, or causes loss of consciousness, will be recorded on the OSHA 300 log. Doctors' reports and supervisors' reports will be kept of each recorded incident, if applicable.

Incidents of abuse, verbal attack, or aggressive behavior which may be threatening to the employee, but not resulting in injury, will be recorded. These records will be evaluated on a regular basis by the Threat Assessment Team.

EAP PROGRAM

We offer to all of our employees an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which may be utilized in the event of workplace violence. The EAP provides employees with free, easily accessible and confidential means of addressing issues that may arise as a result of a violent situation or alleviate tensions that may lead to workplace violence. Our EAP can be accessed by calling the following confidential number:_____.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Company's policy statement is as follows:

[Insert policy statement. See pg. 42 for sample policies]

Training Sheets



>> Violence in the Workplace

Workplace violence is violence or the threat of violence against workers. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide, one of the leading causes of job-related deaths. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide.

Workplace violence is any type of violence, threat, intimidation or other disruptive behavior in the workplace. It can be any inappropriate behavior, verbal or nonverbal communication, or expression that would lead to the reasonable belief that an act has occurred or may occur which may lead to physical and/or psychological harm to the person making threats, to others, or to property. It can take many forms including:

- Beatings
- Stabbings
- Suicides
- Shootings
- Rapes
- Near-suicides
- Psychological traumas
- Threats or obscene phone calls
- Intimidation
- Harassment of any nature
- Being followed, sworn or shouted at

Examples include:

- Verbal threats to inflict bodily harm; including vague or covert threats
- Attempting to cause physical harm; striking, pushing and other aggressive physical acts against another person
- Verbal harassment; abusive or offensive language, gestures or other discourteous conduct towards supervisors, fellow employees, or the public
- Disorderly conduct, such as shouting, throwing or pushing objects, punching walls, and slamming doors
- Making false, malicious or unfounded statements against coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates which tend to damage their reputations or undermine their authority
- Inappropriate remarks, such as making delusional statements
- Fascination with guns or other weapons, bringing weapons into the workplace

You have the right to expect a work environment that promotes safety from violence, threats, and harassment. You can actively contribute to preventive practices by doing the following:

- Accept and adhere to your employer's preventive policies and practices.
- Become aware of and report violent or threatening behavior by coworkers or other warning signs.
- Follow procedures established by the workplace violence prevention program, including those for reporting incidents.

Indicators of potentially violent behavior

No one can predict human behavior and there is no "specific profile" of a potentially dangerous individual. However, indicators of increased risk of violent behavior are available. The following indicators have been identified by the FBI:

- Direct or veiled threats of harm;
- Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying, or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior;
- Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees;
- Bringing a weapon to the workplace, brandishing a weapon in the workplace, making inappropriate references to guns, or fascination with weapons;
- Statements showing fascination with incidents of workplace violence, statements indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve a problem, or statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace homicides;
- Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide;
- Drug/alcohol abuse; and
- Extreme changes in behaviors.



>> Warning Signs of Escalating Behavior

Five warning signs of escalating behavior and suggested responses

Confusion

Behavior characterized by bewilderment or distraction. Unsure or uncertain of the next course of action.

- Listen to their concerns.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Give them factual information.

Frustration

Behavior characterized by reaction or resistance to information. Impatience. Feeling a sense of defeat in the attempt of accomplishment. May try to bait you.

- See steps above.
- Relocate to quiet location or setting
- Reassure them.
- Make a sincere attempt to clarify concerns.

Blame

Placing responsibility for problems on everyone else. Accusing or holding you responsible. Finding fault or error with the action of others. They may place blame directly on you. Crossing over to potentially hazardous behavior.

- See steps above.
- Disengage and bring second party into the discussion.
- Use teamwork approach.
- Draw the person back to facts.
- Use probing questions.
- Create “yes” momentum.

Anger – judgment-call required

Characterized by a visible change in body posture and disposition. Actions include pounding fists, pointing fingers, shouting or screaming. This signals very risky behavior.

- Use venting techniques.
- Don't offer solutions.
- Don't argue with comments made.
- Prepare to evacuate or isolate.
- Contact supervisor and/or security.

Hostility – judgment-call required

Physical actions or threats which appear imminent. Acts of physical harm or property damage. Out-of-control behavior signals they have crossed over the line.

- Disengage and evacuate.
- Attempt to isolate person if it can be done safely.
- Alert supervisor and contact security immediately.



>> Coping with Violence

Follow these suggestions in your daily interactions with people to de-escalate potentially violent situations. If at any time a person's behavior starts to escalate beyond your comfort zone, disengage when it is safe to do so.

For an angry or hostile customer or coworker

- Stay calm. Move and speak slowly, quietly and confidently.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Avoid any physical contact or finger pointing.
- Acknowledge the person's feelings. Indicate that you can see they are upset.
- Listen attentively and patiently. Focus your attention on the other person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- Use delaying tactics which will give the person time to calm down. For example, offer a drink of water (in a disposable cup).
- Be reassuring and point out choices. Break big problems into smaller, more manageable problems.
- Accept criticism in a positive way. When a complaint might be true, use statements like "You are probably right" or "It was my fault." If the criticism seems unwarranted, ask clarifying questions.
- Be courteous. Be patient.
- Keep the situation in your control.

For a person shouting, swearing, and threatening

- Signal a coworker, or supervisor, that you need help. (Use a duress alarm system or prearranged code words.)
- Do not make any calls yourself.
- Have someone call the local police or security.

For someone threatening you with a gun, knife, or other weapon

- Stay calm. Quietly signal for help. (Use a duress alarm or code words.)
- Maintain eye contact.
- Stall for time.
- Keep talking -- but follow instructions from the person who has the weapon.
- Don't risk harm to yourself or others.
- Never try to grab a weapon.
- Watch for a safe chance to escape to a safe area.

Telephone Threats

- Keep calm. Keep talking.
- Don't hang up.
- Signal a coworker to get on an extension.
- Ask the caller to repeat the message and write it down.
- Repeat questions, if necessary.
- For a bomb threat, ask where the bomb is and when it is set to go off.



>> Coping with Violence

- Listen for background noises and write down a description.
- Write down whether it's a man or a woman; pitch of voice, accent; anything else you hear.
- Try to get the person's name, exact location, and telephone number.
- Signal a coworker to immediately call the local police or security.
- Notify your immediate supervisor.

Things to NOT do in a violent situation

- Use styles of communication which generate hostility such as apathy, brush off, coldness, condescension, going strictly by the rules or giving the run-around.
- Reject all of a person's demands from the start.
- Pose in challenging stances such as standing directly opposite someone, hands on hips or crossing your arms.
- Make sudden movements which can be seen as threatening. Notice the tone, volume and rate of your speech.
- Challenge, threaten or dare the individual. Never belittle the person or make them feel foolish.
- Criticize or act impatiently toward the agitated individual.
- Attempt to bargain with a threatening individual.
- Try to make the situation seem less serious than it is.
- Make false statements or promises you cannot keep.
- Try to impart a lot of technical or complicated information when emotions are high.
- Take sides or agree with distortions.
- Invade the individual's personal space. Make sure there is a space of three feet to six feet between you and the person.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Write in all the emergency numbers for your building. Tape this reference tool on your desk by your phone or somewhere else close to your phone for handy reference.

Federal Protective Service _____

Building Security _____

Police/Sheriff _____

Fire Department _____

Ambulance _____

Health Unit _____



>> Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is abusive behavior that is physical, sexual, or psychological, and is intended to establish and maintain control over a partner. Domestic violence instills fear and harms victims and families and must not be tolerated. It is criminal activity that statistics show affects everyone regardless of race, income, or age and occurs in every community.

Domestic violence is not solely a private, family dispute that affects only the people immediately involved, but also crosses over to the workplace, adversely affecting the safety and productivity of victims and co-workers.

This company does not tolerate domestic violence and encourages victims of violence to report it to a supervisor or HR without fear of reprimand. Any issues of domestic violence will be kept confidential to the extent that it is safe to do so. We will assist you in any way possible whether it's obtaining information on where to find help, directing you to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or counseling services, adjusting work schedules to accommodate treatment or helping to create a safer situation. Employees will not be penalized or disciplined solely because they have been victims of domestic violence.

This company also encourages employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence to seek assistance. We are committed to providing assistance through references to counseling services and treatment programs.

Corrective or disciplinary action may be taken against employees who misuse company resources to perpetrate domestic violence, harass, threaten, or commit an act of domestic violence in the workplace or while conducting business.

Perhaps more than with any other risk, employees facing domestic threats may tend to confide most easily in coworkers, rather than supervisors, managers or a company's security force. It is also coworkers who are most likely to sense that someone they work with may be at risk from an abusive relationship, even if the person doesn't say anything explicitly. If a coworker confides in you or you suspect that an employee is a victim of domestic violence, we encourage you to disclose this information to a manager or supervisor if others in the workplace may also be in danger or if could protect your coworker.

Behavior That May Suggest Possible Victimization

- Tardiness or unexplained absences
- Frequent-and often unplanned-use of leave time
- Anxiety
- Lack of concentration
- Change in job performance
- A tendency to remain isolated from coworkers or reluctance to participate in social events
- Discomfort when communicating with others
- Disruptive phone calls or e-mail
- Sudden or unexplained requests to be moved from public locations in the workplace, such as sales or reception areas
- Frequent financial problems indicating lack of access to money
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Noticeable change in use of makeup (to cover up injuries)
- Inappropriate clothes (e.g., sunglasses worn inside the building, turtleneck worn in the summer)
- Disruptive visits from current or former intimate partner
- Sudden changes of address or reluctance to divulge where she is staying
- Acting uncharacteristically moody, depressed, or distracted
- In the process of ending an intimate relationship; breakup seems to cause the employee undue anxiety
- Court appearances
- Being the victim of vandalism or threats



>> Healthcare

Safety Tips for Hospital Workers

Several studies indicate that violence in Healthcare settings often takes place during times of high activity and interaction with patients, such as at meal times and during visiting hours and patient transportation. Assaults may occur when service is denied, when a patient is involuntarily admitted, or when a health care worker attempts to set limits on eating, drinking, or tobacco or alcohol use.

Violence may occur anywhere in the hospital, but it is most frequent in the following areas:

- Psychiatric wards
- Waiting rooms
- Emergency rooms
- Geriatric units

Watch for signals that may be associated with impending violence:

- Verbally expressed anger and frustration
- Signs of drug or alcohol use
- Body language such as threatening gestures
- Presence of a weapon

Maintain behavior that helps diffuse anger:

- Present a calm, caring attitude.
- Don't match the threats.
- Don't give orders.
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (for example, "I know you are frustrated").
- Avoid any behavior that may be interpreted as aggressive (for example, moving rapidly, getting too close, touching, or speaking loudly).

Be alert:

- Evaluate each situation for potential violence when you enter a room or begin to relate to a patient or visitor.
- Be vigilant throughout the encounter.
- Don't isolate yourself with a potentially violent person.
- Always keep an open path for exiting-don't let the potentially violent person stand between you and the door.

Take these steps if you can't defuse the situation quickly:

- Remove yourself from the situation.
- Call security for help.
- Report any violent incidents to your management.

Safety Procedures:

- Use chart tags, logbooks, or other means to identify patients and clients with assaultive behavior problems.
- Lock doors to staff counseling rooms and treatment rooms to limit access.
- Lock automobiles (such as ambulances) at all times.
- Use the "buddy system," especially when personal safety may be threatened. Home health care providers, social service workers and others should avoid potentially threatening situations.



>> Healthcare

Safety Procedures (continued):

- Use properly trained security officers to deal with aggressive behavior. Follow written security procedures.
- Provide sensitive and timely information to people waiting in line or in waiting rooms. Adopt measures to decrease waiting time.
- Supervise the movement of psychiatric clients and patients throughout the facility.
- Do not work alone in emergency areas or walk-in clinics, particularly at night or when assistance is unavailable. Do not to enter seclusion rooms alone.
- Determine the behavioral history of new and transferred patients to learn about any past violent or assaultive behaviors.
- Treat and interview aggressive or agitated clients in relatively open areas that still maintain privacy and confidentiality (such as rooms with removable partitions).
- Use case management conferences with coworkers and supervisors to discuss ways to effectively treat potentially violent patients.
- Prepare contingency plans to treat clients who are "acting out" or making verbal or physical attacks or threats. Consider using certified employee assistance professionals or in-house social service or occupational health service staff to help diffuse patient or client anger.
- Transfer assaultive clients to acute care units, criminal units or other more restrictive settings.
- Ensure that nurses and physicians are not alone when performing intimate physical examinations of patients.
- Do not wear necklaces or chains to help prevent possible strangulation in confrontational situations. Carry only required identification and money.
- Do not carry keys, pens or other items that could be used as weapons.
- Utilize security escorts to parking areas in evening or late hours. Ensure that parking areas are highly visible, well lit and safely accessible to the building.
- Exercise extra care in elevators, stairwells and unfamiliar residences; leave the premises immediately if there is a hazardous situation; or request police escort if needed.



>> Late Night Retail

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has identified a number of factors that may increase a worker's risk for workplace assault.

Those pertaining to late-night retail include:

- Contact with the public
- Exchange of money
- Delivery of passengers, goods, or services
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Working late night or early morning hours
- Working in high-crime areas

Your help as an employee in a workplace violence program is important for several reasons:

First, front-line employees are an important source of information about the operations of the business and the environment in which the business operates. This may be particularly true for employees working at night in retail establishments when higher level managers may not routinely be on duty.

Second, inclusion of a broad range of employees in the violence prevention program has the advantage of harnessing a wider range of experience and insight than that of management alone.

Third, front-line workers can be very valuable problem solvers, as your personal experience often enables you to identify practical solutions to problems and to perceive hidden impediments to proposed changes.

Safety Procedures

- Keep an eye on what is going on outside the store and report any suspicious persons or activities to the police.
- When there are no customers in the store, keep yourself busy with other tasks away from the cash register.
- Use only one register after dark and leave unused registers open with empty cash drawers tilted up for all to see.

Event Measures

- If you are robbed at gunpoint, stay calm and speak to the robber in a cooperative tone. Do not argue or fight with the robber and offer no resistance whatsoever. Hand over the money.
- Never ever pull a weapon during the event--it will only increase your chances of getting hurt.
- Always move slowly and explain each move to the robber before you make them.

Post-Event Measures

- Make no attempt to follow or chase the robber.
- Stay where you are until you are certain the robber has left the immediate area, then lock the door of your store and call the police immediately.
- Do not touch anything robber has handled.
- Write down everything you remember about the robber and the robbery while you wait for the police to arrive.
- Do not open the door of the store until the police arrive.

OSHA Form 301

OSHA Form 301

The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970 requires employers in non-exempt industries with 11 or more employees to keep a record of any injuries or illnesses that occur in the workplace, including incidences involving workplace violence. OSHA's recordkeeping regulation (29 CFR Part 1904) clarifies that the purpose of this rule is not to assign fault or justify benefits or Workers' Compensation rights. It is simply a recordkeeping tool and a fact gathering element for OSHA.

The OSHA 301 form is called the Injury and Illness Incident Report and one must be filled out within seven (7) calendar days of receiving information that a recordable injury or illness has occurred.

An injury or illness is considered work-related if an event or exposure in the work environment caused or contributed to the condition or significantly aggravated a preexisting condition. Work-relatedness is presumed for injuries and illnesses resulting from events or exposures occurring in the workplace, unless an exception specifically applies. See 29 CFR Part 1904.5(b)(2) for the exceptions. The work environment includes the establishment and other locations where one or more employees are working or are present as a condition of their employment.

The work-related injuries and illnesses which need to be recorded are those that result in:

- Death
- Loss of consciousness
- Days away from work
- Restricted work activity or job transfer
- Medical treatment beyond first aid

You must record any significant work related injury or illness that is diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional.

At the end of the year, all of the OSHA 301 records must be transferred into an OSHA Log of Work Related Injuries Illnesses (Form 300) which is used to classify work-related injuries and illnesses and to note the extent and severity of each case. When an incident occurs, this Log is used to record specific details about what happened and how it happened. The Summary, a separate form (Form 300A), shows the totals for the year in each category. At the end of the year, the Summary is posted in a visible location so that employees are aware of the injuries and illnesses occurring in their workplace.

The OSHA 300 Log, the annual summary and the OSHA 301 Incident Report forms must be kept on file for five (5) years following the end of the calendar year that these records cover. Employers are not required to update the OSHA 301 Incident Reports, but they may do so if they wish as information changes.

For more information about OSHA's Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Forms, contact a Compliance Specialist for more information about a complete OSHA Log 300 Kit.

OSHA's Form 301 Injury and Illness Incident Report

Attention: This form contains information relating to employee health and must be used in a manner that protects the confidentiality of employees to the extent possible while the information is being used for occupational safety and health purposes.



Form approved OMB no. 1218-0176

This *Injury and Illness Incident Report* is one of the first forms you must fill out when a recordable work-related injury or illness has occurred. Together with the *Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses* and the accompanying *Summary*, these forms help the employer and OSHA develop a picture of the extent and severity of work-related incidents.

Within 7 calendar days after you receive information that a recordable work-related injury or illness has occurred, you must fill out this form or an equivalent. Some state workers' compensation, insurance, or other reports may be acceptable substitutes. To be considered an equivalent form, any substitute must contain all the information asked for on this form.

According to Public Law 91-596 and 29 CFR 1904, OSHA's recordkeeping rule, you must keep this form on file for 5 years following the year to which it pertains.

If you need additional copies of this form, you may photocopy and use as many as you need.

Completed by _____ Date ____/____/____
 Title _____
 Phone (____) _____

Information about the employee

- 1) Full name _____
- 2) Street _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
- 3) Date of birth ____/____/____
- 4) Date hired ____/____/____
- 5) Male Female

Information about the physician or other health care professional

- 6) Name of physician or other health care professional _____
- 7) If treatment was given away from the worksite, where was it given?
Facility _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
- 8) Was employee treated in an emergency room?
 Yes No
- 9) Was employee hospitalized overnight as an in-patient?
 Yes No

Information about the case

- 10) Case number from the Log _____ (Transfer the case number from the Log after you record the case.)
- 11) Date of injury or illness ____/____/____
- 12) Time employee began work _____ AM / PM
- 13) Time of event _____ AM / PM Check if time cannot be determined
- 14) **What was the employee doing just before the incident occurred?** Describe the activity, as well as the tools, equipment, or material the employee was using. Be specific. *Examples:* "climbing a ladder while carrying roofing materials"; "spraying chlorine from hand sprayer"; "daily computer key-entry."
- 15) **What happened?** Tell us how the injury occurred. *Examples:* "When ladder slipped on wet floor, worker fell 20 feet"; "Worker was sprayed with chlorine when gasket broke during replacement"; "Worker developed soreness in wrist over time."
- 16) **What was the injury or illness?** Tell us the part of the body that was affected and how it was affected; be more specific than "hurt," "pain," or "sore." *Examples:* "strained back"; "chemical burn, hand"; "carpal tunnel syndrome."
- 17) **What object or substance directly harmed the employee?** *Examples:* "concrete floor"; "chlorine"; "radial arm saw." If this question does not apply to the incident, leave it blank.
- 18) **If the employee died, when did death occur?** Date of death ____/____/____

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 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
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 Yes
 No
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 Yes
 No

Information about the case

- 10) Case number from the Log _____
(Transfer the case number from the Log after you record the case.)
- 11) Date of injury or illness ____/____/____
- 12) Time employee began work _____ AM / PM
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14) **What was the employee doing just before the incident occurred?** Describe the activity, as well as the tools, equipment, or material the employee was using. Be specific. *Examples:* "climbing a ladder while carrying roofing materials"; "spraying chlorine from hand sprayer"; "daily computer key-entry."

15) **What happened?** Tell us how the injury occurred. *Examples:* "When ladder slipped on wet floor, worker fell 20 feet"; "Worker was sprayed with chlorine when gasket broke during replacement"; "Worker developed soreness in wrist over time."

16) **What was the injury or illness?** Tell us the part of the body that was affected and how it was affected; be more specific than "hurt," "pain," or "sore." *Examples:* "strained back"; "chemical burn, hand"; "carpal tunnel syndrome."

17) **What object or substance directly harmed the employee?** *Examples:* "concrete floor"; "chlorine"; "radial arm saw." *If this question does not apply to the incident, leave it blank.*

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Form approved OMB no. 1218-0176

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- 5) Male
 Female

Information about the physician or other health care professional

- 6) Name of physician or other health care professional _____
- 7) If treatment was given away from the worksite, where was it given?
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 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
- 8) Was employee treated in an emergency room?
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- 9) Was employee hospitalized overnight as an in-patient?
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Form approved OMB no. 1218-0176

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14) **What was the employee doing just before the incident occurred?** Describe the activity, as well as the tools, equipment, or material the employee was using. Be specific. *Examples:* "climbing a ladder while carrying roofing materials"; "spraying chlorine from hand sprayer"; "daily computer key-entry."

15) **What happened?** Tell us how the injury occurred. *Examples:* "When ladder slipped on wet floor, worker fell 20 feet"; "Worker was sprayed with chlorine when gasket broke during replacement"; "Worker developed soreness in wrist over time."

16) **What was the injury or illness?** Tell us the part of the body that was affected and how it was affected; be more specific than "hurt," "pain," or "sore." *Examples:* "strained back"; "chemical burn, hand"; "carpal tunnel syndrome."

17) **What object or substance directly harmed the employee?** *Examples:* "concrete floor"; "chlorine"; "radial arm saw." If this question does not apply to the incident, leave it blank.

18) **If the employee died, when did death occur?** Date of death ____/____/____

OSHA's Form 301 Injury and Illness Incident Report

Attention: This form contains information relating to employee health and must be used in a manner that protects the confidentiality of employees to the extent possible while the information is being used for occupational safety and health purposes.



Form approved OMB no. 1218-0176

This *Injury and Illness Incident Report* is one of the first forms you must fill out when a recordable work-related injury or illness has occurred. Together with the *Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses* and the accompanying *Summary*, these forms help the employer and OSHA develop a picture of the extent and severity of work-related incidents.

Within 7 calendar days after you receive information that a recordable work-related injury or illness has occurred, you must fill out this form or an equivalent. Some state workers' compensation, insurance, or other reports may be acceptable substitutes. To be considered an equivalent form, any substitute must contain all the information asked for on this form.

According to Public Law 91-596 and 29 CFR 1904, OSHA's recordkeeping rule, you must keep this form on file for 5 years following the year to which it pertains.

If you need additional copies of this form, you may photocopy and use as many as you need.

Completed by _____ Date _____
 Title _____
 Phone (____) _____

Information about the employee

- 1) Full name _____
- 2) Street _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
- 3) Date of birth ____/____/____
- 4) Date hired ____/____/____
- 5) Male Female

Information about the physician or other health care professional

- 6) Name of physician or other health care professional _____

- 7) If treatment was given away from the worksite, where was it given?
 Facility _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
- 8) Was employee treated in an emergency room?
 Yes No
- 9) Was employee hospitalized overnight as an in-patient?
 Yes No

Information about the case

- 10) Case number from the Log _____ (Transfer the case number from the Log after you record the case.)
- 11) Date of injury or illness ____/____/____
- 12) Time employee began work _____ AM / PM
- 13) Time of event _____ AM / PM Check if time cannot be determined
- 14) **What was the employee doing just before the incident occurred?** Describe the activity, as well as the tools, equipment, or material the employee was using. Be specific. *Examples:* "climbing a ladder while carrying roofing materials"; "spraying chlorine from hand sprayer"; "daily computer key-entry."

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- 5) Male
 Female

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Documentation Forms

Recordkeeping

Keeping records of workplace violence incidents serves multiple purposes. One purpose is to provide information for employers, raising their awareness of the possibility for violence occurring in the workplace. Increased employer awareness should result in the identification and voluntary correction of workplace conditions that could lead to violence. In this role, the records serve as a "management tool" for the administration of a workplace violence prevention program.

Likewise, employees who are provided information on injuries will be more aware of hazards in the work environment, and therefore more likely to follow workplace violence prevention practices, and report signs of potential issues. This would generally raise the overall level of safety in the workplace.

Another purpose for keeping these records is to provide the police or OSHA compliance staff with information which can facilitate inspections and investigations. Records should answer such questions as:

- **What** happened?
- **Who** was involved?
- **Where** it happened?
- **When** it happened?
- **Why** it happened?
- **How** it happened?

Interview

Begin recording an incident by reviewing the available information. Discrepancies or deficiencies in the information should be noted so they can be addressed during the interviews. When conducting the investigation having pre-designated questions that are asked uniformly to all witnesses insures that all pertinent areas of information are covered in a fair matter.

To make the interview as official as possible, it is a good idea to conduct the interview in a professional work area such as the office or boardroom as opposed to a restaurant, car or home. It is also important that the place where the interview is conducted is private and free from disruption so that the employee giving information will feel that they can speak openly and that nobody will overhear them.

If an employee declines to be interviewed, the person conducting the investigation should reassure the individual of their confidentiality and importance at obtaining as much information as possible to resolve the issue. If the employee still declines, ascertain and record the reasons for the declination.

The person conducting the investigation should have a comfortable style that projects professionalism and competence. They should generate rapport with the person being interviewed by conveying a willingness to communicate. This will make the employee more willing to confide personally sensitive information. It is important to not be judgmental when disagreeable conduct or information is disclosed.

Incident Investigation

After an incident occurs, a detailed investigation is imperative. All incidents, including near misses, should be investigated as soon as possible. A delay of any kind may cause important evidence to be removed, destroyed intentionally or unintentionally. The investigation should be focused on fact-finding to prevent recurrence and not fault-finding. Employers should have effective medical management programs available and maintain comprehensive records.

When conducting the investigation, the Threat Assessment Team should:

- collect facts on who, what, when, where and how the incident occurred
- record information
- identify contributing causes
- recommend corrective action
- encourage appropriate follow-up
- consider changes in controls, procedures, policy

Handling hostility

During an investigation, individuals may be argumentative. When this type of hostility is encountered, the person conducting the interview can try to defuse it by explaining the purpose of the interview and that the interview is a required part of the investigation. Reminding the interviewee that the investigator has full authority to conduct the interview and that the interviewee is required to cooperate may lessen the reluctance.

Sometimes recognizing and acknowledging the person's hostility and the reason for it will let both parties reach the mutual understanding that the interview will proceed. If the investigator feels threatened by the individual being interviewed, the investigator should stop the interview and report the situation to the appropriate authorities.

If, after repeated attempts in various ways, an individual refuses to answer a specific question, the investigator should attempt to learn the reason. The investigator should record the refusal to answer any question and the reason. If the individual wants to terminate the interview, the investigator should attempt to learn the reason and to dissuade the individual by addressing the concerns. If the individual persists, the investigator should conclude the interview.

The following forms can be used to report any threatening remark or act of physical violence against a person or property, whether experienced or observed. Individuals may be more forthcoming with information if the form is understood to be voluntary and confidential.

Did the assault involve a firearm/weapon? Yes ____ No ____ If so, describe _____

Was the victim injured? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please describe _____

Who was responsible for assault?

- Stranger
- Personal relation
- Client/patient/patron/customer
- Coworker
- Supervisor
- Other If other, describe _____

What was the name of the person(s) who committed the assault?

_____ Male Female

_____ Male Female

_____ Male Female

I have been instructed that I am free to add or change any of the above details and I am satisfied that the facts stated above are accurate. I declare that the information given above is correct to the best of my knowledge or belief. A willful false statement is subject to disciplinary action.

Signature _____ Date _____

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_____ ____ Male ____ Female

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_____ Male Female

_____ Male Female

_____ Male Female

I have been instructed that I am free to add or change any of the above details and I am satisfied that the facts stated above are accurate. I declare that the information given above is correct to the best of my knowledge or belief. A willful false statement is subject to disciplinary action.

Signature _____ Date _____

The information collected may be verified with others who may have knowledge or been witness to the acts in question. This company prohibits retaliation against any person who files a complaint or assists in its investigation. This includes intimidation, threats, coercion or discrimination. Please notify your supervisor or Human Resources manager immediately if any attempt at retaliation is made.

Did the assault involve a firearm/weapon? Yes ____ No ____ If so, describe _____

Was the victim injured? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please describe _____

Who was responsible for assault?

- Stranger
 - Personal relation
 - Client/patient/patron/customer
 - Coworker
 - Supervisor
 - Other If other, describe _____
-

What was the name of the person(s) who committed the assault?

_____ Male Female

_____ Male Female

_____ Male Female

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Was the victim injured? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please describe _____

Who was responsible for assault?

- Stranger
 - Personal relation
 - Client/patient/patron/customer
 - Coworker
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What was the name of the person(s) who committed the assault?

_____ Male Female

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Did the assault involve a firearm/weapon? Yes ____ No ____ If so, describe _____

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Workplace Violence Incident Summary

Date _____

Name of Aggressor and Victim _____

Incident summary

Determination

Resolution

This case was reviewed by _____

The verdict was reached after thorough investigation and using the facts that were provided. Statements that have been documented were done so in a manner that reflects what was reported and have been approved by the person giving the statement. All parties involved in this investigation process have been notified of the outcome and reminded of the company's policy prohibiting any type of retaliation.

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Name of Aggressor and Victim _____

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Signature _____ Date _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
Customer, Patient, Resident, Other _____

Type of Incident (circle one): Assault, Robbery, Harassment, Disorderly Conduct, Sex Offense, Injury,
Other _____

Weapon used (circle one): Gun, Knife, Physical Force, Other _____

Was medical attention required? Yes ___ No ___

Describe Incident: _____

Were other employees present at the time of the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was there reason to believe that such an incident may occur? Yes ___ No ___

Has a similar incident occurred in the past? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___

Does the Assailant/Perpetrator have a history of violence? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___

Did police respond to the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was a police report filed? Yes ___ No ___

Name of Police Department _____

Officer(s) handling the case _____

Report Number _____

If retail location please see next page.

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Signature _____ Date _____

Retail Location _____

Name of cashier on duty _____

Was incident captured on video tape? Yes ___ No ___

Amount of Loss: Currency \$ _____ Merchandise _____

Description of Suspects:

Suspect #1 _____

Suspect #2 _____

Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

Race: White Black Other _____

Height _____

Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

Scars/Marks _____

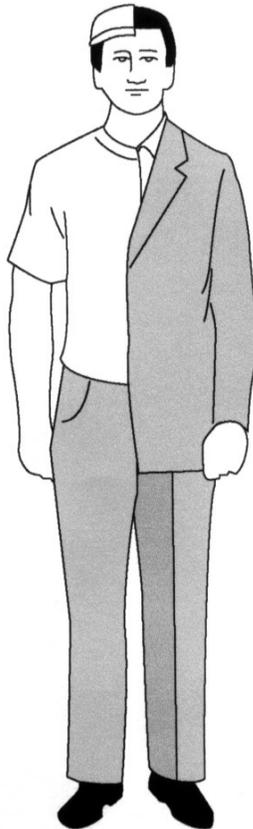
Pants _____

Complexion _____

Shoes _____

Facial Hair _____

Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
Customer, Patient, Resident, Other _____

Type of Incident (circle one): Assault, Robbery, Harassment, Disorderly Conduct, Sex Offense, Injury,
Other _____

Weapon used (circle one): Gun, Knife, Physical Force, Other _____

Was medical attention required? Yes ___ No ___

Describe Incident: _____

Were other employees present at the time of the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was there reason to believe that such an incident may occur? Yes ___ No ___

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Signature _____ Date _____

Retail Location _____

Name of cashier on duty _____

Was incident captured on video tape? Yes ___ No ___

Amount of Loss: Currency \$ _____ Merchandise _____

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Suspect #1 _____

Suspect #2 _____

Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

Race: White Black Other _____

Height _____

Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

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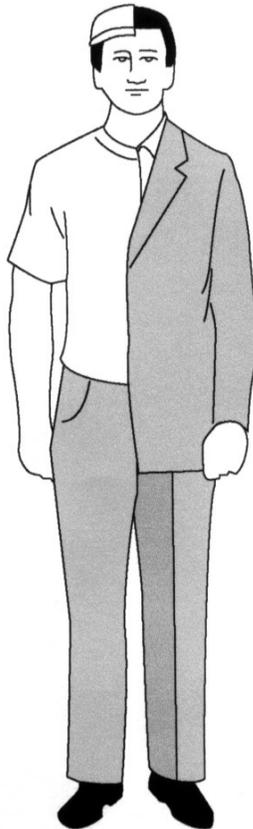
Pants _____

Complexion _____

Shoes _____

Facial Hair _____

Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
Customer, Patient, Resident, Other _____

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Was medical attention required? Yes ___ No ___

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Were other employees present at the time of the incident? Yes ___ No ___

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Description: _____

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Height _____

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Hat (Color/Type) _____

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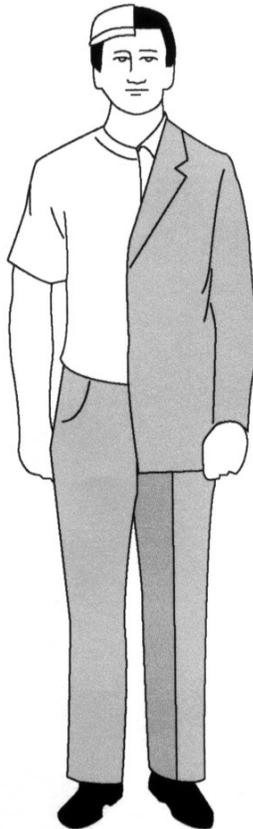
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What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
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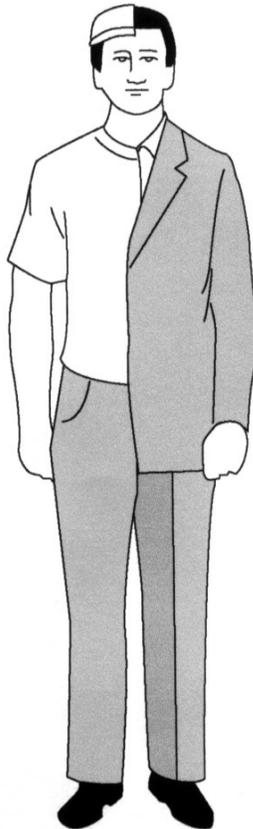
Pants _____

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What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

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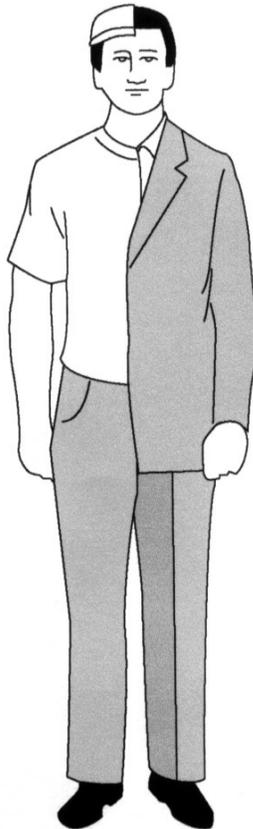
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What did the suspect say? _____

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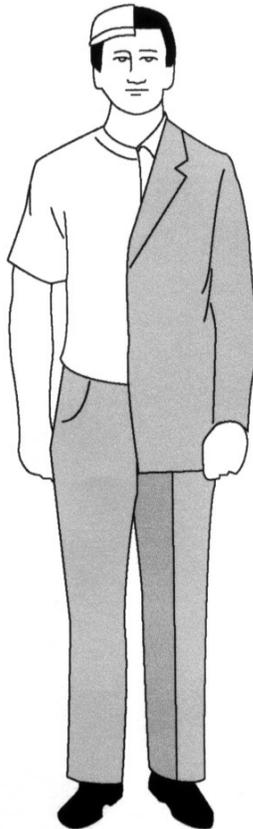
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Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
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Type of Incident (circle one): Assault, Robbery, Harassment, Disorderly Conduct, Sex Offense, Injury,
Other _____

Weapon used (circle one): Gun, Knife, Physical Force, Other _____

Was medical attention required? Yes ___ No ___

Describe Incident: _____

Were other employees present at the time of the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was there reason to believe that such an incident may occur? Yes ___ No ___

Has a similar incident occurred in the past? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___

Does the Assailant/Perpetrator have a history of violence? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___

Did police respond to the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was a police report filed? Yes ___ No ___

Name of Police Department _____

Officer(s) handling the case _____

Report Number _____

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Signature _____ Date _____

Retail Location _____

Name of cashier on duty _____

Was incident captured on video tape? Yes ___ No ___

Amount of Loss: Currency \$ _____ Merchandise _____

Description of Suspects:

Suspect #1 _____

Suspect #2 _____

Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

Race: White Black Other _____

Height _____

Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

Scars/Marks _____

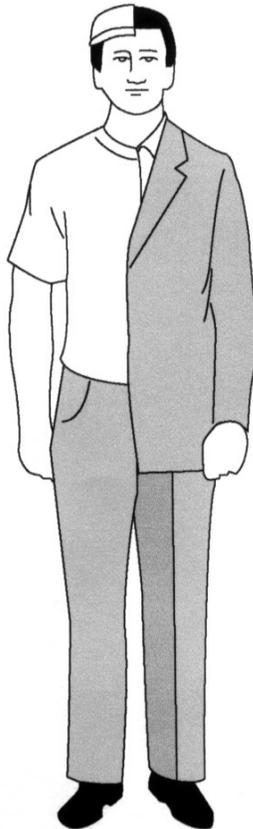
Pants _____

Complexion _____

Shoes _____

Facial Hair _____

Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
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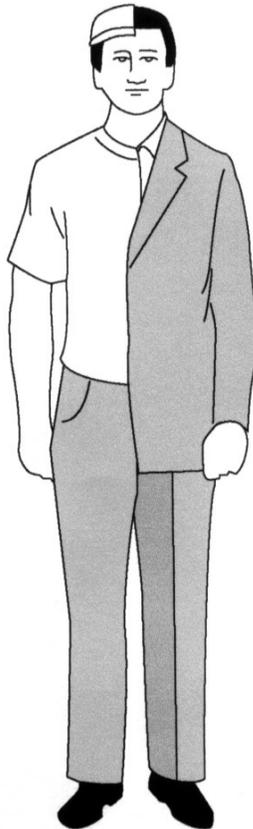
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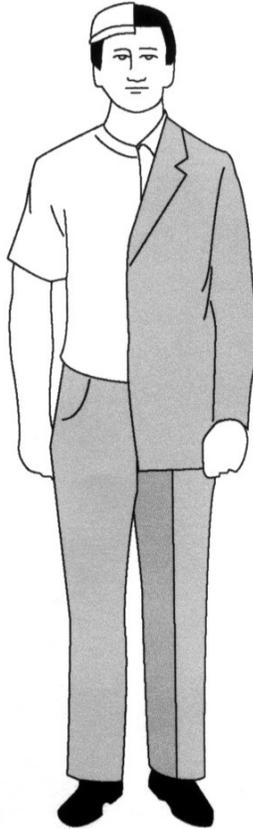
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Complexion _____

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Age _____

Weight _____

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Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

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Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

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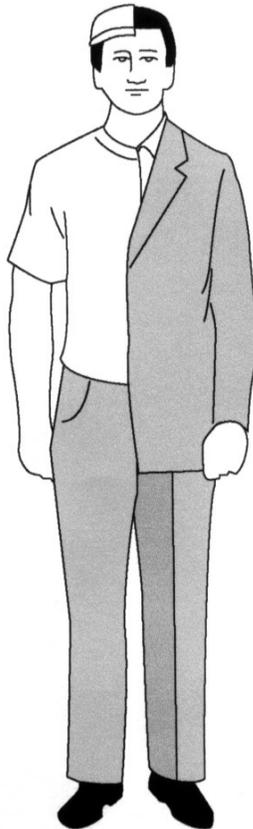
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Workplace Violence Incident Report

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Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

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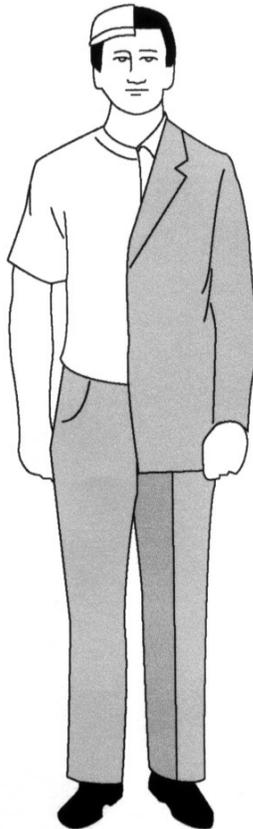
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Race: White Black Other _____

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Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

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Accent _____

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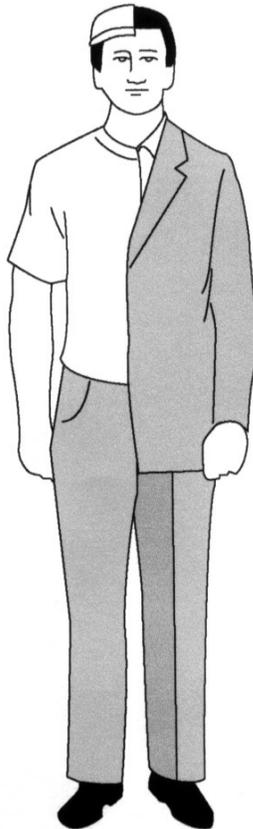
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What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

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Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

Race: White Black Other _____

Height _____

Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

Scars/Marks _____

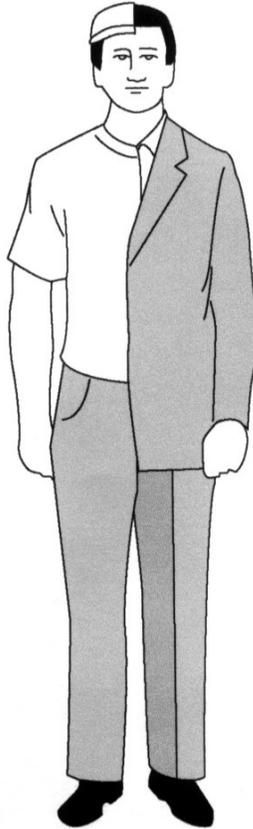
Pants _____

Complexion _____

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Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

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Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

Race: White Black Other _____

Height _____

Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

Scars/Marks _____

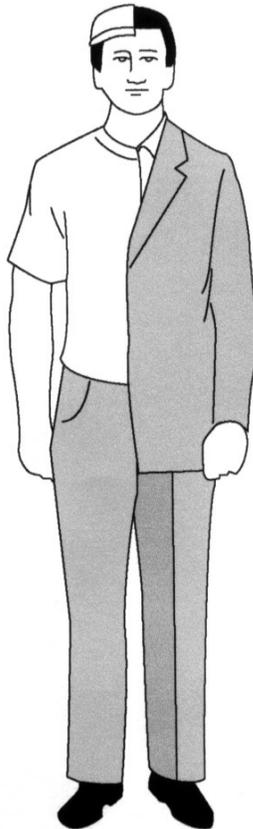
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What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

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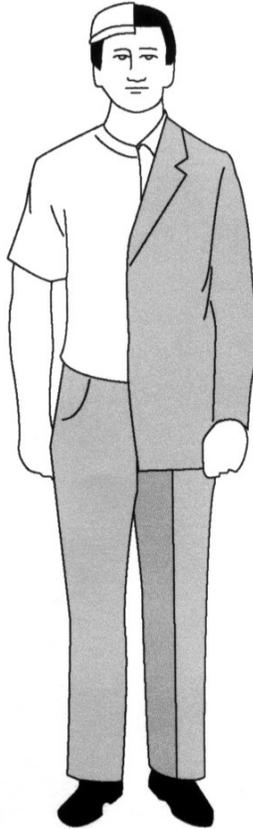
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Workplace Violence Incident Report

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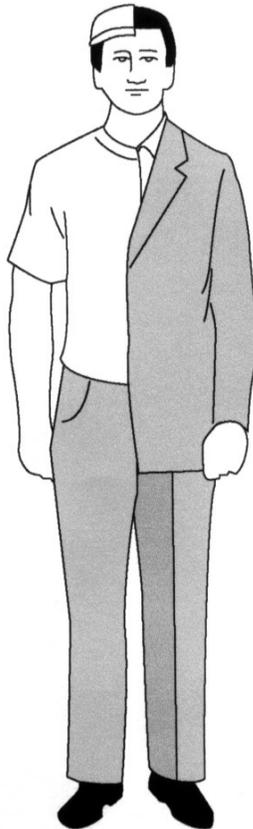
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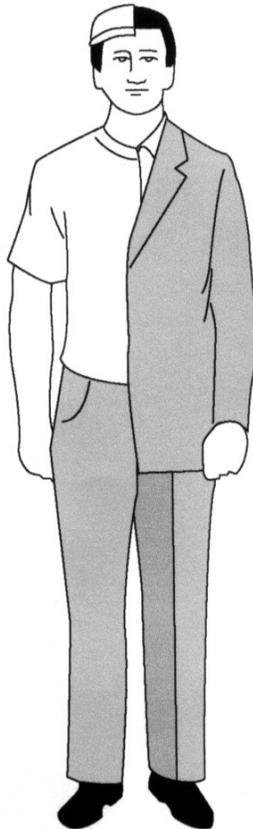
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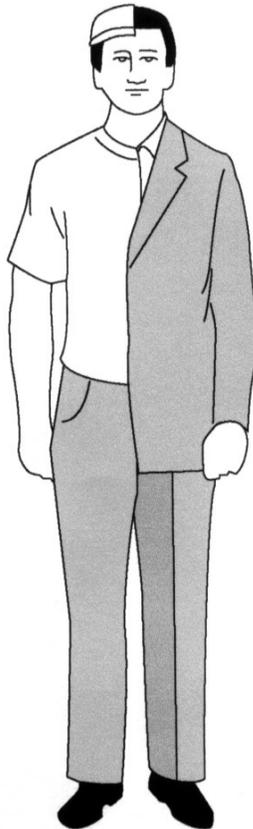
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Amount of Loss: Currency \$ _____ Merchandise _____

Description of Suspects:

Suspect #1 _____

Suspect #2 _____

Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

Race: White Black Other _____

Height _____

Age _____

Weight _____

Left/Right Handed _____

Hat (Color/Type) _____

Hair (Color/Style) _____

Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

Scars/Marks _____

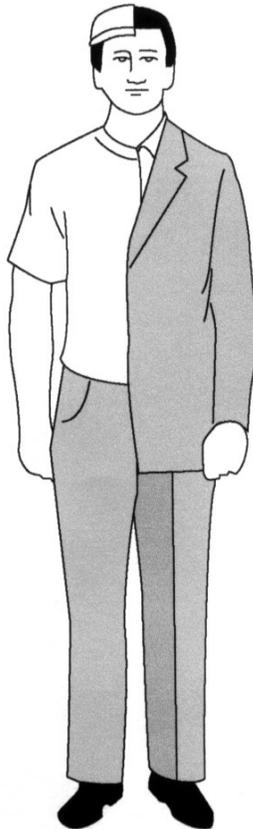
Pants _____

Complexion _____

Shoes _____

Facial Hair _____

Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

Assailant/Perpetrator (circle one): Coworker, Former Employee, Supervisor, Family/Friend, Visitor, Intruder,
Customer, Patient, Resident, Other _____

Type of Incident (circle one): Assault, Robbery, Harassment, Disorderly Conduct, Sex Offense, Injury,
Other _____

Weapon used (circle one): Gun, Knife, Physical Force, Other _____

Was medical attention required? Yes ___ No ___

Describe Incident: _____

Were other employees present at the time of the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was there reason to believe that such an incident may occur? Yes ___ No ___

Has a similar incident occurred in the past? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___

Does the Assailant/Perpetrator have a history of violence? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___

Did police respond to the incident? Yes ___ No ___

Was a police report filed? Yes ___ No ___

Name of Police Department _____

Officer(s) handling the case _____

Report Number _____

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Signature _____ Date _____

Retail Location _____

Name of cashier on duty _____

Was incident captured on video tape? Yes ___ No ___

Amount of Loss: Currency \$ _____ Merchandise _____

Description of Suspects:

Suspect #1 _____

Suspect #2 _____

Suspect #3 _____

Description: _____

Sex: Male Female

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Hair (Color/Style) _____

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Accent _____

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Coat _____

Tattoos _____

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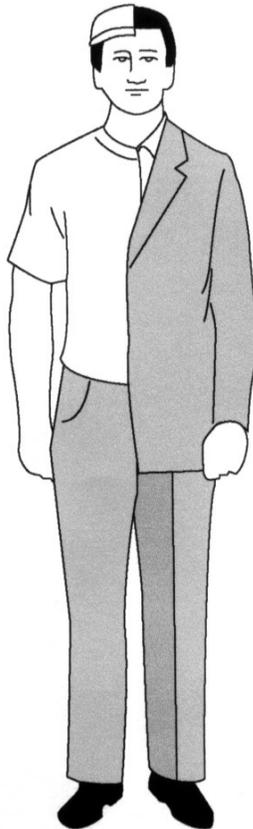
Pants _____

Complexion _____

Shoes _____

Facial Hair _____

Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

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Date/Time of Incident _____

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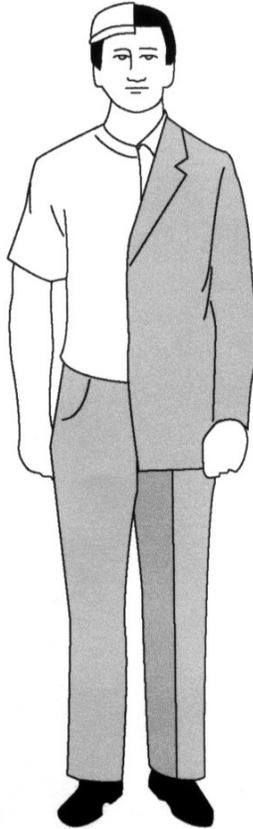
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Complexion _____

Shoes _____

Facial Hair _____

Weapon _____



What did the suspect say? _____

Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____

Workplace Violence Incident Report

Victim's Name _____

Location of Incident _____

Date/Time of Incident _____

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Accent _____

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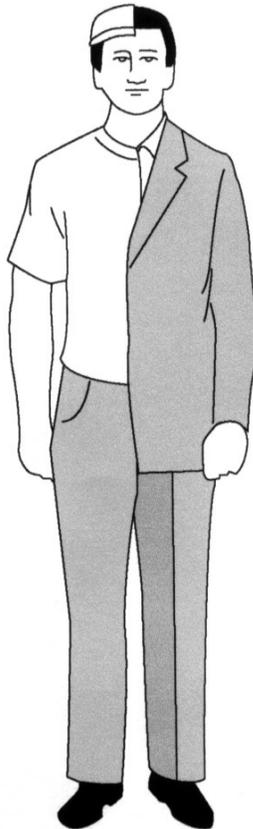
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Eyes _____

Accent _____

Glasses Type _____

Coat _____

Tattoos _____

Shirt _____

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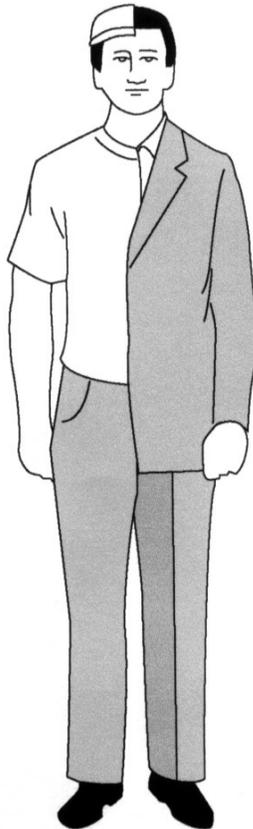
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What did the suspect say? _____

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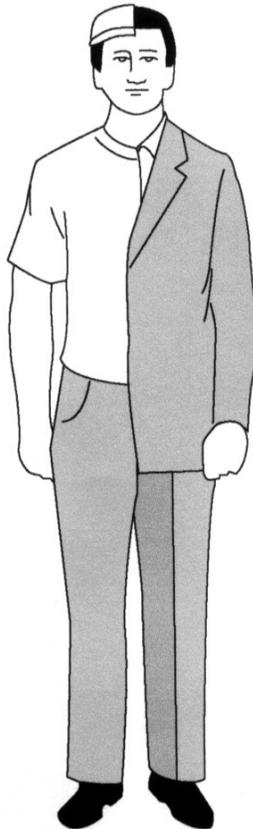
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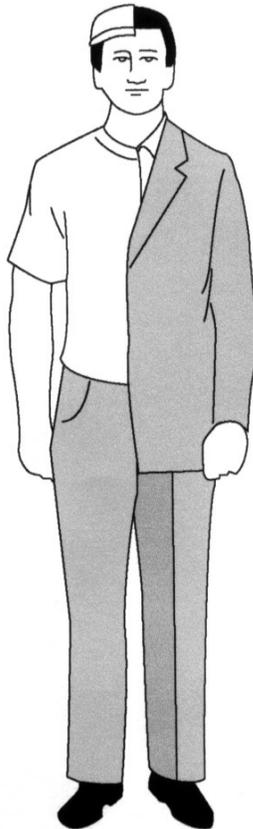
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Type of Vehicle (License Number, Make, Color) _____