

December 2022

RCC Loss Prevention

Actions to prevent workplace violence

Provide Employee Training: Warning Signs & Response

Employee training on workplace violence typically covers definitions and types of violence, risk factors and warning signs for violence, prevention strategies, and ways to respond to threatening, potentially violent, or violent situations.

Warning Signs

As part of training, employees often learn verbal and non-verbal cues that may be warning signs of possible violence. Verbal cues can include speaking loudly or swearing. Non-verbal cues can include clenched fists, heavy breathing, fixed stare, and pacing, among other behaviors. The more cues shown, the greater the risk of violence.

Response

During training, employees also learn how to appropriately respond to potentially violent or non-violent situations. Responses range from paying attention to a person and maintaining non-threatening eye contact to using supportive body language and avoiding threatening gestures, such as finger pointing or crossed arms.

Employers can take actions to prevent workplace violence

1. Maintain adequate lighting inside and outside the store.
2. Install interior and exterior surveillance systems. Cameras should be focused on entrances, cash register area, aisleways, obstructed view areas, and parking lots. Place signs indicating that a video surveillance system is installed at the facility. This can help deter potential robbers and will also help identify perpetrators.
3. Encourage local police department to become familiar with the layout of your location. See if they will provide regular patrols through the parking lot, especially after dark and attend your location to provide training to your staff. Many police agencies will accommodate these type of requests if planned in advance
4. Put in place steps to assess and respond to workplace violence. Response will depend on the severity of the violence and on the size and structure of the business. Possible responses may include reporting to an on duty manager or supervisor, calling security, or dialing 911.
5. Identify a safe area for employees to go if they feel they are in danger (e.g., a room that locks from the inside, has a second exit route, and has a phone or silent alarm).
6. Provide employee training on threat recognition, conflict resolution, non-violent response, and on any other relevant topics related to workplace violence response. [Find more de-escalation training information here.](#)
7. Remain aware of and support employees and customers if a threatening or violent situation occurs.

8. Install security systems (e.g., panic buttons, cameras, alarms) and train employees on how to use them
9. Post signs indicating that employees have limited access to cash.
10. Conduct regular facility inspections focusing on robbery precautions, checking that lighting is adequate, surveillance system is functioning properly, unobstructed views into store maintained, etc.

Images to print and post in-store:

Basic dos and don'ts for EMPLOYEES to prevent workplace violence

Do

-  Do attend all employer-provided training on how to recognize, avoid, and respond to potentially violent situations
-  Do report perceived threats or acts of violence to your manager or supervisor, following any existing policies that may be in place.
-  Do remain aware of and support coworkers and customers if a threatening or violent situation occurs.

Don't

-  Don't argue with a customer if they make threats or become violent. If needed, go to a safe area (ideally, a room that locks from the inside, has a second exit route, and has a phone or silent alarm).
-  Don't attempt to force anyone who appears upset or violent to follow COVID-19 prevention policies or other policies or practices related to COVID-19 (e.g., limits on number of household or food products).

Les principales choses à faire et à ne pas faire pour les employés afin de prévenir la violence sur le lieu de travail

À faire

-  Assistez à toutes les formations dispensées par l'employeur sur la manière de reconnaître les situations potentiellement violentes, de les éviter et de réagir face à celles-ci.
-  Signalez toute menace ou tout acte de violence perçu(e) à votre supérieur hiérarchique ou à votre superviseur, conformément aux politiques existantes pouvant être en place.
-  Restez attentifs à vos collègues et clients, et soutenez-les en cas de situation menaçante ou violente.

À ne pas faire

-  Évitez de vous disputer avec un client s'il profère des menaces ou devient violent. Si nécessaire, dirigez-vous vers une zone sûre (idéalement, une pièce pouvant se verrouiller de l'intérieur, disposant d'une deuxième voie de sortie et équipée d'un téléphone ou d'une alarme silencieuse).
-  N'essayez pas de forcer une personne qui semble contrariée ou violente à suivre les politiques de prévention COVID-19 ou d'autres politiques ou pratiques liées à la COVID-19 (p. ex., les restrictions sur le nombre de produits ménagers ou alimentaires).