

Violence in the Workplace Prevention Guide

New
& Expanded
3rd Edition



Prepared by the Canadian Centre
for Occupational Health and Safety



Emergency Information

Ambulance

Fire

Police

Poison Control Centre

Doctor

Company Emergency Phone Number

Prepared by



Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

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Violence in the Workplace

Prevention Guide

3rd Edition



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Prévention de la violence en milieu de travail.

Contactez le Service à la clientèle de CCHST à

1-800-668-4284 ou serviceclientele@cchst.ca

Top Five Violence Prevention Tips

- 1. Be prepared; know the risks.**
- 2. Trust your instincts.**
- 3. Be ready to respond.**
- 4. Remain calm.**
- 5. Report all incidents.**

Personal Information

This handbook belongs to:

Name _____

Company _____

Position _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Objectives

This is your guide to developing a workplace violence prevention program. Using the advice in this booklet, you will be able to:

- identify risk factors
- develop a prevention policy
- conduct a hazard assessment
- develop a comprehensive prevention program
- develop procedures for reporting and investigating incidents
- develop a critical incident management plan
- develop victim support services
- follow-up on and learn from incidents
- develop a training program
- identify relevant legislation

Scope

This guide will assist in the development and implementation of a workplace-specific violence prevention program. It is a practical hand-out for participants in employee training sessions.

The guide does not address the specific needs of police officers, security guards, prison guards or others whose job it is to manage potentially violent people and situations.

Target Audience

This guide is written for anyone who wants to learn about workplace violence and its prevention. It is especially useful to individuals involved in the development and implementation of workplace violence prevention programs.

How do I use this Guide?

The information in this guide has been organized to support the development of workplace-specific violence prevention programs across business sectors and occupational groupings. For this reason, the content is presented by workplace setting or situation (e.g. “working alone”), rather than by occupation (e.g. “service station attendant” or “taxi driver”) or business sector (e.g. “retail”).

Section II describes how to establish a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program. You may choose to apply some or all of the advice, depending on factors such as:

- the risk of violence at your organization
- the size of your organization
- the legal requirements in your jurisdiction

As a minimum, there are certain steps to workplace violence prevention which everyone should follow, including writing your own policy and conducting your own hazard assessment.

Once you have completed your workplace violence hazard assessment (as described in Section II.1), you will have developed a priority list of situations or circumstances which put you or your co-workers at particular risk. Using those factors or program components, consult the sections of this guide called “Preventing Workplace Violence” and “Responding to Workplace Violence”. Using the practical knowledge that you and your co-workers have of your workplace, you can develop the best preventive practices for your specific situation. The following chart indicates some of the risk factors more commonly associated with specific occupations.

Workplace Design							
Building Security	•	•			•	•	•
Visitors	•				•		•
Waiting Areas	•			•	•		
Natural Surveillance	•	•			•	•	•
Electronic Devices & Surveillance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Workplace Layout	•	•			•	•	•
Parking Lot Design	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Work Situations and Interactions							
Robbery Prevention	•	•					
Handling Cash		•					
Banking Money		•					
Working Alone		•	•	•	•	•	•
Working Off-Site			•	•			
Working from Home	•		•	•	•		
Working Late	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Working with Young People						•	•
Working with Patients & Their Families	•		•				
Managing Workplace Change	•				•		•
Managing Order During a Job Action	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Resolving Problem Behaviour	•		•	•	•	•	•
Preparing for a Potentially Violent Meeting	•						
Managing Workplace Terminations	•						
Threats Against Employees	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Prevention of Harassment, Bullying & Mobbing	•	•		•	•	•	•
Internet Harassment	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Stalking Situations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Domestic Violence	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Work-Related Travel							
Walking Safety		•	•	•	•	•	•
Driving Safety	•		•	•			
Parking Lot Safety	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Public Transit Safety			•				
Travel Safety	•		•	•	•		
Hotel Safety	•				•		

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Introduction

- 1. What is workplace violence?**
- 2. Why is workplace violence an important issue?**
- 3. What factors increase the risk of workplace violence?**
- 4. What should a workplace violence prevention policy say?**

1. What is Workplace Violence?

Most people think of workplace violence as a physical assault. However, workplace violence is a much broader problem. It includes any act in which a person is abused, threatened, intimidated or assaulted in his or her employment, for example:

- **threatening behaviour** – such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects
- **verbal or written threats** – any expression of an intent to inflict harm, including:
 - direct threats* – clear and explicit communication which distinctly indicates that the potential offender intends to do harm, for example “I am going to make you pay for what you did to me.”
 - conditional threats* – involve a condition, for example “If you don’t get off my back, you will regret it.”
 - veiled threats* – usually involve body language or behaviours that leave little doubt in the mind of the victim that the perpetrator intends harm, for example “Do you think anyone would care if someone beat up the boss?”
- **harassment** – any behaviour that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates, annoys, alarms or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be unwelcome. This includes words, gestures, intimidation, bullying, or other inappropriate activities.
- **verbal abuse** – including swearing, insults or condescending language
- **physical attacks** – including hitting, shoving, pushing or kicking the victim, or inciting a dog to attack

Forms of Workplace Violence:

rumours
swearing
verbal abuse
pranks
arguments
property damage
vandalism
sabotage
pushing

theft
physical assaults
psychological trauma
anger-related
accidents
sexual assault
arson
murder

Workplace violence can be caused by:

fellow employees
supervisors
managers
customers
clients

patients
students
members of the public
unauthorized intruders
outside contacts

Workplace violence is not limited to incidents which occur within a workplace. Work-related violence can also occur at off-site business-related functions, such as conferences, trade shows, or social events related to work; and in clients' homes. It can also include violence that occurs away from work, but resulting from work. For example, a social worker who receives a threatening telephone call from a client at his or her home is a victim of workplace violence.

Most jurisdictions with specific workplace violence prevention legislation have legal definitions of workplace violence. You should consult any relevant legislation for specific information relating to your worksite.

2. Why is Workplace Violence an Important Issue?

Violence is an issue that affects all business sectors and occupations:

It affects the safety and security of employees, customers, clients and business owners.

It claims a high personal cost from the emotional trauma and physical injury experienced by victims, their families and co-workers.

It is regulated or being considered for regulation by many jurisdictions.

It creates a poor public image for organizations leading to:

- difficulty in recruiting, keeping and training staff;
- reduced morale;
- strained management-employee relationships; and
- loss of clients or customers.

It brings high costs to the employer, including:

- increased absenteeism;
- higher sick leave costs;
- lost productivity;
- reduced profitability;
- high employee turn-over;
- higher insurance premiums; and
- increased worker's compensation levy payments.

3. What Factors Increase the Risk of Workplace Violence?

Certain work processes, situations and interactions can put people at risk from workplace violence.

- working with the public
- handling money, valuables or prescription drugs (e.g. cashiers, bank and post office staff, pharmacists)
- carrying out inspection or enforcement duties (e.g. government employees)
- providing service, care, advice or education (e.g. health care staff, social workers, teachers)
- working with unstable or volatile persons (e.g. health care, social services, or criminal justice system employees)
- working in premises where alcohol is served (e.g. food and beverage staff)
- working alone or in small numbers (e.g. store clerks, real estate agents)
- working in community-based settings (e.g. home visitors)
- having a mobile workplace (e.g. taxicab)
- working during periods of intense organizational change (e.g. strikes, downsizing, takeovers)

Certain occupational groups tend to be more at risk from workplace violence.

- health care employees
- corrections officials
- social services employees
- teachers
- municipal housing inspectors
- public works employees
- retail employees

Risk of violence may be greater at certain times of the day, night or year.

- late night or early morning hours
- specific times, days of the week or months
 - tax return season
 - overdue utility bill cut-off dates
 - Christmas season in the retail market when demand for service is higher
 - Friday or Saturday nights in establishments that serve alcohol
 - pay days
- in times of certain business or organizational activities that may increase stress, such as
 - report cards or parent interviews
 - performance appraisals
 - contract negotiations

Risk of violence may be greater because of the geographic location of the workplace.

- near buildings or businesses that are at risk of violent crime, for example bars, banks or certain social service agencies
- in a location likely to be accidentally visited by violent, criminal, intoxicated or drugged persons
- in high crime or dense manufacturing areas
- isolated from other buildings or structures

4. What should a Workplace Violence Prevention Policy Say?

Every organization should have a workplace violence prevention policy developed by management and employees. The purpose of the policy is to clearly communicate management's commitment to preventing workplace violence, and to provide an overview of your organization's workplace violence prevention program.



The policy should establish clear standards of behaviour and require prompt, appropriate responses.

The policy should apply to management, employees, clients, independent contractors and anyone who has a relationship with your organization.

How to write a workplace violence prevention policy

Define what you mean by workplace violence in precise, concrete language.

Provide clear examples of unacceptable behaviour (verbal and written threats, harassment, physical intimidation or assault) and working conditions (working late or working alone without acceptable safeguards).

State in clear terms your organization's view toward workplace violence and its commitment to the prevention of workplace violence.

Precisely state the consequences of making threats or committing acts of violence. For example,

Within a workplace, consider when to apply verbal or written reprimands, suspend or terminate employment, transfer the employee or take legal action.

For organizations which provide **services to the public** (e.g. libraries or recreational facilities), consider when to apply reprimands, temporarily or permanently withdraw services, or take legal action.

Outline the process by which preventive measures will be developed.

Encourage reporting of all incidents or potential incidents of violence.

Outline the confidential process by which employees can report incidents and to whom.

Provide assurance that reprisals will not be made against reporting employees.

Outline the procedures for investigating and resolving complaints.

Describe how information about potential risks of violence will be communicated to employees

Make a commitment to provide support services to victims of violence.

Offer a confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to allow employees with personal problems to seek help.

Make a commitment to fulfill the violence prevention training needs of different levels of personnel with your organization.

Make a commitment to monitor and regularly review the policy.

State applicable regulatory requirements.

Once your violence prevention policy has been developed:

Provide training and orientation sessions on the policy.

Distribute the policy widely. Managers, supervisors, co-workers, clients, patients and visitors must be aware of your policy.

Consider integrating the violence prevention policy into your collective agreement.

Section II

Developing a Workplace Violence Prevention Program

- 1. Conducting a Workplace Violence Hazard Assessment**
- 2. Developing Preventive Measures**
- 3. Reporting and Investigating Workplace Violence**
- 4. Establishing an Emergency Response Plan**
- 5. Providing Victim Support**
- 6. Conducting Incident Follow-up**
- 7. Providing Workplace Violence Training and Education**
- 8. Conducting Program Review**
- 9. Using Community Resources**

1. Conducting a Workplace Violence Hazard Assessment

To effectively prevent workplace violence you need to determine the specific hazards associated with your organization. To identify hazards and existing problems, you must conduct a workplace-specific hazard assessment. Working together, employees and management are in the best position to identify existing and potential hazards for their unique situation.

Evaluate the history of violence in your own place of employment.

Ask employees about their experiences, and whether they are concerned for themselves or others.

Educate staff to increase their awareness of violence issues and to help them recognize incidents or situations which should be reported.

Emphasize that perceived or real threats of violence, near-misses and actual incidents of physical violence are all important.

Survey every employee.

Use interviews, a short questionnaire, or a checklist.

Survey all shifts if you have more than one. Analyze the results separately, as trends may vary.

Use small discussion groups to generate more ideas.

Share the results of your review. This knowledge may prompt the identification of other relevant situations or incidents.

Review any incidents of violence by consulting:

- existing incident reports;
- first aid records; and
- health and safety committee records.

Determine whether your workplace has any of the identified risk factors associated with violence.

- work processes, situations or interactions (working alone, working with the public, handling cash)
- occupational groups
- time of the day, night or year
- geographic location

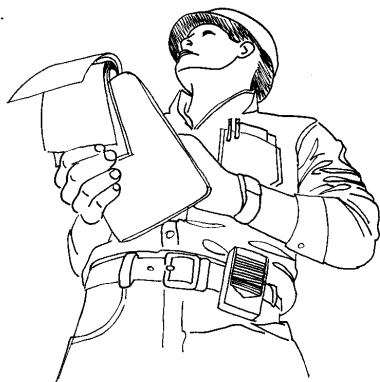
(see section I.3 for information on specific risk factors)

Conduct a visual inspection of your workplace and the work being carried out, including:

- workplace design and layout;
- administrative practices (e.g. visitor policy); and
- work practices.

The prevention tips contained in Section III of this guide will give you ideas on what to look for in a visual inspection.

A sample inspection form can be found in the Appendices.



Evaluate the history of violence in similar places of employment.

You may use one or more of the following approaches.

Obtain information and advice from:

- your insurer
- regional or national insurance associations
- your workers' compensation board
- your occupational health and safety enforcement agency
- your local police department
- your union

Seek advice from a local security expert.

Review relevant publications, including industry specific journals.

Contact your regional or national safety councils.

Contact your state, provincial or equivalent crime prevention associations.

Contact your professional association or industry organization.

Collect newspaper or magazine clippings relating to violence in your industry.

Contact legislative authorities to determine if specific legislation regarding workplace violence prevention applies to your workplace.

Refer to Section VI for general information on work place violence prevention legislation in Canada and the United States.

Organize and review the information you have collected.

Look for trends. Identify occupations and locations which are most at risk.

Ask yourself

How many incidents of *violence* in the workplace have been documented or reported in your workplace or in related workplaces?

How many incidents of *potentially violent situations*, such as threats, have been documented or reported in your workplace or in related workplaces?

What occupational groups or individual employees appear to be most at risk, in terms of either frequency or severity of violence or potential violence?

How many of the incidents involved:

- verbal abuse or threats?
- physically threatening behaviour?
- harassment?

Is there any particular location that appears to have experienced a higher proportion of incidents of violence?

Is there a time of day, month or year when incidents of violence have occurred more often?

Record the results of your assessment.

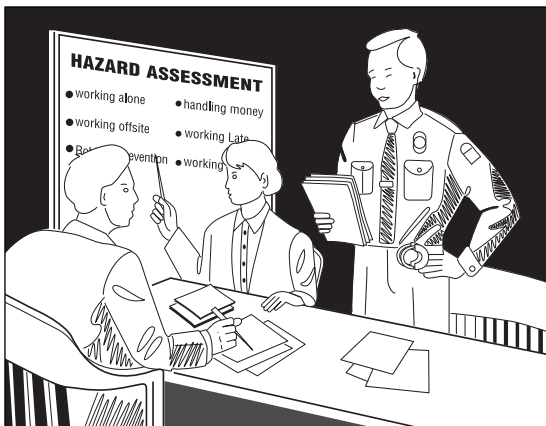
Use this document to develop a prevention program and specific recommendations for reducing the risk of violence within your workplace.

Routinely update your assessment.

Establish a schedule for assessment reviews,
for example annually.

Carry out a new hazard assessment if there is a
significant change in the workplace:

- a major change in operations, for example adding a new shift or merging two operations
- a major change in physical design of the workplace
- addition of a new business unit
- a major increase or decrease in the number of staff
- changes in the local environment or the nature of neighbouring businesses or services which can affect your workplace
- a change in location of the work site



Routinely update your hazard assessment.

2. Developing Preventive Measures

Your hazard assessment will have identified the most significant concerns for your organization. The next step is to develop specific measures to eliminate or minimize these hazards. Preventive measures include training and education as well as improvements to your workplace design, administrative practices and work practices.

Use Section III in this guide as a starting point. It contains many practical steps to combat workplace violence. However, this advice is only a starting point. The most effective preventive programs are developed through employee and management partnerships. Working together, using your own knowledge and the information in this guide, you will develop the most effective violence prevention program for your workplace.

The prevention tips included in this guide are as comprehensive as possible. You may already be doing some; others may seem extreme for your situation. Select the measures which you believe will be most effective for your situation using your knowledge of your own workplace. If you are not sure, consider implementing your new preventive procedures on a small-scale or “pilot” basis.

Review the prevention tips if a new hazard emerges or a violent incident occurs in your workplace. You may reconsider a prevention practice which may have seemed inappropriate or irrelevant in the past.

Communicate the results of your hazard assessment and prevention plan to all employees.

Explain the hazards that were identified.

Describe the changes that are to be made.

Explain how the changes are expected to prevent workplace violence.

Emphasize the positive, preventive aspects of your program.

3. Reporting and Investigating Workplace Violence

Every workplace should have a system set up for reporting, recording, and investigating incidents or possible incidents of violence.

Reporting Workplace Violence

All incidents of violence must be reported, including verbal or written harassment, bullying or acts of physical violence. Reporting employees must not fear criticism, loss of privacy, penalties or judgement.

The report should provide:

- information about the victim
- information about the alleged offender
- a description of the interaction or work activity
- details about the incident, including:
 - a description of the incident
 - the location of the incident
 - the outcome
- information about any witnesses
- other relevant information (possible contributing factors, relevant events which preceded the incident, suggested preventive or remedial actions)
- Information required by regulations applicable to your workplace.

Depending on the needs of your organization, you should consider developing a form to facilitate reporting of incidents. A sample Violence Incident Reporting Form can be found in the Appendices.

On the report, name who the incident report should be sent to and who is responsible for investigating the incident. Supervisors and employees must be aware of the importance of and the process for reporting incidents.

Investigating Workplace Violence

The credibility of any violence prevention program depends in part upon how quickly and effectively reports of workplace violence are handled. It is therefore very important that your organization determine who will investigate reports of violence before any incidents occur.

Depending on the size and nature of your organization, you should consider establishing an incident response team, with a designated team leader and alternative. The incident response team may include representatives from:

- employees or unions
- management
- human resources
- occupational health and safety
- security
- employee assistance
- legal and public relations staff

Workplace violence investigation may have serious legal consequences and should only be assigned to those with the appropriate skills, experience and authority. Special training is normally required.

Organizations without qualified in-house staff should consider retaining an independent external service provider to assist in the evaluation and investigation of all reports of violence.

As soon as a report of violence has been received, the seriousness of the incident must be determined by the incident response team leader or his/her alternate.

If there is imminent danger, implement your emergency response plan, as appropriate. (Refer to Section II.4 for advice).

If a criminal act may have been committed, notify the police immediately. Obtain advice from the police regarding which incidents require immediate reporting.

In many situations, it may be appropriate for staff such as human resources professionals and supervisors to respond to certain incidents (e.g. angry comments or pranks). It is essential that the responder be properly trained to handle the incidents reported to them.

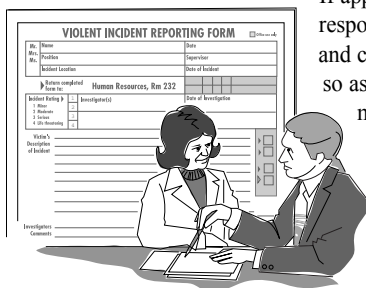
In more serious cases, a qualified and experienced professional workplace violence investigator should investigate the incident. If your organization does not have qualified in-house staff, PRIOR arrangements should be made to contract with an external service provider to conduct the investigation.

In every case, your incident response team or external service provider should determine:

- What happened?
- Who was there?
- Where it happened?
- When it happened?
- Why it happened?
- How it happened?

If applicable, the incident response team must communicate and cooperate with the police so as not to impede or compromise their investigation.

It is important that the investigator convey fairness and objectivity. Investigations must be conducted with a full appreciation of the relevant



legal and ethical considerations. The results of any investigation must be communicated to all of the staff involved in the incident; however, the individual's right to privacy must be respected.

4. Establishing an Emergency Response Plan

It is essential that you have a specific plan which clearly outlines how to respond to a serious incident which is in progress. The plan should be comprehensive enough to deal with most incidents, but easy to understand and remember.

Consider the following steps when developing your plan:

1. Determine how to secure the workplace.
2. Establish internal emergency numbers and/or code words to alert security or co-workers that urgent help is required.
3. Identify the circumstances in which a command centre would be necessary and how it would be set up.
4. Assign responsibilities for decision-making and action to staff with the appropriate skills and authority. Appoint alternates in case a key player is absent during an incident.
5. Provide clear guidelines to follow in various situations.
6. Provide the training necessary to respond to and defuse potentially violent situations.
7. Outline how supervisors are expected to respond to reported incidents of violence or harassment.
8. Identify scenarios where you would call for emergency services.

-
9. Identify who is responsible for contacting emergency services such as:
 - security
 - the police
 - emergency response personnel
 - victim support resources
 - other outside assistance
 10. Identify scenarios where you would “lock-down” (take refuge in a secure location) or evacuate your organization.
 11. Develop a detailed evacuation plan and lock-down procedures. (Refer to Sections IV.11 and IV.12 for advice).
 12. Rehearse evacuation and lock-down procedures, or any other drills for specific situations likely to be encountered at your workplace.
 13. Provide a system to account for the safety of all personnel.
 14. Set up procedures to:
 - provide immediate first aid and medical help
 - deal with emergency staff and police
 - complete medical and legal reports
 15. Establish procedures for the sensitive management of communications regarding the incident (e.g. informing members of the victim’s family, internal communications, media relations)
 16. Provide police and fire departments with the physical plans of your work site.

Section IV of this guide provides practical advice for responding to workplace violence.

5. Providing Victim Support

After a violent incident, it is essential that the victim(s), other affected employees and, in some cases, the victim's family, obtain immediate counselling and trauma therapy. Early provision of victim support services will reduce the impact of a crisis.

Traumatized employees may require emotional support (e.g. critical incident stress management, post-traumatic incident counselling), job accommodations and/or medical treatment. Your organization should identify resources to provide these services and develop procedures for making appropriate use of these resources when an incident occurs.

Individuals who may be affected by a traumatic event include:

- the victim(s)
- other employees (including some remote from the scene)
- witnesses
- first responders
- family members
- others connected to the trauma

Individuals affected by a violent incident may experience:

- shock
- anger
- a general mistrust of other people
- mood swings
- alcohol and drug abuse

-
- physical symptoms, such as
 - inability to sleep
 - loss of appetite
 - trembling
 - psychosomatic symptoms, such as
 - stomach pain
 - headaches
 - panic or anxiety, especially of returning to work
 - family tension and stress
 - inability to concentrate
 - non-specific fears
 - low morale and productivity
 - loss of memory
 - feelings of helplessness
 - loss of confidence
 - feelings of isolation and loneliness
 - feelings of frustration and guilt
 - increased sense of vulnerability
 - flashbacks of the event

In situations with a particularly high risk of workplace violence, it may be appropriate to provide preventive trauma counselling. If people are aware that their reactions to an event are normal, the severity of the reaction may be reduced.

Immediately following a violent incident, victims should be offered:

- medical attention
- informal debriefing, which allows victims to talk through their experience with their co-workers and supervisor
- formal debriefing with a skilled debriefer, if necessary
- voluntary and confidential trauma counselling or therapy by an independent, qualified professional
- time off work, which will vary as individuals react differently to different circumstances
- information regarding their rights
- assistance with compensation, insurance and/or legal advice
- on-going follow-up and treatment, as needed

Employees should be encouraged to talk about problems they encounter or feelings they experience after an incident of workplace violence. This “debriefing” can be informal between co-workers or can be part of a professionally facilitated debriefing exercise. In more formal debriefings, employees can learn how best to be supportive and sensitive to the needs of a co-worker who has been a victim of a violent incident.

6. Conducting Incident Follow-up

Incident follow-up occurs some time after the incident has been investigated and recommendations made. It involves taking a second look at the situation.

All incidents of violence should be classified according to key characteristics, such as:

- location
- time
- working activity or interaction (e.g. working alone and/or working off-site)
- type of incident
- outcome
- who was involved (e.g. co-worker, client, stranger)
- possible causes

Once the incident has been classified, you should look for similarities or common patterns. For example, do the majority of incidents occur:

- at a particular time of day (e.g. 1 to 4 a.m.)?
- during a particular time of year (e.g. report card time, Christmas)?
- inside or outside the workplace?

These observations will help you identify new or previously undefined risks and will give you opportunities to strengthen your prevention program. Follow-up should involve establishing steps to prevent or minimize repeat occurrences.

Revisit your training and education programs and determine if they should be re-designed or if refresher training should be provided. Outline what corrective actions are necessary and how you will achieve them.

Others points to consider:

- Did your organization implement the recommendations that were developed during the investigation phase?
- Have you gained additional insight into the situation over time?
- Are the victims okay? Do they require additional services or advice?
- Was everything done that should have been done?

Incident follow-up allows closure and assures that all the lessons that can be learned from a situation are applied to preventing future incidents.



Lessons learned from follow-up help prevent reoccurrence of similar incidents.

7. Providing Workplace Violence Training and Education

Education and training are an indispensable part of any violence prevention program. The exact content and type of training necessary depend upon the results of your workplace hazard assessment and your workplace-specific prevention program.

All employees need to understand:

- their rights and responsibilities under any relevant legislation and company policy
- the scope of workplace violence and risk factors
- your organization's prevention policy



Know your rights and responsibilities.

-
- your organization's procedures and arrangements to minimize or control the risk of violence
 - safe and appropriate responses to incidents or potential incidents, including how to obtain assistance
 - the correct procedures for reporting, investigating and documenting incidents or potential incidents
 - the follow-up and support services that are available to them, in the event of a violent incident

Training should be specific to the risk of each individual employee or occupational category and may cover the following:

- warning signs that may precede a violent situation
- how to prepare a profile of a potentially violent client
- ways of preventing or defusing volatile situations or aggressive behaviour, including:
 - anger management
 - mediation
 - interpersonal skills
 - conflict resolution
 - behaviour management
 - assertiveness training
- stress management, relaxation techniques, and wellness training
- self-defence training (when appropriate)
- crisis intervention

Effective training will use techniques such as role-playing, simulations and drills.

Periodic refresher courses are necessary.

8. Conducting Program Review

An annual program review should be conducted by management and employee health and safety representatives. The purpose of a program review is to evaluate how well your violence prevention program is working and to identify any necessary program changes.

- List all incidents of violence which occurred in the past year.
- List corrective actions taken following any violent incidents.
- Cite specific changes in your violence prevention policy or procedures.
- Re-visit your hazard assessment.
 - consider any changes at your workplace or in industry trends.
 - re-do your employee survey and compare the results with those of previous surveys.

9. Using Community Resources

Your local police department or a security consultant will be able to assist with the following types of issues:

- identifying scenarios when the police should be called
- evaluating the physical design of your workplace
- identifying geographical risks
- developing your prevention program
- developing emergency response procedures
- developing victim support services
- educating employees regarding workplace violence

Employee Assistance Programs, local human resource professional consultants and mental health agencies can:

- assess the needs of individuals and organizations in preventing and dealing with violence
- provide consultation during crisis management planning
- show how internal and external stressors contribute to aggression and violence
- help identify high-risk employees
- provide counselling for employees
- help individuals cope with job loss
- establish strategies to keep domestic violence from entering the work environment
- help develop programs for managing organizational change and the stress that may result

-
- conduct training programs on how to deal with workplace violence, and educate employees regarding normal reactions to violence
 - train supervisors and managers on issues of employee management
 - participate in violence prevention or intervention teams
 - conduct group or individual debriefings following a violent incident
 - assist in managing relationships with outside service providers and the public

Your local telephone utility, computer/internet provider or mail carrier may be able to help you:

- establish a policy regarding or responding to verbal or written threats received via the telephone, fax, e-mail or regular mail.

Section III

Preventing Workplace Violence

1. Warning Signs

Physical Signs of a Potentially Violent Person

Warning Signs of a Troubled Employee

Warning Signs of a Potentially Violent Person

Common Characteristics of Violent Incidents Between Employees

2. Personal Safety

Emergency Preparedness

Trusting your Instincts

Dealing with Strangers

Elevator Safety

3. Workplace Design

Building Security

Visitors

Waiting Areas

Natural Surveillance

Electronic Devices and Surveillance

Workplace Layout

Parking Lot Design

4. Work Situations and Interactions

Robbery Prevention

Handling Cash

Banking Money

Working Alone

Working Off-Site

Working from Home

Working Late

Working with Young People

Working with Patients and Their Families

Managing Workplace Change

Managing Behaviour During a Job Action

Resolving Problem Behaviour

Preparing for a Potentially Violent Meeting

Managing Workplace Terminations

Threats Against Employees

Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Mobbing

Internet Harassment

Stalking Situations

Domestic Violence

5. Work-Related Travel

Walking Safety

Driving Safety

Parking Lot Safety

Public Transit Safety

Travel Safety

Hotel Safety

The prevention tips included in this guide are as comprehensive as possible. Some of them you may already be doing; others may seem extreme for your situation.



Select the measures which you believe will be most effective for your situation using your knowledge of your own job and workplace.



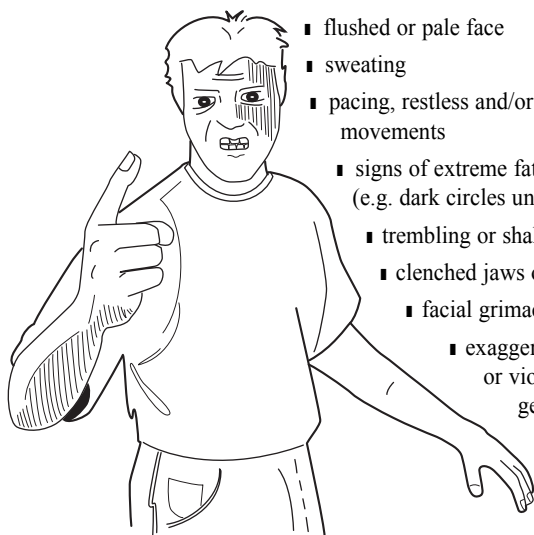
Use the space at the end of each sub-section to add your own “tips” to this guide.

CCOHS would love to hear your “tips!” They may be added to future editions of this guide, to help create a safer workplace for everyone.

1. Warning Signs

Physical Signs of a Potentially Violent Person

Use caution if someone exhibits one or more of the following non-verbal signs or body language:



- flushed or pale face
- sweating
- pacing, restless and/or repetitive movements
- signs of extreme fatigue (e.g. dark circles under the eyes)
- trembling or shaking
- clenched jaws or fists
- facial grimacing
- exaggerated or violent gestures

Exercise caution if you notice these signs.

- change in voice
- loud talking or chanting
- shallow, rapid breathing
- scowling, sneering or use of abusive language
- glaring or avoiding eye contact
- violating your personal space (they get too close)

Warning Signs of a Troubled Employee

It is extremely important to understand that these behaviours do not necessarily predict violence, but may indicate that an employee is experiencing periods of high stress. Each situation is unique. Professional judgment and outside assistance may be required to determine if intervention is warranted.

Take particular note if:

- There is a change in the employee's behaviour pattern.
- The frequency and intensity of the behaviours are disruptive to the work environment.
- The employee is exhibiting many of these behaviours, rather than just a few.

Warning signs may include:

- Crying, sulking or having temper tantrums
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Pushing the limits of acceptable conduct, disregarding the safety of co-workers
- Increased operating errors
- Increasingly unsatisfactory work quality
- Faulty decision-making
- Testing of limits to see how much he or she can get away with
- Swearing or emotional language
- Making inappropriate statements
- Forgetfulness
- Inability to focus
- Confusion and/or disorientation
- Disrespect for authority
- Handles criticism poorly

-
- Holds grudges, especially against his or her supervisor. Verbalizes hope that something negative will happen to the person against whom he or she has the grudge
 - Refuses to acknowledge job performance problems
 - Blames others for mistakes
 - Complains of unfair personal treatment
 - Is disgruntled more than usual about work and fixates on perceived injustices
 - Talks about the same problems repeatedly, without resolving them
 - Insists that he or she is always right.
 - Misinterprets communications from supervisor or co-workers
 - Socially isolated
 - Personal hygiene is poor or ignored
 - Sudden and/or unpredictable change in energy level
 - Complains of unusual and/or non-specific illnesses
 - Shows signs of substance abuse, such as alcohol on the breath

Refer also to the section on Warning Signs of a Potentially Violent Person, next in this guide.

Warning Signs of a Potentially Violent Person

A random act of violence or crime-related violence is sudden and unpredictable. There may be few or no warning signs. However, in some cases there has been a clear pattern of warning signs.

No one can predict human behaviour, and there is no specific profile of a potentially violent person. Nevertheless, a potentially violent person may exhibit any or all of the following characteristics:

History of violence

- fascinated with incidents of workplace violence
- shows an extreme interest in, or obsession with, weapons
- demonstrates violence towards inanimate objects
- evidence of prior violent behaviour

Threatening behaviour

- states intention to hurt someone (verbal or written threat)
- holds grudges
- excessive behaviour (phone calls, gift-giving)
- escalating threats that appear well-planned
- a preoccupation with violence



**WARNING SIGN OR
BAD DAY?**
Take these behaviours
“in context”. Look
for multiple warning
signs and signs
of escalation.

Intimidating behaviour

- argumentative or uncooperative
- displays unwarranted anger
- easily frustrated or impulsive
- challenges peers and authority figures

Increase in personal stress

- an unreciprocated, romantic obsession
- serious family or financial problems
- recent job loss or personal loss

Negative personality characteristics

- suspicious of others
- believes he or she is entitled to something
- cannot take criticism
- feels victimized
- shows a lack of concern for the safety and well-being of others
- has low self esteem
- blames others for his or her problems or mistakes

Marked changes in mood or behaviour

- extreme or bizarre behaviour
- irrational beliefs and ideas
- appears depressed
- expresses hopelessness or heightened anxiety
- demonstrates a drastic change in belief systems
- marked decline in work performance

Socially isolated

- history of negative interpersonal relationships
- few friends or family
- sees the company as a “family”
- has an obsessive involvement with his or her job

Abuses drugs or alcohol

If you are concerned about an individual who exhibits some of the above characteristics, TAKE ACTION. Obtain assistance from your supervisor, human resources department, and/or employee assistance program.

Common Characteristics of Violent Incidents Between Employees

Violence usually begins as a verbal dispute and almost always involves people who know each other.

Disputes often appear to have relatively trivial causes.

The dispute pattern is usually not random and unique; rather, it builds, intensifies and continues.

Eventual victims may behave in an irritating manner prior to a violent incident. Frequently they misjudge their own ability to arouse hostility in others, and are unaware that they are provoking a serious response to their behaviour.



Stop verbal disputes before the situation escalates.

2. Personal Safety

Emergency Preparedness

- ☐ Know your emergency exits and procedures, including safe places or rooms.
- ☐ Know where to access telephones, including local pay telephones.
- ☐ Imagine appropriate responses to various situations you may find yourself in.
- ☐ Decide ahead of time how you will respond to various situations.
- ☐ Compare procedures with your co-workers or people with similar occupations.







**Know how you will
respond to violent
situations.**

Trusting your Instincts

- ☐ Keep personal information at a minimum when talking with anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable (e.g. vacation plans, hours of work, where you live).
- ☐ DO NOT engage in conversations that make you feel uncomfortable. Excuse yourself and walk away.
- ☐ Be firm and confident and do not permit any kind of harassment, sexual, racial or otherwise.
- ☐ Be alert for anger and hostility. De-escalate arguments wherever this is appropriate.
- ☐ If you feel you are being harassed, threatened or intimidated:
 - Tell the person to stop.
 - Document the incident (e.g. the nature of the incident, time, place, witnesses)
 - Inform your supervisor, manager or human resource professional.
- ☐ Report any inappropriate behaviour toward yourself or your co-workers to the person identified in your organization's Violence Prevention Policy.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Refer to "Responding to Harassment, Bullying or Mobbing" for additional information.

Dealing with Strangers

- ☐ Adopt a non-threatening, “May I help you?” attitude toward visitors in your office or building. The underlying question is “What are you doing here?”
- ☐ Escort “strangers” to the location or person they identify as their destination, if you are comfortable doing so.
- ☐ Ask for the person’s name and to see his or her identification, if required as part of your organization’s violence prevention program (refer to Workplace Design – Visitors).
- ☐ Note the appearance of people who are not familiar to you, in case something does happen.
- ☐ Report “strangers” to security.
- ☐ Build a rapport with customers so that you can distinguish strangers from repeat customers.
- ☐ DO NOT open the door to strangers before or after regular business hours.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Elevator Safety

- ☐ DO NOT get on an elevator with anyone who makes you feel uneasy. Wait for the next elevator.
- ☐ Observe all passengers in elevators.
- ☐ Board the elevator last and select floor buttons last.
- ☐ Get off the elevator if a suspicious looking person gets on with you.
- ☐ If possible, stand near the control panel when entering an elevator.
- ☐ If someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable, push the button for the next floor or push the alarm.
- ☐ If attacked, push the alarm and as many floor buttons as possible. Keep your back to the sidewall.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



3. Workplace Design

Note: Tell employees about the nature and purpose of any workplace modifications before you implement them. This information will help prevent unnecessary alarm or confusion.

Building Security

- ☐ Ensure the reception area is easily identifiable and accessible.
- ☐ Ensure the receptionist or sales clerk is able to clearly see incoming and outgoing staff and visitors.
- ☐ Position the reception area or sales counter so that it is visible to fellow employees or members of the public passing by.



- ☐ Use a locked reception area that prevents outsiders from entering the building or office when no receptionist is present.
- ☐ Install physical barriers for example pass-through windows or bullet-proof enclosures.
- ☐ Minimize the number of entrances to the workplace. Check the Fire Code and other relevant legislation before taking this action.

-
- ☐ Use coded cards or keys to control access to the building or certain areas within the building.
 - Ensure there is minimum distribution of keys or entry cards.
 - Change entry card codes or locks immediately if keys or cards are lost or misplaced.
 - Use “buzzed” access to workplaces in high-risk areas.
 - ☐ Place height markers next to doors to help employees identify alleged offenders.
 - ☐ Securely lock doors to unoccupied areas when not in use (e.g. closets, storage areas, machine rooms).
 - ☐ Use adequate exterior lighting around the workplace and near entrances.
 - ☐ Strategically place fences to control access to the workplace.
 - ☐ Locate garbage areas, external buildings or equipment that employees may have to access in an area:
 - with good visibility
 - close to the main building
 - with no potential hiding places
 - ☐ Provide a locked, secure area for employees to store their personal belongings.
 - ☐ Use metal detectors in workplaces with a high risk of violence.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

Visitors

To control visitor access, clearly define different areas as:

- public space (e.g. waiting room, lobby, library)
 - semi-public space (e.g. conference or interview rooms, elevators) or
 - private space (e.g. offices)
- ☐ Use physical barriers such as walls, turnstiles, and doors.
 - ☐ Use different flooring styles or carpet colour to visually separate public space from private or semi-public space.
 - ☐ Use signs such as “Employees Only” or “All visitors must be escorted past this point.”

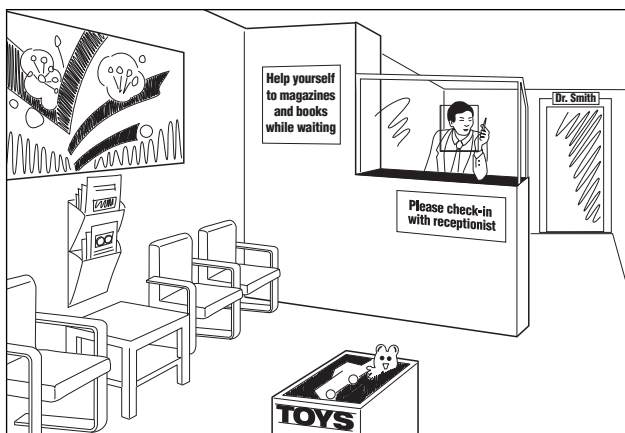
Administrative Tips

- ☐ Require that visitors identify themselves and sign in and out of the office or building.
- ☐ Establish policies for escorting or supervising visitors.
- ☐ Require visitors and employees to wear identification badges on the premises. Consider colour coding the badges or using photo identification badges.
- ☐ Limit or control access to private areas.
- ☐ Establish set visiting hours.
- ☐ Establish a list of restricted visitors and make it available at all visitor reception points. Restricted visitors may be denied access or allowed supervised or controlled access to the building.
- ☐ Turn away after-hours visitors if they do not have an appointment, or are not personally known by and vouched for by a staff member.
- ☐ Never admit visitors who appear to be intoxicated, under the influence of a controlled substance, visibly angry or threatening.

- ☐ Encourage employees to conduct public or client business in public space areas, not in private offices.
- ☐ Post a Code of Conduct for visitors in a visible location.

Waiting Areas

- ☐ Provide distractions for people who may be waiting for an appointment—magazines, television, vending machines, toys for children.
- ☐ Make the waiting area as pleasant and entertaining as possible.
- ☐ Provide welcoming, calming surroundings—comfortable seating, subdued colours, non-glare lighting.
- ☐ Post clear signs providing directions and information.
- ☐ Reduce irritating background noise by using sound absorbing surfaces and keeping noise to a minimum.



Provide welcoming, calming surroundings for visitors.

-
- ☐ Acknowledge clients who have been waiting a long time for their appointment. Make eye contact, provide reassurance that they will be looked after as soon as possible.
 - ☐ Provide regular information about delays and revised waiting times. Allow affected persons to re-schedule appointments.
 - ☐ Provide sufficient personal space, so that people do not feel crowded.
 - ☐ Post a Code of Conduct in a visible location.
 - ☐ Provide telephones for communication with family, friends, or business associates.
 - ☐ Secure furniture and fixtures to the floor.
 - ☐ Minimize the number of objects which could be thrown or used as weapons.
 - ☐ Provide a separate waiting area to isolate certain individuals, as necessary.
 - ☐ Introduce strategies to reduce waiting time.
 - Book appointments which usually take longer for the end of the day.
 - Leave open appointments to accommodate for emergencies, or to “catch up” appointments.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Natural Surveillance

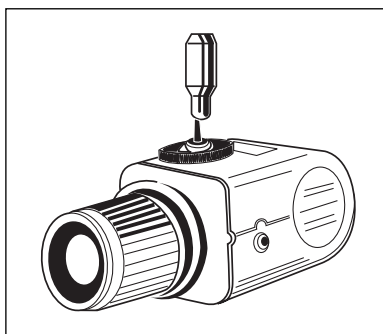
Natural surveillance allows other employees or members of the public to naturally observe interactions within a work area. The following techniques can provide or improve natural surveillance.

- ☐ Use shatterproof smoked glass walls on cubicles or space dividers.
- ☐ Use glass doors or glass windows instead of solid doors or walls.
- ☐ Remove items that may obstruct the view (e.g. posters and white boards) from glass walls, windows and doors.
- ☐ Provide sufficient lighting to allow all areas of the room to be viewed and monitored.
- ☐ Eliminate hidden corners.
- ☐ Use convex or ball mirrors to improve sight lines around corners or angles.
- ☐ Provide for co-workers to hear what is happening if good visual contact cannot be achieved.
- ☐ Design entrances and exits so that members of the public approach staff only from the front, not the side or back.
- ☐ Allow staff members full view of approaching members of the public by eliminating visual obstructions.
- ☐ Keep windows and aisles clear to provide good sight lines for employees or members of the public passing by.
- ☐ Install good outside lighting and train staff to check lights before dusk.
- ☐ Remove or trim overgrown bushes or landscaping which may obstruct the view of a member of the public passing by the workplace.
- ☐ Reduce access to alcoves and doorways after hours.

Electronic Devices and Surveillance

Note: provide training to ensure that employees know how to activate electronic devices they may need to use.

- ☐ Use still photography or video surveillance cameras.
- ☐ Install signs which indicate that surveillance cameras are being used (e.g. "This area is monitored by video surveillance camera 24-hours a day.").



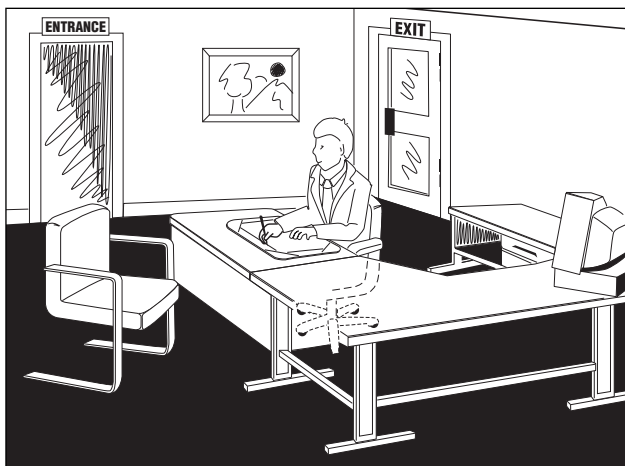
Video surveillance discourages violent behaviour.

- ☐ Install telephones in isolated areas.
- ☐ Pre-program telephones to dial 9-1-1 or local police emergency numbers.
- ☐ Install alarms or panic buttons. Install more than one button to increase accessibility.
- ☐ Locate alarms or panic buttons in places other than under desks or counters, where they are most expected to be.
- ☐ Ensure alarms or panic buttons are easily accessible to the employee, but not to members of the public.

-
- ☐ Have alarms or panic buttons ring elsewhere in the workplace or in a neighbouring workplace or household.
 - ☐ Periodically check the functioning of alarms or panic buttons.
 - ☐ Install motion detectors.
 - ☐ Give employees personal alarms which are:
 - light-weight
 - easy to operate
 - one-time activated (that is, if it is dropped or thrown the alarm will continue)
 - ☐ Install “trouble” lights or geographic locating devices in police cars or taxicabs, in case of hijacking.
 - ☐ Ensure that electrical panels, communications panels, and/or elevator controls are secured against access by unauthorized persons.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

Workplace Layout

- ☐ Minimize the opportunity for physical contact, by:
 - using wide tables or counters
 - raising the height of counters
 - installing physical barriers, such as glass, screens or grills
- ☐ Arrange furniture to prevent the employee from being trapped and to maintain a minimum distance, approximately 4 to 6 feet, between the client and the employee.
- ☐ Provide a clear exit route from the employee's work area to the door.
- ☐ Provide alternative exit(s).
- ☐ Minimize the amount of furniture in the room.
- ☐ Provide rolling chairs for staff and stationary chairs for clients.

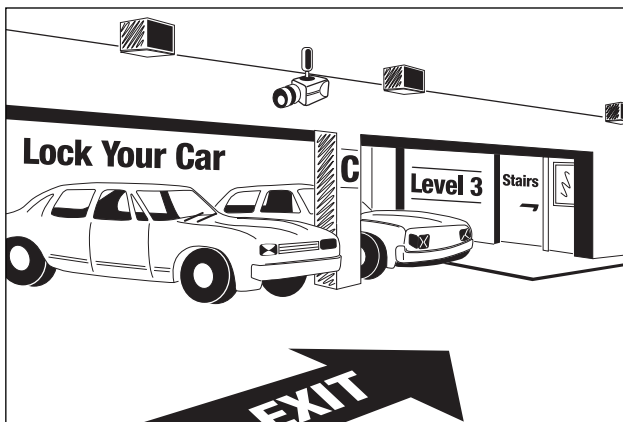


Organize your work station to minimize the chance of physical contact.

-
- ☐ Remove or secure items which could be used as weapons or projectiles (e.g. unsecured chairs, lights, computer monitors, pictures, ashtrays).
 - ☐ Select furniture without sharp edges or corners.
 - ☐ Secure furniture to the floor.
 - ☐ Ensure that valuable items such as computers are not in view from outside windows.
 - ☐ Provide lockable and secure bathrooms for staff members, separate from visitor or patient bathrooms.
 - ☐ Designate an employee “safe room” for use during an emergency.
 - ☐ Convey a “pride-of-ownership” attitude to the public. Keep the building well-maintained and free of graffiti or garbage.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

Parking Lot Design

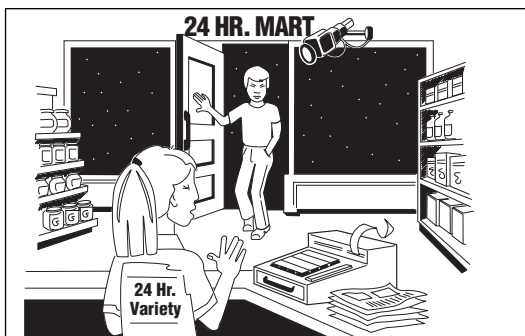
- ☐ Make sure entrances and exits are well marked.
- ☐ Use signs to remind users to “lock your car,” or “remember your level and aisle number.”
- ☐ Put up “no trespassing” or “security patrolled” signs if it is true. DO NOT give your clients a false sense of security.
- ☐ Use sufficient lighting.
- ☐ Replace burnt out light bulbs promptly.
- ☐ Paint underground walls white to:
 - increase the light levels
 - minimize hiding places
 - maximize visibility for patrols
- ☐ Keep exterior walls and plants under 3 feet high.
- ☐ Trim tree branches below six-foot height.
- ☐ Use speed bumps in traffic lanes near exits or drive-up windows.
- ☐ Use security patrols wherever possible.
 - Patrol regularly.
 - Vary patrol times.
 - Vary patrol routes.
- ☐ Provide parking lot escort services after hours or after dark.
- ☐ Clearly mark alarms.
- ☐ Zone alarms for response so that security personnel can respond quickly.
- ☐ Use cameras for electronic surveillance wherever possible.



- ☐ Control access to the parking lot by using pass cards, which are read going in and out.
- ☐ Install motion detectors or motion triggered lights to keep trespassers away.
- ☐ Link emergency doors to alarms.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

4. Work Situations and Interactions

Robbery Prevention



- ☐ Install visible security cameras to deter potential robbers and to record all activities.
- ☐ Install mirrors and establish clear sight lines allowing employees to see who is in the aisles or secluded areas.
- ☐ Greet everyone who enters the store. Be friendly and look briefly into their eyes.
- ☐ Move away from the sales counter when there are no customers.
- ☐ Reduce the number of signs in the store so that passersby can see into the store.
- ☐ Avoid looking directly at suspicious loiterers. Prolonged eye contact may be perceived as a challenge.
- ☐ Ask the customer ahead of someone suspicious, "Are you together?" The customer will usually turn around and look at the person which may deter a robbery.

-
- ☐ Fill out a description sheet on suspicious loiterers.
 - ☐ Call the police and ask for a patrol check if suspicious loiterers do not leave.
 - ☐ Lock delivery doors when not in use. DO NOT use back entrances to let people in.
 - ☐ DO NOT empty garbage at night, especially if the dumpster is in a secluded spot or back alley.
 - ☐ Wear conservative clothing, for example a uniform. DO NOT wear jewellery which could become a strangulation or theft hazard.
 - ☐ DO NOT carry cash while on duty.
 - ☐ Be aware of areas with poor lighting.
 - ☐ DO NOT exit into poorly lit, unobserved areas.
 - ☐ Be familiar with escape routes and emergency procedures.
 - ☐ Keep emergency response numbers clearly accessible.
 - ☐ Know the location of phones or assistance outside the premises.
 - ☐ Report all violent incidents to the police.

Prior to opening your place of business:

- ☐ Look for loiterers.
- ☐ Check for any signs of attempted entry.
- ☐ If in doubt, or if the premises are not secure, DO NOT enter. Advise the police immediately.

Extra precautions for after dark and during slow periods:

- ☐ Check each night to see that outside lights are on and working.
- ☐ Operate only one cash register, or as few cash registers as possible.

-
- ☐ Open the empty unused cash register drawer and tip it up for display.
 - ☐ Run an “empty register” - just \$5 and change.
 - ☐ Establish minimum staffing levels, for example have no less than 2 people on duty at high risk times.
 - ☐ Use two people to close the store. Have one act as a look-out.
 - ☐ Arrange for periodic police or security checks.
 - ☐ Minimize high-risk exposure hours; for example close your place of business late at night and early morning.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

Handling Cash

- ☐ Keep cash register funds to a minimum.
- ☐ Use electronic payment systems to make robbery less attractive, for example:
 - automatic ticket dispensers – credit cards
 - or collectors – cheques
 - debit cards – tokens
- ☐ Vary the time of day that you empty or reduce funds in the cash register.
- ☐ Remove all large bills (\$50, \$100) from the register as soon as you receive them.
- ☐ Install and use a locked drop safe.
- ☐ Change the combination of the safe at frequent intervals.
- ☐ Arrange for regular cash collection by a licensed security firm.
- ☐ Post visible signs which let customers know that minimum cash (state amount, e.g. less than \$50) is kept on the premises.
- ☐ Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bills possible.
- ☐ DO NOT allow transactions with bills over \$20.
- ☐ DO NOT handle large amounts of cash or count money in public view.
- ☐ Use cash drawer covers.
- ☐ Install security screens in high risk areas.
- ☐ Train employees in cash handling procedures.
- ☐ Encourage employees to make a conscious effort to keep the amount of cash on hand low.
- ☐ Create a secure refuge area such as a lockable office with a fish-eye lens in the door.

Banking Money

- ☐ Bank money more frequently.
- ☐ Use an unmarked bag or container to carry cash and/or securities.
- ☐ Vary the route taken to the bank or financial institution.
- ☐ Avoid making night deposits.
- ☐ Observe your surroundings before making your transaction.
- ☐ Vary times of deposit.
- ☐ Rotate the task so that it isn't always the same person making the deposit.
- ☐ DO NOT make deposits alone.
- ☐ Have one person face the other way to act as a look-out while the other makes the deposit.
- ☐ Travel to the financial institution by vehicle, rather than on foot or by public transit.
- ☐ If necessary to take a taxi, choose a reputable firm and do not disclose your specific destination. State your destination in general terms for example the corner of Broadway and Main; not the National Bank.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Working Alone

“Working alone” includes employees who work by themselves without close or direct contact with co-workers. For example, the receptionist in a large office building may be considered a “lone” worker.

Administrative Tips

Every effort should be made to avoid having employees work alone in areas of recognized risk. If using a second employee is not feasible,

- ☐ Put more experienced employees on higher risk shifts or in higher risk areas.
- ☐ Provide the employee with a means of emergency communication (e.g. a cell phone). Check its proper operation at the beginning of the shift and at least once during the shift.
- ☐ Post emergency numbers.
- ☐ Periodically check the well-being of the employee. Use the check-in procedures described in “Working Off-Site”.
- ☐ Arrange agreements with other company locations, adjacent merchants or security firms to monitor your employee.
- ☐ Provide a protective enclosure.
- ☐ Ensure that a qualified person will respond immediately to signs of distress.
- ☐ Post signs indicating employees are not working alone, for example real estate open house signs should list the names of two real estate agents.
- ☐ Prominently display signs indicating that the premises are monitored.

Employee Tips

- ☐ Know the staff in other area stores, offices, or businesses and be aware of their schedules.
- ☐ Notify the police and staff in neighbouring stores or businesses if you are suspicious of people hanging around or of strange phone calls.
- ☐ Check all lighting before it gets dark.
- ☐ Use personal alarms or monitored video surveillance systems and properly maintain these devices.



DO NOT open back or secondary doors unless absolutely necessary.

DO NOT leave back or secondary doors unlocked, open and/or unattended.

DO NOT empty garbage at night, especially if the dumpster is in a secluded spot or back alley.

DO NOT mention you are alone. Develop methods for suggesting that you are not alone. Use words such as “we” or “my partner and I”.







An illustration of a worker on a utility pole. The worker is wearing a hard hat, a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, and pants. They are using a pair of pliers to work on a wire or component on the pole. The pole is a vertical wooden structure with several horizontal cross-arms. Two insulators are visible on the cross-arms, each with a wire passing over it. The worker is positioned on a lower cross-arm, leaning against the pole. The background is plain white.

Working Off-Site

If you work away from a traditional office setting, you must exercise extra caution. This advice applies to real estate agents, social workers, inspectors, home care or health care providers, service or repair employees, and sales people. In many cases, you have less or no ability to control your work environment.

You may require special training to avoid violence by using conflict resolution and mediation tactics. Nevertheless, the following specific preventive tactics or procedures will minimize or prevent risks associated with working off-site.

- ☐ Have access to a cellphone, two-way radio or car phone at all times. Confirm that the phone or radio works at the start of and during your shift.
- ☐ Use an established check-in procedure which allows you to manage typical situations you may encounter off-site.

Keep your designated contact informed of your location.

Check-in Procedures

Identify a designated contact at the office and a back-up.

Clearly define how often and under what circumstances you will check in.

Keep your designated contact informed of your location and consistently adhere to your call-in schedule.

Let the client know that others know your schedule and where you are, in a subtle, non-threatening way.

Call and check in when you first arrive and as you leave, especially the first time you go to a new setting.

Have your designated contact call you periodically to ensure you are okay, especially if you are concerned about a particular situation.

Identify what predetermined action or code words will be used to confirm that you require assistance.

If you become concerned about a specific situation, call your designated “partner” or an office contact to ask when they expect to join you at the client’s location.

Develop procedures to be followed if you do not check in as planned.

- ☐ Prepare a daily work plan, so that you and others know where and when you are expected somewhere.
- ☐ Always wear your identification badge. This will signal that you are acting in some official capacity or that you are an employee doing a job.
- ☐ Arrange to meet in a safe environment, for example at your office, the client’s office or workplace, a restaurant or a hotel, if possible.

-
- ☐ Check the credentials of clients and the place and arrangements for any meetings away from the workplace.
 - ☐ Call the client to confirm your appointment. This will convey that you take the appointment seriously and may allow you to detect any unusual mood or activity at the client's location.
 - ☐ Wear comfortable, professional clothing and practical shoes, which will enable you to leave quickly if necessary.
 - ☐ Only carry with you what is absolutely necessary to conduct your business. Heavy purses and large briefcases may be cumbersome and slow your exit.
 - ☐ Always take your cell phone to the meeting and keep it in a location where you can access it quickly.
 - ☐ Avoid having new work contacts walk you to your car or escort you to your home.
 - ☐ Be alert and make mental notes of your surroundings when you arrive at a new or different setting.
 - ☐ Park your car facing out toward the main road – to allow quick and easy exit
 - ☐ Use the “buddy system,” especially when you feel your personal safety may be threatened.
 - ☐ Determine under which circumstances unaccompanied visiting would involve unacceptable risk.
 - ☐ Exercise your right to refuse to provide services in clearly hazardous situations.
 - ☐ Disclose any feelings of discomfort or apprehension about an impending assignment to your supervisor.
 - ☐ Document your visit. Do NOT leave out any incidents that make you feel apprehensive.

-
- ☐ DO NOT enter any situation or location where you feel threatened or unsafe.
 - ☐ Keep client records and indicate if the client or patient is known to be aggressive, hostile or potentially violent.
 - ☐ Provide information on high-risk geographical areas to all staff, particularly new staff.
 - ☐ Be more diligent if the nature of the assignment poses a threat to the client (e.g. imposing sanctions or penalties).
 - ☐ Limit the time of day visits can be made to specific high-risk areas.
 - ☐ Carry hand-held alarms, noise devices, or other effective alarm devices.
 - ☐ DO NOT carry any type of weapon, including pepper spray. Weapons can just as easily be used AGAINST you and are illegal in some jurisdictions.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

When you enter unfamiliar premises:

- ☐ Check for escape routes and position yourself near an escape route.
- ☐ Mentally rehearse what you will do if the client becomes aggressive or hostile. Decide what your best preventive tactic will be.
- ☐ Stay out of the kitchen or workshop where sharp items are kept.
- ☐ Take control of the seating arrangements.
If possible, seat yourself near the door.

-
- ☐ Maintain a “reactionary gap” between yourself and the client – out of reach of the average person’s kicking distance. Increase the gap by sitting at a table. Be aware of the client’s proximity at all times.
 - ☐ Be well prepared for the meeting. Know your subject.
 - ☐ Rehearse the work and how you will do it in a safe manner.
 - ☐ If you are referring to written material, bring two copies so that you can sit across from the client, not beside.
 - ☐ Terminate the contact in a non-confrontational manner if the client appears to be:
 - intoxicated
 - under the influence of drugs
 - emotionally disturbed or out of control



DO NOT allow yourself to be backed into a corner. Leave a clear path to the exit.

DO NOT venture too far into the premises; for example remain near an exit.

DO NOT turn your back on the client or enter a room first.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Working from Home

Working from home has many advantages, but it can also leave you vulnerable given its isolation.

Treat the home office as you would any workplace, always mindful of your security.

Consider the following safeguards:

- ☐ Position your office as close to the front entrance of your house as possible.
- ☐ If you must locate your office elsewhere (e.g. the basement, upstairs or the rear of your home), conduct business meetings with clients in the front room.
- ☐ Consider holding meetings in an offsite, more public location, especially if you have concerns.
- ☐ If you are having a meeting in your home office, use check-in procedures (see Check-In Procedures under "Working Off-Site" in this guide).
- ☐ Regardless of where you conduct business, arrange yourself so that a visitor cannot block your access to an exit.
- ☐ Avoid displaying valuables in the room where you conduct business.
- ☐ When meeting new clients for the first time, meet away from the home office to help determine if you feel comfortable having them in your home. If you are uncomfortable for any reason, do not invite them to your home office (see "Trusting your Instincts" under "Personal Safety" in this guide).
- ☐ Before you meet with a new client, check with the person who referred them to you.
- ☐ Think ahead and have solutions for situations that might be uncomfortable. Avoid getting yourself into unsafe or potentially unsafe situations.

-
- ☐ If you have equipment that requires servicing, try to schedule this when a family member or neighbor can be there or use established check-in procedures.
 - ☐ If someone is scheduled to visit your home office from another company, call the company in advance and verify the visitor's information.
 - ☐ If someone is in your office and you feel uncomfortable, excuse yourself to make a phone call.
 - Make the call in their presence so it can be overheard.
 - Call a neighbor or family member, and make it sound as if you are expecting them to arrive at your office soon.
 - This strategy will make it easier to end the current meeting and let the client know that you will not be alone soon.
 - ☐ Arrange in advance to have an emergency contact that you can call should you feel threatened. Decide on a code word that will indicate that you are in need of assistance.
 - ☐ Have emergency and/or critical contact numbers on speed dial and always be positioned near your phone.
 - ☐ Consider installing a security system with a panic alarm.
 - ☐ Contact your local police department and ask if they offer residential security inspections. Ask for additional suggestions regarding home office security.

For additional safety tips refer to the following sections:

- ☐ Personal Safety
- ☐ Warning Signs
- ☐ Workplace Design
- ☐ Working Off-Site
- ☐ Resolving Problem Behaviour

Working Late



Ensure someone knows you are working late.

- ☐ Let a security guard or a friend know you are working late and when you expect to leave.
- ☐ Use established check-in procedures, as described in "Working Off-Site" in this guide.
- ☐ Use the "buddy system." Arrange to work late the same night as a colleague or friend.
- ☐ While accompanied by a co-worker, check that all doors and windows are locked and make sure washrooms and storage rooms are empty.
- ☐ Before dark, move your car to a well-lit area, close to the building or a parking lot attendant.
- ☐ Call police or security officers if you suspect some one is lurking outside.

-
- ☐ If you enter a washroom and you suspect someone might be inside, DO NOT call out. Back out, go to a safe area with a lockable door and call for help.
 - ☐ Plan ahead which safe places you can retreat to and call for help.
 - ☐ If you encounter someone unfamiliar, indicate that you are not alone. Say “my supervisor will be right here and will be able to help you.”
 - ☐ Ask your employer to consider providing safe transportation home after hours.
 - ☐ Review the tips provided for public transit, parking lot safety and working alone, as appropriate.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

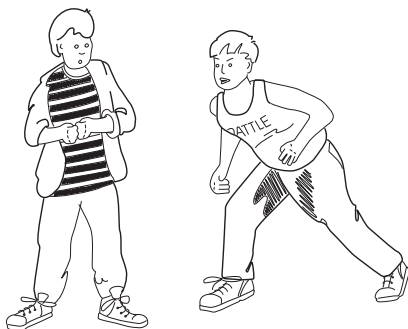
Working with Young People

This advice applies to people who work with young people, for example recreational program leaders, camp counsellors, teachers and social workers.

- ☐ Communicate your violence prevention policy to all involved parties, including parents of the children, if appropriate.
- ☐ Train program leaders to recognize and prevent potentially violent situations.
- ☐ Teach conflict-resolution skills to program staff.
- ☐ Establish a system to identify children or parents with a history of significant behaviour problems, respecting both confidentiality and staff safety issues.
- ☐ Introduce programs for the children which:
 - build self-esteem
 - teach appropriate social skills
 - teach anger management skills
 - teach conflict-resolution skills
- ☐ Promote a non-violent culture within the organization by:
 - addressing problem behaviour directly and immediately
 - consistently enforcing your violence prevention policy
 - consistently and fairly applying consequences to problem behaviour
 - rewarding desired behaviours
- ☐ Recognize achievements in peacekeeping
- ☐ Address problem behaviour privately. DO NOT reprimand children in front of their peers; preserve their sense of integrity and self-esteem.
- ☐ Encourage pride and “ownership” of the program, class, or organization. Create a feeling of “ours”, not “theirs”, “mine” or “yours”.

-
- ☐ Provide counselling and education programs about victimization and bullying.
 - ☐ Target youth leaders to discourage violent behaviour and model appropriate behaviours; introduce a peer mediation program.
 - ☐ Identify positive role models (e.g. from sports and entertainment) at every opportunity.
 - ☐ Introduce a “big sibling” program to teach and model appropriate social skills.
 - ☐ Provide safe-haven programs for potential victims.
 - ☐ Solicit parent and community support. Provide workshops for parents and community members on non-violent conflict resolution techniques.
 - ☐ Refer children to appropriate community agencies and programs which provide specialized assistance, for example building self-esteem and teaching conflict resolution skills.
 - ☐ Establish positive relations with the local police; have a local police officer or department adopt your group or school.
 - ☐ Apply other relevant sections in this guide, as appropriate. For example, if the potential for violence is recognized:
 - Leave your (class)room door open to provide for natural surveillance.
 - Apply some of the working alone or working off-site techniques, such as using check-in procedures; implement visitor procedures.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

How to Intervene in a Fight Involving Children



Keep your distance and use verbal commands.

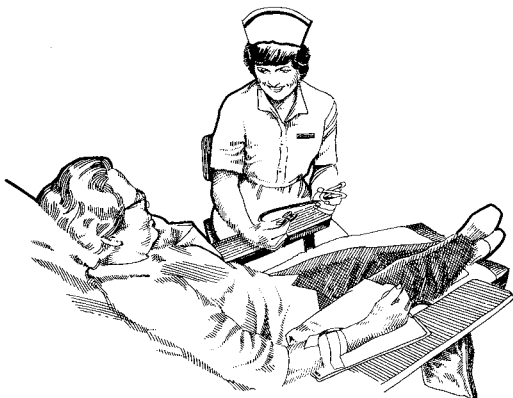
Note: The advice given here applies specifically to fights involving children. DO NOT intervene in a fight involving adults if you don't have special training.

- ☐ Get help. Your first priority is to avoid getting hurt. Send someone, by name, for help.
- ☐ Dismiss the audience. Tell the children or students, using their names, to leave the immediate area. Tell them specifically where to go.
- ☐ Deal with the fighters. Use their names. Tell them what you expect them to do. Use specific commands. Keep your distance.
- ☐ If you do not know individual children's names, identify them by unique characteristics, for example "You in the red shirt..."
- ☐ Defer to rules, instead of personal authority, for example "hands off" or "fighting is against the rules."
- ☐ Identify the aggressor and direct the other child to a safe place.

DO NOT criticize or demean the aggressor as this may be seen as a challenge.

Working with Patients and their Families

- ☐ Approach patients and their family members in a non-threatening, respectful manner.
- ☐ Provide the right information at the right time.
DO NOT overload patients or family members with too much medical or technical jargon.



Clearly and fully explain procedures.

- ☐ Review the patient's profile prior to meeting with the patient and/or family. Take note of any potential concerns and take appropriate precautionary measures, for example use the "buddy" system or increase natural surveillance.
- ☐ Clearly and fully explain to the patient and/or family, before and during procedures:
 - what is involved
 - how long it will take
 - whether it will hurt
- ☐ If you feel threatened, DO NOT conduct intimate examinations of patients alone. Arrange to have a colleague in the room or close by.

-
- ☐ If a patient resists and becomes hostile during a procedure:
 - Stop what you are doing, if possible.
 - Ask the patient to identify what is wrong.
 - If you can, correct the situation. Otherwise, explain why you cannot.
 - ☐ Open the door during any potentially violent consultation with either the patient or family member, allowing visual or verbal contact with other staff.
 - ☐ If you are concerned about the actions of a family member:
 - let them know in clear and simple terms what is expected of them.
 - If their behaviour continues or escalates, ask them to take a seat in the waiting room.
 - Call security if you feel threatened.
 - ☐ Carry a diary to record instances of abuse so details are not forgotten when filing a report.
 - ☐ Limit information given to outsiders regarding the condition or status of hospitalized victims of violence.
 - ☐ Supervise the movement of psychiatric clients at risk of violence in accordance with your facility's procedures and policies.
 - ☐ Consider transferring aggressive patients to more secure or restrictive settings, if available.
 - ☐ Apply other relevant sections in this guide, as appropriate.

Examples:

- working alone
- visitor procedures
- waiting room design

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Administrative Tips

- ☐ Establish a system to identify patients and clients who may present a violence risk due to factors such as personality, medication and type or degree of illness. Keep in mind patient confidentiality and employee safety issues.
- ☐ Assign more experienced staff, or staff with a demonstrated ability to handle potentially violent situations, to areas or patients that pose a higher risk of violence.
- ☐ Implement procedures so patients aren't repeatedly asked for the same information for example chart all information that needs to be passed to the attending staff.
- ☐ Use time-out or a separate area for segregating potentially violent patients.
- ☐ Provide employee safe rooms for crisis retreats.
- ☐ Ensure all counselling and patient care rooms have two exits.
- ☐ Identify the circumstances in which use of medication to prevent or control anxiety is appropriate.
- ☐ Identify the circumstances in which physical restraint is appropriate and obtain training.
- ☐ Establish procedures for monitoring high-risk patients at night.
- ☐ Establish lock-up procedures for pharmaceuticals.
- ☐ Post the telephone number of local police or put the number on speed-dial.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Managing Workplace Change

- ☐ Train managers to conduct workplace changes and workforce reductions with sensitivity and compassion.
- ☐ Keep employees informed regarding the status of major changes, to reduce stress caused by false rumours and uncertainty.
- ☐ Address concerns about job security first; then address concerns about the workplace.
- ☐ Involve employees in the change process as much as possible, for example set up committees which include employees, survey employees for their input.
- ☐ Explicitly convey how employee's views will be addressed or influence the process.
- ☐ Identify the benefits of change and create incentives for acceptance.
- ☐ Be aware of subsets of employees who have special needs for additional information or opportunities to discuss the change.
- ☐ Track the rumour mill and clarify misinformation when necessary.
- ☐ Provide venting systems, such as open-door policies, company advocates and grievance procedures.
- ☐ Provide support and reassurance.
- ☐ Maintain voluntary employee assistance programs for all employees.
- ☐ Encourage employees to use employee assistance programs in times of stress.

-
- ☐ Provide workshops on the change process and how it affects employees during times of organizational change, for example restructuring, mergers, or downsizing.
 - ☐ Clarify expectations as often as necessary. During times of intense organizational change, it is difficult to remain focused on new organizational objectives and expectations.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____



Clarify Expectations Often

Maintaining Order during a Job Action

Maintaining order and civility during a job action requires a concerted effort by both labour and management. Be vigilant in managing your emotions during a job action. Keep the following in mind:

- ☐ Understand everyone's rights, and respect the law.
- ☐ If you are management, be mindful that it is an employee's legal right to initiate a job action when allowed by law.
- ☐ If you are an employee, be mindful that it is management's right to maintain operations during as job action.
- ☐ Do not pass judgement.
- ☐ Regardless if you are labour or management, be patient at a picket line. Conduct yourself in a safe and courteous manner respectful of the other party's rights.
- ☐ Do not debate the issues which may have led to the job action, leave this to the negotiating teams of both sides.
- ☐ Refrain from making provocative comments or gestures when either crossing or maintaining the picket line.
- ☐ If provoked, remain calm and non-confrontational.
- ☐ If you see inappropriate behaviour or hear inappropriate statements on the picket line, file a workplace violence incident report, as required in your violence prevention policy.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Resolving Problem Behaviour

The following advice is intended to help resolve problem workplace behaviours in a constructive manner, once it has been decided that intervention is necessary and appropriate. Refer to "Warning Signs of a Troubled Employee" for advice on identifying situations which may require intervention. It is important that problem behaviours be addressed promptly and directly so they do not escalate. By identifying the problem and dealing with it proactively, managers and supervisors may be able to prevent a violent situation from developing.

- ☐ Meet with the employee confidentially.
- ☐ Clearly and concretely identify the behaviour that is of concern.
- ☐ Ask for the employee's feedback.
- ☐ If the employee suggests workplace-related issues, take clear steps to correct the identified problems or rule them out. Treat the claim seriously.
- ☐ Reinforce your organization's accepted standards of workplace behaviour. Be specific where necessary.
- ☐ Work with the employee on a plan to improve his or her behaviour and agree on an acceptable timeframe for improvement.
- ☐ Systematically observe the employee's behaviour. Document patterns of unacceptable behaviour, including excessive absenteeism, tardiness or any disruptive behaviours. Keep notes of the behaviour-related problems, and the dates and times you discussed the issue with the employee.
- ☐ If a significant incident occurs, or you have to return to the same problem repeatedly, suggest the employee contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider.

DO NOT ask the employee if they are having personal problems. Instead, you might say “if there is a personal issue that is contributing to this problem, then I recommend you call the EAP”. Ensure that you have the EAP brochure or telephone number on hand to give to the employee.

- ☐ If the employee brings up personal problems:
 - Be sympathetic, let the employee briefly describe the situation.
 - Clarify your role as supervisor.
 - Offer support for work-related issues.
 - Refer the employee to your EAP provider for assistance. Provide the employee with an EAP brochure or telephone number.
- ☐ Be prepared to provide a leave of absence so the employee can obtain appropriate assistance or treatment.
- ☐ Schedule a follow-up meeting with the employee to provide feedback, and to discuss progress made in resolving the issue(s).
- ☐ If disciplinary action is necessary (or at any other stage in the process), seek the support and advice of your manager, a human resources professional, a union representative, your company EAP, or other appropriate resources.
- ☐ If the employee leaves your organization for any reason, follow your organization’s employment reference policy.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

X DO NOT get involved in the employee's personal life.

DO NOT provide counseling to the employee – leave this to a trained professional.

DO NOT make value judgements. Instead rely on specific accepted standards of behaviour for your organization.

DO NOT permit the employee to box you in a corner. Appropriate behaviour is always the responsibility of the employee.

DO NOT ignore threats. Report them to the appropriate people in your organization.

DO NOT transfer the employee to another work unit without confronting or dealing with problem behaviours.

DO NOT make idle disciplinary threats. If you give a warning, follow through on it. Check back with the employee on specific dates to determine the progress, or lack of progress, being made.

Preparing for a Potentially Violent Meeting

- ☐ Conduct a background check. Check client background information, reports from fellow employees or internal sources. Keep in mind individual confidentiality and employee safety issues.
- ☐ Consider having two employees meet with the client.
- ☐ Arrange to have security nearby, but not visible, if at all possible.
- ☐ Notify other staff that trouble is anticipated.
- ☐ Set up a communication system to use to check on the interaction.
- ☐ Establish a recognizable “help” signal to alert other staff members that you need assistance, for example a special paging code or placing a coloured file folder in a visible location.



Remove all unnecessary paper and other material from your desk.

-
- ☐ Agree on an appropriate response, for example interrupt the meeting, or call security or the police.
 - ☐ Consider holding the meeting in a special room or neutral venue.
 - ☐ Treat and/or interview aggressive or upset clients in a relatively open area that still maintains privacy and confidentiality.
 - ☐ Evaluate the physical design of the meeting area:
 - physical barriers
 - access to escape routes
 - roller chairs
 - natural surveillance opportunities
 - removal of sharp objects or objects which could be thrown or used as weapons
 - ☐ Be prepared for the interview.
 - ☐ Remove all unnecessary paper and other material from the desk.
 - ☐ Duplicate any written material that will be referred to.
 - ☐ Be on time.
 - ☐ Using the yes/no technique, have a co-worker call and ask the following questions at a pre-arranged time:
 - Are you all right?
 - Do you want me to come to your office?
 - Do you want me to call security, police or other assistance?
 - ☐ Consider using the emergency buzzer system; but make sure employees know under which circumstances it is to be used.

Managing the Workplace Terminations

Once it has been decided that an employee must be terminated, there are positive steps that can be taken to ensure that the termination goes as smoothly as possible.

- ☐ Seek the support and advice of a human resources professional, a union representative, your organization's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider or other appropriate resources.
- ☐ Pre-plan the termination meeting. Know:
 - Who will conduct the interview.
 - How to call security, if needed.
 - Who will witness the meeting.
 - Where the meeting will be held.
 - When the meeting will occur.
 - How the remaining staff will be told and by whom.
 - How the departing employee will retrieve personal possessions.
 - Who will inform his or her customers, clients, etc.
- ☐ Rehearse the termination meeting before hand.
- ☐ If the immediate supervisor may be at risk, consider having the employee terminated by someone else within the organization. (This should be the exception, but may be necessary in certain circumstances).
- ☐ Bring in an experienced outplacement consultant to assist with the termination planning and process. Provide the best outplacement you can afford and begin it as soon as possible.
- ☐ Arrange the meeting room so that the employer is closest to the door in case the termination becomes violent and a quick exit is necessary.
- ☐ Put security staff on notice.
- ☐ Arrange to have electronic access to company computer systems terminated during the termination meeting.
- ☐ Keep the actual meeting brief (10 or 15 minutes) and to the point.

- ☐ Allow the employee to save face and maintain self-esteem. Explain the decision, but acknowledge their strengths and contributions.
- ☐ Keep to a prepared script. **DO NOT** get drawn into a lengthy discussion or explanation regarding the reasons for the decision.
- ☐ If possible, continue Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) during severance.
- ☐ Explain the severance package in writing.
- ☐ Give the employee the opportunity to ask questions and express feelings.
- ☐ Have the outplacement consultant on-site at the time of the termination to review the severance package, explain the services available and initiate contact.
- ☐ Collect keys or other access devices to prevent unauthorized access, copying or "lost" security cards.
- ☐ Listen for fall-out. Take any threats seriously. Refer to "Threats Against Employees" for additional advice.
- ☐ Identify the departing employee's principal company contact following departure.
- ☐ Answer follow-up questions promptly and thoroughly.
- ☐ Except in high-security areas, let the employee leave the building on their own and return after hours under supervision to retrieve their personal effects.



DO NOT embarrass or put down the departing employee. Explain the reasons for termination in as unbiased and neutral a manner as possible.

DO NOT escort anyone from the building with armed guards.

DO NOT make the departing employee pack their belongings in front of colleagues.

DO NOT agree to another meeting.

DO NOT terminate someone without advance planning on how to manage the situation.

Threats Against Employees

Take all threats seriously. Depending on your situation, some or all of the following measures may be appropriate.

- ☐ If a threat has been received by a co-worker, immediately inform the targeted employee about the threat.
- ☐ Remind all employees not to give out personal information about other staff.
- ☐ Assist with safe transportation:
 - have someone escort the employee to their vehicle,
 - provide the employee with an employer vehicle, or
 - arrange for someone to drive the employee to and from work.
- ☐ Ensure the employee informs his or her children's school and neighbours of any threats involving the children.
- ☐ Make all staff in the office or area aware of the threats so that team supports can be put in place. Provide a description of the person who issued the threat.
- ☐ If the threat was made by a client,
 - transfer the client's file to another location and formally advise the client that he or she is not to return to your office or contact the threatened employee again.
 - re-assign the employee to another case or assignment to avoid further contact with the threatening client.
 - re-assign the employee to another office or geographic area, either permanently or until the threat is reduced.
- ☐ Support the employee if he or she is laying police charges and/or applying for a restraining order.
- ☐ Provide debriefing and/or counselling to the employee and his or her family, if necessary.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Mobbing

Harassment

Harassment includes any behaviour that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates, annoys, alarms or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be unwelcome. This includes words, gestures, intimidation, bullying, or other inappropriate activities.

Note: The term “harassment” can be used generally to describe inappropriate behaviours or it may be used in a legal sense as defined by applicable legislation, for example, Human Rights Codes (e.g. sexual or racial harassment) or the Criminal Code (e.g. criminal harassment).

Bullying

Workplace bullying is the persistent mistreatment of one or more employees, sometimes by an employee in a position of influence or authority, who, intentionally or unintentionally, subjects others to behaviour that humiliates, demoralizes or otherwise undermines the victim’s credibility, effectiveness and personal wellbeing.

Mobbing

Mobbing is also characterized by behaviour that undermines the credibility or personal wellbeing of an employee. However, in the case of mobbing, these actions are carried out by a group, usually a group of co-workers. Like bullying, mobbing serves to exclude, punish and otherwise humiliate the intended victim.

Harassment, bullying and mobbing often include patterns of behaviour that are displayed over a period of time. Because of this and the sometimes subtle nature of the offensive behaviour, harassment, bullying and mobbing can be difficult to recognize.

In the workplace, objective comments that are intended to provide constructive feedback are not usually considered harassment or bullying. These comments are intended to assist the employee with their work.

If you are not sure if an action or statement should be considered harassment or bullying, you can use the "reasonable person" test, i.e. "Would most people consider the action unacceptable?"

The following are not checklists, but are meant to provide you with some examples of behaviour that may suggest harassment, bullying or mobbing.

Warning Signs of Harassment, Bullying or Mobbing

Behaviours associated with harassment, bullying and mobbing can overlap. *The only major difference is whether they originate from one person (bullying, harassment) or several (mobbing.)*

- Unjust criticism and trivial fault-finding
- Belittling a person's opinions
- Intimidation
- Any form of communication (words, gestures, e-mails, and/or actions) that embarrasses or humiliates the person privately or publicly
- Unpredictable, explosive outbursts that threaten or intimidate
- Rude, abusive and/or sexist language
- Fostering rumours, gossip and innuendos about an individual
- Practical jokes which repeatedly target a single person
- Tampering with someone's personal belongings or work equipment
- Intentionally and repeatedly isolating someone (heckling, failure to listen, refusal to associate, denying information and assistance when needed)
- Making jokes that are 'obviously offensive' by spoken word or e-mail
- Taking credit for another's ideas or successes
- Undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work

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- Physically abusing or threatening abuse
 - Intrusive contact outside of working hours (phone calls, e-mails)
 - Intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking

Additional Warning Signs of a Supervisor or Manager Who May be Bullying

- Setting unrealistic goals or deadlines
- Ignoring requests, overruling authority or denying access to information necessary to complete a task
- Blocking applications for training, leave or promotion
- Removing areas of responsibilities without cause
- Unwarranted (or undeserved) punishment
- Constantly changing work guidelines
- Putting the target in a position of “underwork” – creating a feeling of uselessness

If you realize you might be the bully or harasser:

- Be aware of your own behaviour and its impact on others.
- Use your power/privilege carefully if you are in a position of authority.
- Apologize and modify your behaviour for next time.
- Practice stress management techniques, especially during times of crisis or stress.
- Enroll in educational programs designed to improve interpersonal communication and people management skills, for example positive performance management or anger management.
- Practice patience – give people the benefit of the doubt – ask questions instead of making assumptions.
- Keep the lines of communication open so issues can be addressed and resolved quickly.

As an organization

- Recognize that harassment, bullying and mobbing are unacceptable behaviours in any circumstance.
- Encourage everyone at the workplace to act towards others in a respectful and professional manner.
- Actively create a workplace culture and environment where harassment, bullying and mobbing are not welcome – communicate anti-bullying / anti-harassment statements; use clear procedures and processes that reduce potential for abuse of power.
- Educate everyone that harassment and bullying are serious matters.
- Educate everyone about what is considered harassment or bullying, and whom they can go to for help.
- Provide opportunities for team building, and developing interpersonal skills such as effective communication, problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Have a workplace violence prevention policy in place that includes a reporting system.
- Try to work out solutions before situations get serious or "out of control".
- Treat all complaints seriously, and deal with complaints promptly and confidentially.
- Train supervisors and managers in how to deal with complaints and potential situations. Encourage them to address situations promptly whether or not a formal complaint has been filed.
- Have an impartial third party help with the resolution, if necessary.
- DO NOT ignore any potential problems.
- DO NOT delay resolution. Act as soon as possible.

Internet Harassment

Internet harassment, also referred to as “Cyberbullying”, is the use of the Internet (the World Wide Web or e-mail) to repeatedly harass threaten or maliciously embarrass. It can involve behaviours such as:

- Sending unsolicited and/or threatening e-mail.
- Encouraging others to send the victim unsolicited and/or threatening e-mail or to overwhelm the victim with e-mail messages.
- Sending viruses by e-mail (electronic sabotage).
- Spreading rumours.
- Making defamatory comments about the victim in public discussion areas.
- Sending negative messages directly to the victim.
- Impersonating the victim online by sending an inflammatory, controversial or enticing message which causes others to respond negatively to the victim.
- Harassing the victim during a live chat.
- Leaving abusive messages on Web site guest books.
- Sending the victim pornography or other graphic material that is knowingly offensive.
- Creating a Web page or writing an entry on a blog that depicts the victim in negative ways.

Prevention Tips:

- ☐ Use a gender neutral e-mail address if you have a choice.
- ☐ Make your e-mail password at least seven (7) characters long and ensure that it is a combination of letters and numbers. The best passwords don’t spell anything and don’t follow a logical pattern.
- ☐ Change your password regularly.

-
- ☐ Review your e-mail signature (the block of text that gets added automatically to the end of an outgoing message). It should provide enough information about you so that you can be identified, but not so much that you are providing your e-mail recipients with personal information.
 - ☐ Use encryption (e.g. PGP (Pretty Good Privacy)) for person-to-person e-mail to prevent someone from impersonating you or reading your e-mail. A "Frequently Asked Questions" document about PGP is available at <http://www.pgp.net/pgpnet/pgp-faq/>.
 - ☐ Watch for "red-flags," for example someone asking where you live or where you work.
 - ☐ Be very cautious about meeting online acquaintances in person. If you choose to meet, do so in a public place and take along a business associate.
 - ☐ Set up two e-mail accounts. One used for business correspondence and one that has another name for use in discussion groups, etc. Change or cancel your secondary account if you start receiving too much unwanted mail.
 - ☐ If you want to remain anonymous, DO NOT list your e-mail address on any Web pages or give your e-mail address when filling in forms on Web pages.
 - ☐ Use an anonymous browser to browse the Web. Web sites collect all sorts of information about visitors (e.g. what Web browser you used, your Internet Service Provider and potentially your e-mail address). Anonymous browsers offer varying degrees of security, some are free and some are not.
 - ☐ Discuss your safety and privacy with your Internet Service Provider. Seek their help and advice.

- Make sure your Internet Service Provider, discussion groups and chat networks have an Acceptable Use Policy (no harassment permitted) and that the policy is enforced by the administrator of the site.
- Discuss Internet privacy and safety with your organization's Internet technology specialist. Follow any policies or procedures your organization has in place for Internet communication.



DO NOT tell anyone your password.

DO NOT share personal information in e-mail – even e-mail addressed to a trusted individual.

DO NOT share personal information in public spaces anywhere online, nor give it to strangers, including in chat rooms.

DO NOT leave your computer logged in and unattended.

DO NOT use "out of office" facilities in your e-mail. If you don't need to, don't broadcast that you are on vacation or on work-related travel.

DO NOT attack or insult anyone while participating in discussion groups. If you disagree with the person, state your position objectively and factually.

Stalking Situations

- ☐ Establish a policy to provide support and assistance to stalked employees, for example security or human resources or EAP assistance.
- ☐ Record all pertinent information such as date and time of incidents, witnesses, anything that will help establish the identity of the stalker.
- ☐ Encourage the employee to keep a log detailing every incident of unwanted contact (phone calls, flowers, letters, visits). Include dates, times, names of witnesses.
- ☐ Alter the work pattern of the threatened employee, for example work hours, location of work and parking arrangements. Make the employee more difficult to locate.
- ☐ Change the victim's work telephone number.
- ☐ Provide the victim with voice mail and let voice mail screen all incoming calls.
- ☐ Obtain permission to give co-workers knowledge of the situation. Provide the name and a picture or description of the stalker to receptionists, security officers, and other relevant personnel.
- ☐ Encourage the victim to report the situation to the police and to obtain a restraining order, if appropriate.
- ☐ Give the employee time off if the threat is severe.
- ☐ Place silent alarms or buzzers at the employee's workstation.
- ☐ Provide the employee with a cell phone.
- ☐ Place a security camera near entrances to the employee's work area.
- ☐ Increase opportunities for natural surveillance of the employee's work area.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Domestic Violence (“Intimate Partner Abuse”)

Commonly referred to as domestic abuse or “intimate partner abuse”, this situation involves physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse by current or former partners in personal relationships. This form of victimization can spill into the workplace. It is not uncommon for victims of domestic abuse to try to conceal their mistreatment because of embarrassment or a fear of reprisal from their abusing partner.

Each situation is unique. It is therefore important to understand that no one behaviour in itself is confirmation of domestic abuse. Be alert to changes in customary patterns of behaviour.

Potential Signs of Domestic Abuse

- Excessive absences or lateness
- Frequent and unexplained bruises or injuries
- Inappropriate clothes that conceal (e.g. sunglasses worn inside, turtleneck worn in the summer)
- Noticeable change in the use of makeup (to cover up injuries)
- Lack of concentration and/or difficulty making decisions
- Sudden changes of address or reluctance to reveal current address
- Appearing apprehensive, anxious or tearful
- Appearing tired, run down and/or depressed
- Being the victim of vandalism or threats
- Excessive use of medications and alcohol
- Lack of access to money
- Frequent and disruptive phone calls, visits or faxes from their partner
- A sudden avoidance of social situations or withdrawal from co-workers

Organizations, unions, co-workers, managers and the victimized employee each have an important role in preventing and stopping domestic abuse.

If you are a victim of domestic abuse, remember...

- Nothing “justifies” abusive behaviour.
- Domestic abuse is against the law.
- Once a pattern of abuse has been established, it is very difficult to stop without outside help.
- Reach out for support through your union, manager, Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) counsellor, occupational health and safety specialist, or community agency. Only by taking action will the abuse stop.
- If in danger, make arrangements for alternate housing for you and your children.
- Obtain a restraining order that includes the workplace. Provide a copy to the police, your supervisor, security, and/or human resources.
- Provide a picture of the perpetrator for easy recognition at the workplace.
- Save any threatening e-mail or voice-mail messages. These can potentially be used for future legal action.
- Advise your manager and/or union representative. They can help.

Assisting Victims at Work

If you suspect, or if it is disclosed to you, that someone at work is being abused, consider taking the following actions:

As a concerned co-worker

- Approach the person with respect and genuine caring.
- Listen carefully, accept what the person tells you without judgement.

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- Be patient. Understand that people can only take action to leave an abusive situation when they are ready.
 - Find out if the person is safe.
 - If risk is imminent or in progress, call 911 and/or your company's security immediately.
 - Offer alternatives, not advice. Remember that you can't replace the professional counselling that is available through the EAP or from professionals in the community.
 - Provide the person with information on how to access your company's EAP, union counsellor, occupational health services or a community assistance program.

As a manager:

You can support employees who are victims of domestic violence in the following ways:

- Provide time off to go to court, seek shelter or connect with other resources.
- Provide leave(s) of absence if the threat is acute.
- Move their workstation away from public access, stairs, and/or elevators.
- Change their work schedule or offer alternative work assignments.
- Arrange for them to park close to the workplace, and if possible provide a security escort to their car or public transit.
- Provide a picture of the abuser to security personnel, pertinent managers and reception.
- Make changes to their paycheck delivery (direct deposit, hand delivered, etc.) to ensure they have access to funds.
- Have them identify an alternative contact person in the event that you are not able to reach him or her.

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- Offer referrals for safety planning at home.
 - Screen their calls by having someone else answer her/his phone, routing them through reception or security, changing the victim's phone number or installing caller ID.

Remember to always consult with the employee before taking action.

As an organization or union

- Provide workplace awareness sessions on domestic violence.
- Make information available on resources from both inside and outside the workplace.
- Develop policies and procedures that create supportive work environments.

5. Work Related Travel

Walking Safety

- ☐ Plan your route and carry a map. Know exactly where you are going.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the area.
- ☐ Take a taxicab or get a ride with a friend if your place of business is in an unsafe area, or after dark.
- ☐ Wear comfortable, flat shoes, such as running shoes.
- ☐ Scan your route. Be observant and aware of your surroundings.
- ☐ Walk with confidence.
- ☐ Keep your head up, look around and directly at people to assess them, but do not stare.
- ☐ Stay on well-lit streets, in the centre of the sidewalk, away from hiding spots such as bushes, doorways, alleys, and parked cars. Cross the road if necessary.
- ☐ If you **know** you are being followed:
 - Walk directly and quickly, without running or looking back, to a safe place.
 - DO NOT go to your car or your house.
 - Call 9-1-1.
- ☐ If someone approaches you, say “no thank you” in a strong voice and keep moving.
- ☐ Walk around groups of people rather than through them.
- ☐ Use the main entrance of your place of business as much as possible. Avoid rear or secluded entrances.
- ☐ If you are using a stairwell, be sure it is well lit and that you can quickly exit to a safe place.
- ☐ Trust your instincts when you feel something is not right.



Be alert. DO NOT reduce your ability to be prepared.

X DO NOT act lost. Do not be obvious when using a map.

DO NOT reduce your ability to be prepared:

- DO NOT dig in your purse.
- DO NOT wear headphones.
- DO NOT carry heavy briefcases or luggage.

DO NOT carry any type of weapon, including pepper spray. Weapons can just as easily be used AGAINST you and are illegal in some jurisdictions.

- ☐ Secure packages by carrying them under your arm or with straps across your body.
- ☐ Carry a personal safety alarm:
 - on your key ring
 - pinned to your clothing
- ☐ Report any suspicious incidents to your employer or the police.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Driving Safety

- ☐ Keep your car in good repair.
- ☐ Keep your gas tank at least 1/2 full.
- ☐ Always check your tires.
- ☐ Before you drive away in a rented car:
 - Obtain advice from the rental agency regarding safe and unsafe routes.
 - Make sure the gas tank is full.
 - Make sure the tires are properly inflated.
 - Lock all doors.
- ☐ Plan your route and carry a map. Avoid dangerous areas.
- ☐ If you need to drive in unfamiliar areas, try not to drive alone.
- ☐ Do not pick up hitchhikers.
- ☐ Go to a service station or store to ask for directions if you get lost. **DO NOT** stop on the side of the road.
- ☐ Carry a cell phone and keep it handy. Program the phone to dial 9-1-1 or an emergency services number.
- ☐ Carry a personal safety alarm on your key chain. Use it to attract attention, if necessary.
- ☐ Always lock your car, even when you are in it.
- ☐ Use your vehicle's security system, if it has one.
- ☐ Drive away from anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable.
- ☐ Avoid eye contact with an aggressive driver.
- ☐ Stay cool. Do not react to provocation.
- ☐ Keep away from drivers behaving erratically.



DO NOT identify your keys with your car plate number, name or address.

DO NOT open your car window more than one inch to speak to someone approaching your car.

- If you suspect another car is following your car:
 - Note the licence plate number of the other car.
 - DO NOT go home or to your place of business.
 - Drive to a service, police, or fire station.
 - Stay in your car.
 - Honk the horn in short repeated blasts until someone helps you.
- If you think you have been intentionally bumped from behind:
 - DO NOT leave your vehicle.
 - Motion to the other driver to follow you to the nearest police station or open service station.
- If your car breaks down:
 - Put on your 4-way flashers.
 - Stay in the car with windows closed and doors locked.
 - Place a “help or call police” sign in the window.
 - DO NOT raise the hood of your car as it reduces your ability to see someone approaching the car.
 - Only open the window one inch to speak to anyone other than the police.
 - DO NOT accept unsolicited help. Ask the person to call the police or your towing service.
 - When help arrives, ask for identification.



Call Police. DO NOT accept unsolicited help.

- Make sure someone knows your plans, your route and your estimated arrival time.

Parking Lot Safety

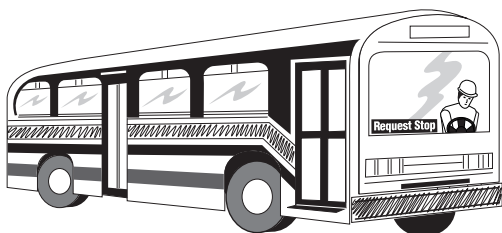
- ☐ Park near the building in a highly visible and well-lit area.
- ☐ Park near other vehicles.
- ☐ DO NOT use more than one parking space as it may anger another motorists.
- ☐ Avoid parking next to vans, pick-ups and other large vehicles.
- ☐ Use the main entrance. Avoid rear or secluded entrances and exits.
- ☐ Keep valuables, including purses, out of sight in your car.
- ☐ DO NOT hide a spare key in your car.
- ☐ Never leave a personal I.D. tag on your key ring. If you lose your keys or they are stolen, an I.D. tag can help a thief find you, your place of business or your house.
- ☐ Be prepared when you leave your place of business or your vehicle. Have access to:
 - keys to lock or unlock doors
 - the key to open your vehicle
 - a whistle or other personal alarm
- ☐ Position the correct key to open the door lock as you approach your vehicle.
- ☐ If someone is loitering near your vehicle, avoid them and walk to a safe place such as a lighted store, house or other building. Call the police.
- ☐ As you approach your vehicle, look to see if someone is hiding underneath it.
- ☐ Check in, and around, your vehicle before you get in.

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- ☐ Ensure all doors are locked and windows are up, once you are in your vehicle.
 - ☐ DO NOT walk to your vehicle alone, after dark or in a high-risk neighbourhood.
 - Walk to and from your car with another person or a security officer.
 - Provide your escort with a ride back to the main entrance.
 - ☐ If you must walk to your vehicle alone:
 - Have a co-worker watch you from a window.
 - Wave to him or her on the way to your vehicle.
 - If no one is available, fake it and pretend you are being watched and wave to an imaginary co-worker.
 - ☐ Scan the area for menacing individuals before you leave your vehicle or your place of business. Have a back-up plan if there is danger.
 - ☐ Report suspicious behaviour to the parking lot attendant, security or the police.
 - ☐ When walking to, or from, your vehicle:
 - Keep your head erect.
 - Be alert and scan your route.
 - Proceed directly and quickly.
 - ☐ Park near the attendant or exit if you use underground parking lots.
 - ☐ Carry a cell phone or be aware of the location of the nearest emergency phone.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

Public Transit Safety

- ☐ Avoid isolated or poorly lit bus stops.
- ☐ Carry an up-to-date schedule, in case you are delayed or miss your bus or train.
- ☐ Plan your route ahead of time.
- ☐ Plan your arrival time, so that you arrive just before the transit vehicle is due.
- ☐ Plan to have someone meet you at your destination.
- ☐ Late at night or early in the morning, stay near the agent on duty at a subway station until you hear the train coming, then walk to the platform.
- ☐ Have your pass or fare ready in your pocket. Do not open your wallet or purse.
- ☐ Sit near the driver if you are alone or it is late at night.
- ☐ Tell the driver immediately if someone bothers you or you are concerned for your safety.
- ☐ Alert the driver to any suspicious packages left unattended.
- ☐ Sit where you can see your upcoming stop as you arrive.
- ☐ Keep valuables out of sight.
- ☐ Use the “Request Stop” service available on some transit routes. This service allows riders to get off at locations on the route, other than regular stops.
- ☐ Get off at the next stop if you see suspicious or menacing individuals at your stop.
- ☐ Check to see if you are being followed when stepping off the bus.

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- ☐ If you know you are being followed:
 - Attempt to get back on the bus.
 - Walk directly and quickly, without running or looking back, to a safe place, such as a service station or store.
 - Call 9-1-1.
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____



Plan to have someone meet you at your destination.

Travel Safety

- ☐ Travel light and wear comfortable shoes that allow you to move quickly.
- ☐ Read or work while you travel, but remain aware of your surroundings. You look less vulnerable when you are busy.
- ☐ Use crowds as camouflage. Stand among a group when waiting for a taxi, bus or subway.
- ☐ Make arrangements to arrive before dark, whenever possible.
- ☐ Plan ahead, know your route or how you are going to get to where you are going, for example taxi, shuttle bus, rental car.
- ☐ Have your travel agent:
 - select hotels that take extra measures to ensure your security
 - recommend a safe taxi-cab company
 - tell you about the customs and culture if you are travelling to a foreign country; simple gestures can be considered rude or aggressive
- ☐ Keep some money in an outside pocket to avoid fumbling through your purse or wallet for tips and other expenses.
- ☐ Consider wearing a money belt.
- ☐ Keep a clear head; restrict or avoid drinking alcohol.
- ☐ Make sure your contacts at home know your schedule and have your telephone number.
- ☐ Call your home or office when you arrive at your destination to report that you have arrived safely.
- ☐ Leave a copy of your itinerary and proof of citizenship (e.g. Canadian birth certificate or certificate of Canadian citizenship) with a family member or friend who can be contacted in an emergency.



Do not give your travel plans to strangers.



DO NOT draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewellery.

DO NOT allow your travel plans to be given out to strangers.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Hotel Safety



- ☐ Make sure the hotel is in a safe neighbourhood.
- ☐ If you arrive in a bus or cab, stay with your luggage until it is brought into the hotel lobby.
- ☐ Keep a close eye on your luggage, purse, etc. when checking in.
- ☐ Make sure your hotel reservations are guaranteed if you are arriving late.
- ☐ Purchase a travel lock or an alarm or motion detector for hotel room doors.
- ☐ Request a room with a peephole, dead bolt and chain lock.
- ☐ Make sure your room does not have a connecting door to the next room.
- ☐ Keep your name private – give the check-in clerk a business card or only use your first initials.
- ☐ Leave instructions with the hotel not to give your room number or name out to anyone.
- ☐ Request a room change immediately if the hotel clerk accidentally announces your room number out loud.

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- ☐ Have any delivery you are expecting (e.g. takeout food, packages) delivered to the front desk or concierge.
 - ☐ Whenever possible, do not accept a hotel room on the ground floor that has doors and windows that open to the outside. Hotels with interior hallways tend to be safer.
 - ☐ Get a room close to the elevator on a floor with restricted public access.
 - ☐ Make sure your room is away from stairwells, fire stairs and exits.
 - ☐ Leave the lights on and the closet doors, bathroom door and shower curtain open if you are going out for the evening.
 - ☐ Immediately request a security check if you notice a suspicious change in your room when you return.
 - ☐ Close the door securely whenever you enter or exit your room. Use all of the locking devices provided.
 - ☐ Check that any sliding glass doors, windows and connection doors are locked.
 - ☐ When inside your room, use a door wedge when sleeping or in the shower.
 - ☐ If you find a lock not working, contact the front desk for immediate repairs or a room change.
 - ☐ If you are in a motel, try to get a room next to the office or the manager's unit and keep all windows locked.
 - ☐ For extra security in motels, avoid ground floor rooms off the parking lot. If you can't get a room on a higher level, take one facing the interior courtyard.
 - ☐ Use valet parking whenever possible. Self-park only in well-lit areas.
 - ☐ Use the main entrance when returning to your hotel late in the evening.

- ☐ Place all valuables in the hotel's safety deposit box.
- ☐ Use caution if someone calls you saying they are with the hotel and need to come to your room to repair something.
 - Call the front desk to confirm the information.
 - Ask to see identification when the person arrives at your room.
- ☐ Report any suspicious activity to the hotel management.



DO NOT needlessly display guest room keys in public or leave them where they can be stolen.

DO NOT answer the door without verifying who is there. If the person claims to be an employee, call the front desk to confirm his or her identity.

DO NOT enter the room if you suspect someone is in there, if you are being followed, or if someone is lingering near your door.

DO NOT invite strangers or acquaintances into your room. Arrange to meet in a public location, such as the hotel lobby or a restaurant.

DO NOT draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewelry.

Responding to Workplace Violence

1. Dealing with a Potentially Violent Person

Tips for Verbal Communication

*Tips for Non-verbal Communication and
Behaviour*

Tips for Problem Solving

2. Terminating a Negative Interaction

3. Responding to Harassment, Bullying or Mobbing

4. Responding to an Abusive Telephone Call

5. Responding to Internet Harassment

6. Making an Emergency Services Call

7. Responding to a Physical Attack

8. Responding to a Hostage Situation

9. Responding to a Robbery

10. Responding to a Bomb Threat

11. Lock-Down Procedures

12. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

1. Dealing with a Potentially Violent Person

Tips for Verbal Communication

- Focus your attention on the other person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- Look at the person when they are talking. DO NOT look away as if disinterested.
- DO NOT try to humour the person as this can be interpreted negatively.
- Remain calm and try to calm the other person. DO NOT allow the other person's anger to become your anger.
- Remain conscious of how you are delivering your words.
- Speak slowly, quietly and confidently.
- Speak simply. DO NOT rely on official language or complex terminology.
- Avoid communicating a lot of technical or complicated information when emotions are high.
- Listen carefully. DO NOT interrupt or offer unsolicited advice or criticism.
- Ask if you can take a few "brief notes" to help you retain the information. This conveys that you are interested
- Encourage the person to talk. Ask questions that require a lengthy explanation as this can defuse the intensity of the interaction. DO NOT tell the person to relax or calm down.
- Try to understand. Ask questions. Make statements like "Help me understand why you are upset."



- Once you think you understand, repeat it back to the person so they know you understand.
- Remain open-minded and objective.
- Use silence as a calming tool.
- Use delaying tactics to give the person time to calm down, for example offer a drink of water (in a disposable cup)
- Identify troublemakers and learn their names.
- Acknowledge the person's feelings. Indicate that you can see he or she is upset.
- Invite the person to make suggestions. DO NOT reject these suggestions. Tell the person you will consider them.
- Before you terminate the conversation, clearly and precisely summarize the issues discussed and the next steps you will take to resolve the problem.



DO NOT

Confront
Antagonize
Criticize

Challenge
Threaten
Belittle

Tips for Non-Verbal Behaviour and Communication

- Use calm body language - relaxed posture with hands unclenched, attentive expression.
- Arrange yourself so that your exit is not blocked.
- Position yourself at a right angle rather than directly in front of the other person.
- Give the person enough physical space...this varies by culture, but normally 2-4 feet is considered an adequate distance.
- Get on the other person's physical level. If they are seated try kneeling or bending over, rather than standing over them.



DO NOT pose in a challenging stance, such as:

- standing directly opposite someone
- putting your hands on your hips
- pointing your finger
- waving your arms
- crossing your arms

DO NOT glare or stare, which may be perceived as a challenge.

DO NOT make sudden movements which can be seen as threatening.

DO NOT fight. Walk or run away. Get assistance from security or police.

Tips for Problem Solving

- Try to put yourself in the person's shoes, so that you can better understand how to solve the problem.
- Ask for his or her recommendations.
- Repeat back to the person what you feel he or she is asking of you, to clarify what you are hearing.
- 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 honest. DO NOT make false statements or promises you cannot keep.
- Be familiar with your organization's complaint procedures and apply them fairly.
- Remain professional and take the person seriously. Be respectful.
- Ask for small, specific favours, such as asking the person to move to a quieter area.
- Break a problem or an issue down into smaller units and offer step-by-step solutions so that the person is not overwhelmed by the situation or issue.
- Be reassuring and point out choices.
- Try to keep the person's attention on the issue at hand.



DO NOT take sides or agree with distortions.

DO NOT reject the person's demands or position from the start.

DO NOT attempt to bargain with a threatening individual. If necessary terminate the interaction.

DO NOT make promises you cannot keep.

-
- Try to avoid escalating the situation.
 - Find ways to help the person save face.
 - Establish ground rules if unreasonable behaviour persists.
 - In a calm and non-threatening manner, clearly state that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
 - Calmly describe the consequences of violent or aggressive behaviour.
 - Suggest alternatives to violent behaviour.
 - Avoid issuing commands and making conditional statements.
 - If the nature of the situation involves punishment or sanctions (e.g. enforcement); delay the punitive action until you have back-up or the situation is safer.

If you feel threatened

Try to politely and calmly terminate the interaction in a non-threatening manner, if possible.

- Know what back-up and advice is available to assist you in handling a difficult individual.
- Get help.
 - Send for security or someone more senior.
 - Use a silent alarm.
 - Use a code word.
- If you threaten to call the police, call them.

2. Terminating a Negative Interaction

- Interrupt the conversation firmly but politely.
- Tell the person that you:
 - do not like the tone of the conversation
 - will not accept abusive treatment
 - will end the conversation if necessary
- Tell the person that you will ask him or her to leave the building, or that you will leave (if working off-site).
- If the behaviour persists, end the conversation.
- Ask the person to leave the building, or leave yourself.
- If the person does not agree to leave, remove yourself from the scene and inform your manager or supervisor immediately.
- DO NOT return to the meeting if you believe the person poses a physical threat.
- Advise other staff and have them leave the immediate area.
- Call security or your local police.
- File an incident report.

3. Responding to Harassment, Bullying or Mobbing

If you feel that you are being bullied, mobbed, discriminated against, victimized or subjected to any other form of harassment:

- Talk to someone you trust about your observations and experiences. This might include a trusted co-worker, occupational health professional or an Employee Assistance Counsellor.
- Firmly tell the harasser or bully that his or her behaviour is unacceptable and unwelcome. Ask him or her to stop.
- Keep a factual journal or diary of daily events.
Record:
 - The date, time and what happened in as much detail as possible
 - The names of witnesses
 - The outcome of the event

Remember, it is not just the character of the incidents, but the number, regularity and especially the pattern that reveal harassment.

- Keep copies of all letters, memos, e-mails, faxes, etc. received from the harasser or bully.
- When criticism or allegations are made, write to the harasser or bully and ask him or her to substantiate their claims in writing.
- Keep all memos and correspondence related to your work if the quality of your work is being challenged.
- Report the harassment, bullying or mobbing behaviour to the person identified in your Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, your manager or your human resources department.

If your concerns are minimized, proceed to the next level of management.

- Know your organization's violence prevention and harassment policies and follow the procedures outlined in those documents.
- File an incident report.
- Create a safer space for yourself at work. Refer to the topics in the rest of this guide and make a personal list of the steps you might take. For example, you could:
 - Reposition your desk so that you have a clearer view of people approaching you and can make a quick exit from your work area.
 - Work with your employer to identify areas with poor lighting or other security risks.
 - Ask for violence prevention training specific to your situation, for example handling cash, working with patients, or conflict resolution techniques.
- Build a support network – family, friends, supportive co-workers, support organizations and information centres.
- Take advantage of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).
- Understand, if you begin to question your own competence, that the problem is not yours.
- If your health is affected, keep a daily record of:
 - All physical and mental symptoms
 - All visits to your doctor or any other medical appointments
 - Any medication or treatment prescribed

X DO NOT blame yourself. Don't waste time or energy worrying about why it is you.

DO NOT retaliate. You may end up looking like the perpetrator and will most certainly cause confusion for those responsible for evaluating and responding to the situation.

DO NOT engage in workplace conversations that make you uncomfortable. Excuse yourself and walk away. If necessary, say "I'm not comfortable discussing this."

DO NOT agree or disagree with distorted statements.

DO NOT tolerate harassment in any form.

If you witness harassment, bullying or mobbing:

- Make sure the victim knows about your workplace violence prevention policy
- Stand next to, or speak up for, the person being harassed, bullied or mobbed.
- Ask the harasser or bully to stop.
- Offer support.
- File an incident report.

Refer to "Terminating a Negative Interaction", and "Prevention of Harassment, Bullying or Mobbing".

4. Responding to an Abusive Telephone Call

- Interrupt the conversation firmly, but politely.
- Advise the caller that you will end the call if the caller does not stop using abusive language.



If the abuse persists, end the call.

- If you have call display, note the number and/or person identified.
- Advise your manager or supervisor of the incident.
- If the caller calls back, interrupt the conversation firmly, but politely. Advise the caller that you will transfer the call to your manager or supervisor, if necessary.
- Remind the caller that you will not accept abusive treatment or language.
- Put the caller on hold and contact your manager or supervisor.
- Advise your manager or supervisor that the caller is on hold.

-
- Transfer the call to your manager or supervisor.
 - The manager or supervisor should take appropriate action to resolve any misunderstanding and reinforce with the caller that abusive language or behaviour toward employees will not be tolerated.

Be sure to note:

- the exact wording of the abuse or threat, if possible.
- any regional or ethnic accent, speech impediment, or distinctive voice characteristics.
- the caller's manner of speaking; for example is he or she angry or calm?
- the caller's knowledge of you or your organization or business activities.
- any background noises or any other identifiers that would assist in identifying the caller.

- Record the call or use a speaker phone, so that others can hear and help identify the caller.
- If you are unable to resolve the client's issue, be aware that the client may come to your office for a personal visit. Inform your co-workers and supervisor of the situation and record the telephone conversation in the client's file.
- Inform your telephone carrier and the police.
- Ask your telephone carrier if they provide "call trace" and/or "call display" services.
- File an incident report.

5. Responding to Internet Harassment

If someone is harassing you by e-mail:

- If the harasser is known to you, make it clear that you do not want him or her to contact you again.
- Once you have told a known harasser not to contact you again, or if you are receiving harassing e-mail from someone you do not know, block or filter messages from the harasser. Many e-mail programs have a filter feature that will automatically delete e-mails from a particular e-mail address or that contain offensive words.
- DO NOT reply to unsolicited, harassing or offensive e-mail if the harasser is not known to you. By responding, you confirm that your e-mail address is valid and active.
- DO NOT open attachments as they may contain viruses.
- Keep a log of any harassing activity.
- Save all offending communications for evidence, both electronically and in hard copy. DO NOT edit or alter them in anyway.
- Report e-mail or Web harassment to your supervisor and/or the manager responsible for your organization's Internet system, and, if appropriate, to the police.
- Using your name as keywords, conduct a Web search to find out if any information exists on you, so you are at least aware of what information is available.
- If the harasser is known to you and harassment continues after you have asked the person to stop, contact the harasser's Internet Service Provider (ISP).
 - Most ISP's have clear policies prohibiting the use of their services to abuse another person.
 - Often, an ISP can stop the conduct by direct contact with the harasser or by closing his or her account.
 - The ISP domain name is identified by the information after the @ (e.g. name@home.com). Most ISPs have an e-mail address such as postmaster@domain name that can be used for complaints.

If someone is harassing you publicly in a discussion group:

- Keep a log of any harassing activity.
- Save all offending communications for evidence, both electronically and in hard copy. DO NOT edit or alter them in anyway.
- Contact the group's administrator and provide evidence of the harassment. If they fail to respond, stop participating in the group, (i.e., have your e-mail address removed from the group's distribution list).

If someone is harassing you in a live chat situation:

- Log off or surf elsewhere. If the situation causes you to fear for your safety or that of others, contact your local law enforcement agency.
- Keep a log of any harassing activity.
- Save all offending communications for evidence, both electronically and in hard copy. DO NOT edit or alter them in anyway.
- Contact the group's administrator and provide evidence of the harassment. If they fail to respond, stop participating in the group.



DO NOT send or reply to e-mail when you are angry or upset. Wait until you are composed; you do not want to become perceived as the harasser.

DO NOT rush into a confrontation. You risk starting a "flame war" which can rapidly escalate.

DO NOT respond to flaming (provocation online).

DO NOT engage in any question and answer scenarios that make you feel uncomfortable.

6. Making an Emergency Services Call

Confirm with your local police department that the following procedures are appropriate:

- Avoid delay.
- Stay calm.
- Dial 9-1-1 or your emergency services number. Keep these numbers posted near your telephone.
- When asked by the operator, state the service you require; for example police, fire or ambulance.
- Let the operator control the conversation. They have standard questions for obtaining critical information from you in a timely and orderly manner.
- Clearly state your location and the location of the situation you are reporting using the street address, if you know it, or perhaps the business name.
- State briefly and clearly what you have observed or why you are calling.
- Give any further information the operator requests.
- If possible, without exposing yourself to danger, stay on the line until emergency services arrive, unless the operator specifically asks you to hang up.

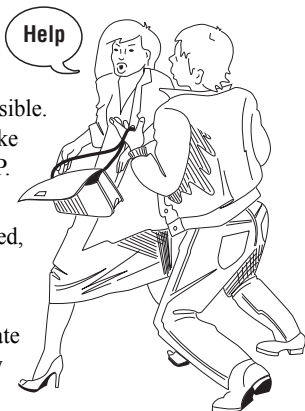
7. Responding to a Physical Attack

If you are attacked

- Make a scene, yell or scream as loud as possible. Try shouting words like STOP, FIRE, or HELP.

- If you are being pulled along or dragged, fall to the ground and roll.

- Blow a whistle, activate your personal security alarm or push the security alarm.



Shout for help.

- Give bystanders specific instructions to help you. Single someone out and send them for help, for example “You in the yellow shirt, call the police.”
- If someone grabs your purse, briefcase, deposit bag or other belongings, DO NOT resist. Throw the item to the ground several feet away from the thief and run in the opposite direction, yelling “help” or “fire.”
- DO NOT chase a thief.
- Run to the nearest safe place, a safe office, or an open store.
- Call security or the police immediately after the incident.
- If the attack does not warrant calling the police, inform your supervisor or the authorities at your workplace.
- File an incident report.

Be prepared

- Take a self defence course.

-
- Try to imagine yourself responding successfully to different types of attacks. Practice your responses.

8. Responding to a Hostage Situation

If you are taken hostage

- Remain calm.
- Speak to the captor only when spoken to.
- Avoid appearing hostile.
- If you must reach for something or move in any way, ask the captor for permission to do so.
- Stay clear of windows and doors. Drop to the floor if shots are fired and a rescue effort takes place.
- Call the police if they have not already been summoned.
- Administer first aid to any victims if necessary.
- Tell the police the direction the captor took to leave, the time of the incident, the appearance of the captor and any weapon or vehicle used.



DO NOT be a hero.

DO NOT talk down to the captor.

DO NOT stare or fix your gaze too long on the captor.

DO NOT delay or argue. Cooperate fully. Listen carefully and comply with all instructions as well as you can.

DO NOT resist by fighting or pulling a weapon. Do not jeopardize your own safety or that of others in the area.

DO NOT attempt to apprehend, impede or chase the captor if he or she leaves.

If a hostage situation occurs in your workplace

- Remove everyone who is not involved from the immediate area. Make sure no one can wander into the situation by mistake.
- Notify the police and the person in charge at your workplace.
- Write down any specific demands made by the hostage taker.
- Provide whatever assistance the police request.

9. Responding to a Robbery

- Remain calm. Be polite and cooperative.
- Handle the entire procedure as if you were making a sale to a customer. Keep the transaction short and smooth.
- Listen carefully to what the robber says, and obey him or her.
- Follow instructions exactly.
If the robber asks for \$10's and \$20's, hand over those bills.
- Ask the robber for clarification, if needed.
- Speak only in response to the robber.
DO NOT volunteer any information.
- Avoid surprises. If you must reach for something or move in any way, ask the robber for permission to do so.
- Tell the robbers if another employee is in the back room so they are not startled.
- Note any other characteristics of the robber such as hair colour, obvious scars, etc.
- Note the robber's exact height against the height strip beside the door as they exit.
- Activate the alarm system, but only after the robber has left the premises.
- Lock the door immediately after the robber has left.
- Call the police. Keep police numbers near the phone. Have the name and address of your location visible near the phone.
- Stay on the phone until the police tell you they have all of the information they need.



- X DO NOT** be a hero. Go along with the demands of the robber. Give him or her all the cash and merchandise he or she wants.
- DO NOT** stall the robber or appear to be stalling.
- DO NOT** stare or fix your gaze too long on the robber.
- DO NOT** resist by fighting or pulling a weapon. **DO NOT** jeopardize your own safety or that of other employees or members of the public.
- DO NOT** delay or argue. Cooperate fully with the robber.
- DO NOT** attempt to apprehend, impede or chase the robber.

After help has been summoned

- Administer first aid to any victims.
- Post someone by the door to allow police and emergency services access to the business.
- Protect the crime scene.
 - Ask any witnesses to wait for the police. Get their names and addresses.



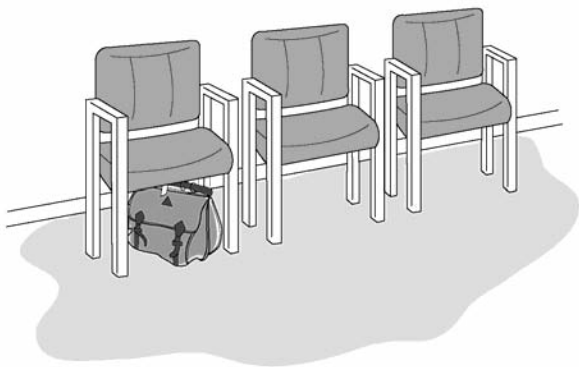
- **DO NOT** touch the evidence or touch any surfaces the robber may have touched.
- Record the robber's appearance, mannerisms, and any distinguishing characteristics on a description sheet.
- Tell the police the direction the robbers took to leave, the time of the robbery, the appearance the robber(s) and any weapon(s) or vehicle(s) used.

10. Responding to a Bomb Threat

Contact your local police department to ensure that the following procedures are the ones they want you to follow.

- When a bomb threat is received:
 - Listen carefully.
 - Be calm and courteous.
 - DO NOT interrupt the caller.
 - Obtain as much information as possible.
 - Initiate call trace action or make note of the information displayed on call display, if available.
 - Notify your responsible authority by pre-arranged signal while the caller is on the line.
 - Try to keep the caller on the phone by asking questions, or asking him or her to repeat the information.
- Record the following information:
 - date
 - time of call
 - duration of call
 - exact wording of the threat
- Questions to ask the caller:
 - What time will the bomb explode?
 - Where is the bomb?
 - What does it look like? (i.e. packaging)
 - Where are you calling from?
 - Why did you place the bomb?
 - What is your name?
- Note the following identifying features of the caller, if possible:
 - sex (male/female)
 - estimated age
 - accent, by nationality, if apparent
 - voice, by tone (loud, soft, raspy, deep)

-
- speech (impediments, slurred, slow, fast)
 - diction or language (excellent, good, poor)
 - manner (emotional, angry, calm, vulgar)
 - background noise (construction, music, trains)
 - Did the caller appear to be familiar with your organization or building?
 - Was the caller's voice familiar?
- Take all threats seriously.
 - Notify the police, corporate security and/or human resources.
 - During a bomb threat evacuation:
 - Search your immediate area.
 - DO NOT touch a suspicious object. Report it.
 - Unlock drawers, cabinets, etc. for the search crew and identify any strange or unfamiliar objects.
 - Take your personal property with you, for example briefcase, purse, lunch container.
 - Follow standard evacuation procedures.



DO NOT touch a suspicious package. Report it.

11. Lock-Down Procedures

“Lock-down” means that the people in a building take refuge in a secure location, for example in offices or classrooms. Lock-down procedures are usually initiated when it is unsafe to evacuate the building.

During lock-down

- Remain in your present location.
- Stay away from windows.
- Close blinds and doors.
- Lock doors, if possible.
- Take cover.
- Crouch or sit on the floor.
- Post the “all-secure” sign in a visible location.
- Wait for the all-clear signal, an evacuation signal or assisted evacuation.

Administrative Tips

- Identify who decides to lock-down, and an alternate.
- Determine who will notify personnel to lock-down and how the message will be communicated.
- Establish a code word or unique warning alarm to alert employees that a lock-down is taking place.
- Develop a sign or signal to indicate that personnel are secure in a locked-down area.
- Put locks, which can be locked or unlocked from the inside and outside, on doors in areas of high risk.
- Train all employees on lock-down procedures.
- Practice your lock-down plan.

12. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

During evacuation

- Remain calm.
- Follow instructions.
- Proceed quickly and directly to the designated meeting area.
- Report to attendance check.

Administrative Tips

- Determine who decides to evacuate, and an alternate.
- Determine who will notify personnel to evacuate and how the message will be communicated.
- Assign responsibility for ensuring that everyone has been evacuated, for example washroom, office, and hallway checks.
- Draw up evacuation routes and post evacuation routes in prominent areas.
- Identify specific precautions which must be followed before everyone evacuates the building.
 - Do cash, valuables, confidential materials need to be locked away?
 - Do employees with disabilities need assistance?
 - Does any equipment need to be shut off?
- Determine where everyone will meet once they have vacated the building.
- Establish procedures for taking attendance of all personnel.
- Train all employees on evacuation procedures.
- Practice your evacuation plan.



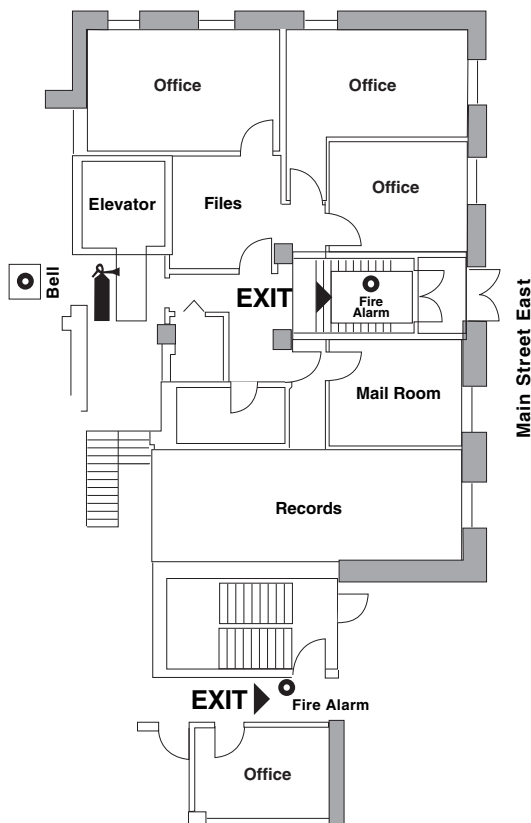
Fire Bell



Fire Alarm



Fire Extinguisher



Know your building evacuation routes.

Notes

Conclusions

Is your organization prepared?

**Common mistakes made in dealing
with violence issues**

Is your organization prepared?

Do you have a violence prevention policy which identifies the problem and outlines your general approach to dealing with it?

Did you conduct a comprehensive hazard assessment of your workplace?

Have you developed a violence prevention program which incorporates a secure workplace design, prudent administrative practices and safe work practices?

Have you set up a trustworthy, confidential reporting system and investigation procedures for all violent or potentially violent incidents?

Has your organization clearly outlined and assigned responsibilities to management and employees?

Do you have a comprehensive and easy to remember critical incident management plan?

Have you established victim support services?

Have managers and employees been trained to recognize, prevent and respond to violent or potentially violent situations?

Do you regularly review all of the above to ensure they reflect and respond to the current status of your workplace?

Common mistakes made in dealing with violence issues

Believing that the organization is immune from violence.

Not taking threats seriously.

Not documenting threats.

Ignoring warning signs.

Not providing appropriate counselling.

Not following disciplinary procedures.

Not enforcing the violence prevention policy.

Section VI

Occupational Health and Safety Legislation

1. Canada

2. United States

1. Canada

General Outline

The purpose of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) legislation is to protect you, the employee, against hazards on the job. It outlines the general rights and responsibilities of the employer, the supervisor and the employee.

The law makes both you and your employer jointly responsible for workplace health and safety legislation.

What does the OH&S legislation say?

Each of the provinces and the federal government have their own OH&S legislation. The details of the OH&S legislation vary slightly from one jurisdiction to another but the basic elements are the same.

Most Canadian jurisdictions have a *general duty provision* in their OH&S legislation which requires employers to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of employees.

New legislation, commonly known as Bill C-45, was proclaimed into force on March 31, 2004. Bill C-45 imposes a legal duty on employers and those who direct work to take reasonable measures to protect employee and public safety. If this duty is wantonly or recklessly disregarded and bodily harm or death results, an “organization” could be charged with criminal negligence.

For further details refer to the Justice Canada website at <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/index.html>

1. Government's Responsibilities

- to enforce occupational health and safety legislation to conduct workplace inspections
- to disseminate information
- to promote training, education and research

2. Employee Rights and Responsibilities

Employee Rights:

- to refuse unsafe work
- to participate in workplace health and safety activities through the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) or an employee health and safety representative
- to know actual and potential dangers in the workplace

Employee Responsibilities:

- to work in compliance with the OH&S act and regulations
- to use personal protective equipment and clothing as directed by the employer
- to report workplace hazards and dangers

3. Supervisor's Responsibilities

- to ensure that employees use prescribed protective equipment
- to advise employees of potential and actual hazards
- to take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances for the protection of employees

4. Employer's Responsibilities

- to establish and maintain a joint health and safety committee, or cause employees to select at least one health and safety representative
- to take every reasonable precaution to ensure the workplace is safe
- to inform employees about any potential hazards and provide training to work safely
- to provide personal protective equipment and ensure workers know how to use the equipment safely and properly

-
- to immediately report all critical injuries to the government department responsible for OH&S
 - to train all employees on how to safely use, handle, store and dispose of hazardous substances and handle emergencies

5. Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC)

- must be composed of management and employee representatives
- at least half the members of the committee must be employee representatives
- must meet at least once every 3 months; 1 month in some jurisdictions
- must be co-chaired by one management chairperson and one employee chairperson
- employee representatives are elected or selected by the employees or their union

6. Role of the Joint Health and Safety Committee

- to act as an advisory body
- to identify hazards and obtain information
- to recommend corrective actions
- to assist in resolving work refusal cases
- to participate in accident investigations and workplace inspections

7. Work Refusals

You can refuse work if you have reason to believe that the situation is unsafe to either yourself or your co-workers.

- You must report to your supervisor that you are refusing to work and state why you believe the situation is unsafe.
- You, your supervisor, and a JHSC member or employee representative will investigate.

-
- You return to work if the problem is resolved.
 - If the problem is not resolved, a government health and safety representative is called.
 - Your supervisor may assign you reasonable alternative work.
 - The inspector will investigate the situation and give a decision.

8. Work Stoppage

Work stoppage legislation applies to Ontario only. Certified members of the Health and Safety Committee may direct the employer to stop work if all of the following three conditions exist:

- Health and safety legislation is being violated.
- The violation poses a danger or a hazard to employees.
- Any delay in controlling the danger or hazard may seriously endanger an employee.

Ask your Health and Safety Committee for detailed procedures for work stoppage.

9. Violence Legislation

Many Canadian jurisdictions have specific OH&S violence prevention legislation. References to this legislation are provided below.

In general, the legislation on workplace violence and harassment prevention requires employers to:

- conduct a workplace violence risk assessment
- establish a workplace violence and/or harassment prevention policy

If the workplace is at risk of violence, the employer must:

- establish work practices and procedures to eliminate or minimize risk

-
- establish procedures for reporting, investigating, and recording incidents of violence
 - provide information and training to employees

In addition, every Canadian jurisdiction has a general duty provision in its OH&S legislation. This provision includes protecting employees from a known risk, which may include the risk of workplace violence.

Some jurisdictions also have “working alone” legislation, which may apply to situations of workplace violence. In general, this legislation requires that means be established to check the well-being of the employee and/or for the employee to obtain emergency assistance while working alone.

All jurisdictions also have Human Rights Acts or Codes. Some forms of violence and harassment may be covered by this legislation.

In all cases, contact your local jurisdiction for specific advice.

Canadian Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Legislation

Canada (Federal)

Canada Labour Code, Part II (R.S.C. 1985, c. L-2).
Section 125(1), subsection (z.16).

Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (SOR/86-304). Part XX, Violence Prevention in the Work Place.

Canada Labour Code, Part III (R.S.C. 1985, c. L-2).
Division XV.1, Sexual Harassment.

Alberta

Occupational Health and Safety Act (R.S.A. 2000, c. O-2)

Occupational Health and Safety Code (2009).
Part 27, Violence.

British Columbia

Workers Compensation Act (R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 492)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (B.C.
Reg. 296/97). Sections 4.24-4.26, Workplace
Conduct. Sections 4.27-4.31, Violence in the
Workplace.

Manitoba

Workplace Safety and Health Act (R.S.M. 1987,
c. W210). Section 18, subsection (bb).
Workplace Safety and Health Regulation
(Man. Reg. 217/2006). Part 10, Harassment.
Part 11, Violence in the Workplace.

New Brunswick

Newfoundland and Labrador

Occupational Health and Safety Act (R.S.N.L.
1990, c. O-3)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2009
(N.L.R. 70/09). Sections 22-24.

Northwest Territories

Nova Scotia

Occupational Health and Safety Act (S.N.S. 1996, c. 7)
Violence in the Workplace Regulations (N.S. Reg
209/2007)

Nunavut

Ontario

Occupational Health and Safety Act (R.S.O. 1990,
c. O.1). Part III.0.1, Violence and Harassment.

Prince Edward Island

Employment Standards Act (R.S.P.E.I. 1988, c. E-6.2). Section 24, Sexual Harassment.

Occupational Health and Safety Act (R.S.P.E.I. 1988, c. O-1.01)

Occupational Health and Safety Act General Regulations (EC180/87). Part 52, Violence in the Workplace.

Quebec

Act respecting Labour Standards (R.S.Q., c. N-1.1). Division V.2, Psychological Harassment.

Saskatchewan

Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (S.S. 1993, c. O-1.1). Section 14.

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996 (R.R.S. c. O-1, r. 1). Section 36, Harassment. Section 37, Violence.

Yukon

2. United States

General Outline

In the United States (US) the Occupational Safety and Health Act is popularly known as OSHAct. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) is responsible for administering the OSHAct.

The OSHAct does not cover the following four categories of people:

- self-employed persons
- farms which employ only immediate family members of the farm employer
- employees covered by other legislation
- state and local government employees

OSHA regulations are published in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations as:

- 29 CFR Part 1910 - Occupational Safety and Health Standards
- 29 CFR Part 1926 - Construction Standards

These standards define exposure limits, exposure monitoring methods, medical surveillance and protective measures.

Duties of Employers

The OSHAct sets out two main duties for employers:

- Employers must provide a workplace which is free from hazards that are known to cause or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.
- Employers must comply with occupational safety and health standards under the Act.

Duties of Employees

Employees must comply with occupational safety and health standards, rules, regulations and orders which are applicable to their own conduct and actions.

Key Provisions

Some of the key provisions of the OSHAct are to:

- assure, insofar as possible, that every employee has safe and healthy working conditions
- require employers to maintain accurate records of exposures to potentially toxic materials or harmful physical agents and inform employees of the monitoring results
- provide for employee walk-around or interview of employees during the inspection process
- provide procedures for investigating alleged violations, at the request of any employee or employee representative issuing citations and assessing monetary penalties against the employer

US Violence Legislation

The federal OSHA *General Duty Clause* includes recognized threats of violence.

OSHA has published guidelines to assist employers in combating violence in the health care industry and for the night retail industry. Implementation of these guidelines by employers is voluntary.

Certain states have enacted specific legislation to combat workplace violence, for example:

California enacted specific legislation (S.B. 198) that requires businesses to have workplace injury prevention plans. This legislation requires:

- a workplace security hazard assessment
- assault reporting and investigation
- hazard correction
- employee training
- an emergency action plan

Under the California Workplace Violence Safety Act, employers may seek a temporary restraining order or injunction against anyone who poses a threat to the workplace. California also has a specific law to combat workplace violence in hospitals.

The *Washington* Industrial Safety and Health Act has specific regulations called “Late Night Retail Workers Crime Prevention.” These regulations require implementation of:

- robbery and crime prevention training
- specific measures aimed at making the establishment less attractive to robbers

Florida also has established retail violence legislation called the “Convenience Business Security Act.”

New York State has enacted legislation creating a new Section 27-b of State Labor Law that requires public

employers (other than schools covered under the school safety plan requirements of the education law) to perform a workplace evaluation or risk evaluation at each worksite and to develop and implement programs to prevent and minimize workplace violence caused by assaults and homicides.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive. Other states may have proposed or enacted specific violence legislation. Contact the regulators in your jurisdiction for specific advice.

General Violence Legislation

Most North American jurisdictions have legislation on stalking, threats, harassment and physical assault. Contact your local regulatory authorities to find out more about the specific laws applicable to violence in your jurisdiction.

Notes

[illegible]

Information Sources

- 1. Canadian Government Departments with Responsibility for Occupational Health and Safety**
- 2. United States Federal Safety and Health Agencies**

1. Canadian Government Departments Responsible for Occupational Health and Safety

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)

Inquiries & Client Services
(free answers to your OH&S questions)
135 Hunter Street East
Hamilton, ON L8N 1M5
Phone: 905-570-8094
(8:30 AM to 5:00 PM EST Time)
Toll-free: 1-800-668-4284 (Canada and US only)
Fax: 905-572-4500
E-mail: clientservices@ccohs.ca
OSH Answers Web Site: www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers
Web Site: www.ccohs.ca

General Contact
Phone: 905-572-2981
Fax: 905-572-2206

Federal Jurisdiction

Workplace Health and Safety
Human Resources and Social Development Canada
1-800-641-4049
Ottawa ON K1A 0J2

Web Site: www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/labour/index.shtml

Federal Labour Program:

Web Site: [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/labour/
contact_us/contact_us.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/labour/contact_us/contact_us.shtml)

Provincial Jurisdictions

Alberta

Worksafe Alberta Alberta Employment and Immigration

10030-107 Street

Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4

(Edmonton and surrounding area)

Phone: (780) 415-8690

Toll-free in Alberta: 1-866-415-8690

Fax: (780) 422-3730

E-mail: whs@gov.ab.ca

Web Site: <http://employment.alberta.ca/SFW/53.html>

British Columbia

WorkSafeBC (Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia)

6951 Westminster Highway (Richmond, BC)

PO Box 5350 Stn Terminal

Vancouver, BC V6B 5L5

Workplace Safety and Health Inquiries

Phone: (604) 276-3100

Toll-free in B.C.: 1-888-621-7233 (SAFE)

Fax: (604) 244-6490

Emergency and Accident Reporting

Toll-free in B.C.: 1-888-621-7233 (SAFE)

After hours: 1-866-922-4357 (WCB-HELP)

Web Site: www.worksafebc.com

Manitoba

Workplace Safety and Health Division Manitoba Labour and Immigration

200-401 York Avenue

Winnipeg, MB R3C 0P8

General Inquiries: (204) 945-3446

Toll free in Manitoba: 1-800-282-8069

After hours: (204) 945-0581

Fax: (204) 945-4556

E-mail: wshcompl@gov.mb.ca

Web Site: www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/

New Brunswick

Worksafe New Brunswick

1 Portland Street
PO Box 160
Saint John, NB E2L 3X9
Phone: (506) 632-2200
Toll free: 1-800-222-9775
Fax: (506) 642-0718
E-mail: prevention@whscc.nb.ca
Web Site: www.worksafenb.ca/

Newfoundland and Labrador

Occupational Health and Safety Branch Department of Government Services

15 Dundee Avenue
Mount Pearl, NL A1N 4R6
General Inquiries: (709) 729-2706
Toll-free in NL: 1-800-563-5471
Fax: (709) 729-3445
Serious Workplace Accident Reports
Phone: (709) 729-4444 (24 Hours)
Web Site: www.gs.gov.nl.ca/ohs/

Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

5022 49th St., 5th Floor
Centre Square Tower Box 888
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2R3
General Inquiries: (867) 920-3888
Toll free: 1-800-661-0792
Fax: (867) 873-4596
Toll Free Fax: 1-866-277-3677
E-mail: yellowknife@wcb.nt.ca
Web Site: www.wcb.nt.ca/

Iqaluit

PO Box 669
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
Phone: (867) 979-8500
Fax: (867) 979-8501
Toll-free: 1-877-404-4407
Toll Free Fax: 1-866-979-8501
E-mail: iqaluit@wcb.nt.ca
Website: www.wcb.nt.ca

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Department of Labour & Workforce Development

5151 Terminal Rd., 6th Floor
PO Box 697
Halifax, NS B3J 2T8
General Inquiries: (902) 424-5400
Toll free in NS: 1-800-952-2687
Fax: (902) 424-5640
E-mail: sampsons@gov.ns.ca
Web Site: www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety/

Ontario

Ministry of Labour Occupational Health and Safety

505 University Avenue, 19th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1T7
416-326-3835
Fax 416-326-7761
1-800-268-8013 (province-wide)
E-mail: webohs@mol.gov.on.ca
Web Site: www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/

Prince Edward Island

Workers' Compensation Board of PEI

Occupational Health and Safety

PO Box 757, 14 Weymouth Street

Charlottetown, PE C1A 7L7

General Inquiries: (902) 368-5680

Toll-free (in Atlantic Canada): 1-800-237-5049

Occupational Health & Safety

24 Hr Emergency Tel: (902) 628-7513

Fax: (902) 368-5705

Web Site: www.wcb.pe.ca

Québec

Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail du Québec (CSST) (Occupational Health & Safety Commission)

1199, rue de Bleury

C.P. 6056, Succursale «centre-ville»

Montréal QC H3C 4E1

Tel: 514-906-3780/514 906-3061, poste 2214

1-866-302-2778

Fax: 514-906-3781/514 906-3016

www.csst.qc.ca

(514) 906-2911 Urgence 24 h – Services de
prévention-inspection

Web Site: <http://www.csst.qc.ca/portail/fr/>

Saskatchewan

Ministry of Advance Education, Employment and Labour

400 - 1870 Albert Street

Regina, SK S4P 4W1

Phone: (306) 787-4496

Toll-free in SK: 1-800-567-7233

Fax: (306) 787-2208

Web Site: www.labour.gov.sk.ca/ohs

Yukon Territory

Yukon Workers' Compensation, Health and Safety Board Occupational Health and Safety Branch

401 Strickland Street

Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5N8

General Inquiries: (867) 667-5645

24-hour Emergency Line for Reporting Serious

Workplace Accidents and Injuries: (867) 667-5450

Toll free across Canada: 1-800-661-0443

Fax: (867) 393-6279

E-mail: worksafe@gov.yk.ca

Web Site: <http://wcb.yk.ca/Default.aspx>

***For an up-to-date listing of information
sources visit:***

<http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/information/govt.html>

2. US Federal Safety and Health Agencies

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW,
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 272-0167
Web Site: www.epa.gov

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Education and Information Division (EID)
4676 Columbia Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45226
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
Toll Free: 1-800-232-4536
Outside the US: (513) 533-8328
Fax: 1-513-533-8347
E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov
Web Site: www.cdc.gov/NIOSH/

U.S. Department of Labor-(OSHA)

1099 Winterson Road, Suite 140
Linthicum, Maryland 21090
Phone: (410) 865-2055/2056
Fax: (410) 865-2068
Emergency reporting or if you have workplace safety and health related questions
Toll Free: 1-800-321-OSHA (6742)
Web Site: www.osha.gov

Section VIII

Key Sources Used to Prepare this Publication

Key Sources Used to Prepare this Publication

Guidelines for the Safety of Staff from the Threat of Armed Robbery. Wellington, N.Z.: N.Z. Department of Labour, 1995

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Health Services Advisory Committee. Violence to staff in the health services. Sheffield, U.K.: Health and Safety Commission, 1987

Harrison, R., ed. Violence in the workplace. (Occupational Medicine: State of the Art Reviews: Vol. 11, no. 2). Philadelphia: Hanley & Belfus Inc., 1996

Minor, M. Preventing Workplace Violence: Providing a Safe Work Environment. Menlo Park, Calif.: Crisp Publications, 1995

Kinney, J.A. Violence at Work: How to make your company safer for employees and customers. Toronto: Prentice Hall, 1995

Poyner, B., et al. Violence to staff : A basis for assessment and prevention. Sheffield, U.K.: Health and Safety Executive, 1986

Take Care: How to develop and implement a workplace violence prevention program : A guide for small business. Vancouver, B.C.: Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia, 1995

Ministry of Women's Equality. Keeping Women at Work Safe. Victoria, B.C.: Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, n.d.

Surviving the Workplace Jungle: Workbook/Video Guide, Appendices and Facilitator's Guide. Victoria, B.C.: SWJ Productions Ltd., 1995

Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers. Washington, D.C. : U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 1996

Katula, S. Domestic violence in the workplace - part II - employers' response. AAOHN Journal. Vol. 54, no. 8 (Aug. 2006). p. 341-344

Domestic violence prevention: a workplace initiative. Resource guide for employers. Manitoba Women's Directorate, n.d.

Donna Denham and Joan Gillespie, Wife abuse: a workplace issue. A guide for change. Family Violence Program, Canadian Council on Social Development, 1992

Notes

[illegible]

Appendices

- 1. Sample hazard assessment questionnaire**
- 2. Sample inspection form**
- 3. Sample reporting form**

Sample Hazard Assessment Questionnaire

- 1) Have you experienced verbal abuse while an employee of this company? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, did you report the incident(s)? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, did you report the incident(s)
☐ orally? ☐ in writing?

What was the relationship of the abuser to you?

- ☐ co-worker ☐ client/customer
☐ member of the public ☐ other (please specify)
-

- 2) Have you experienced written abuse while an employee of this company? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, did you report the incident(s)? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, did you report the incident(s)
☐ orally? ☐ in writing?

What was the relationship of the abuser to you?

- ☐ co-worker ☐ client/customer
☐ member of the public ☐ other (please specify)
-

- 3) Have you experienced a threat of physical violence while an employee of this company? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, did you report the incident(s)? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, did you report the incident(s)
☐ orally? ☐ in writing?

What was the relationship of the harasser to you?

- ☐ co-worker ☐ client/customer
☐ member of the public ☐ other (please specify)
-

Sample Hazard Assessment Questionnaire Continued

- 4) Have you experienced a physical assault or attack while an employee of this company? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, did you report the incident(s)? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, did you report the incident(s)
☐ **orally?** ☐ **in writing?**

What was the relationship of the assailant to you?
☐ **co-worker** ☐ **client/customer**
☐ **member of the public** ☐ **other (please specify)**

- 5) Do you ever:
work alone or with a small number
of co-workers? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

work in a community-based setting? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

work late at night or early in the morning? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

- 6) Are you concerned about violence
on the job? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

What is the source of your concern?

Do you believe that such a possibility represents a
☐ **high risk** ☐ **medium risk** ☐ **low risk?**

Sample Inspection Form

Location _____ Building _____

Floor _____ Section _____

Date _____ Time _____

Name (optional) _____

Parking Lot

Are the entrances and exits well marked? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is the lot appropriately signed with security reminders ("lock your car", "security patrolled") ☐ yes ☐ no

Is there sufficient lighting? ☐ yes ☐ no

Are alarms clearly marked? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is access to the lot controlled by pass cards? ☐ yes ☐ no

Are company vehicles parked on-site after hours? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, is there a secured vehicle compound? ☐ yes ☐ no

Have there been vehicle thefts from the parking lot? ☐ yes ☐ no

Building Perimeter

Is your workplace near any buildings or businesses that are at risk of violent crime (bars, banks)? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is your building ever accidentally visited by violent, criminal, intoxicated or drugged persons? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is your building located in a high crime area? ☐ yes ☐ no

Are there signs of vandalism? ☐ yes ☐ no

Are you located in a dense manufacturing area? ☐ yes ☐ no

Are you isolated from other buildings? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is there graffiti on the walls or buildings? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is the exterior of the building adequately lighted? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is the building entrance adequately lighted? ☐ yes ☐ no

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Is the entrance to the building easily seen from the street and free of heavy shrub growth ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are outside lights checked before dusk? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are garbage areas, external buildings or equipment that employees use

– in an area with good visibility? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

– close to the main building with no potential hiding places? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there any overgrown shrubs or landscaping which obstruct your view or provide a hiding place? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Access Control

How many public entrances are there to your building? _____

Can the number be reduced? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is your building connected to any other building(s)? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, is there access control to your building? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is your building shared with other businesses? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, is there access control to your area(s)? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there a system to alert employees of access by intruders? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are offices designed/arranged to distinguish public vs private spaces? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Do you use coded cards or keys to control access to the building or certain areas within the building? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there a system in place to minimize the distribution of keys/entry cards? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Do you change codes/locks immediately if keys/cards are lost or misplaced? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Security System

Do you have a security system at your location? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, is the system tested on a regular basis (monthly) to assure correct functions? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Is the existing security system effective based on past performance? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there security guards/safety walking services available at your location? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Have you posted signs indicating there is a security system in use? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are security cameras and mirrors placed in locations that would deter potential offenders? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Reception

Is your reception area easily identifiable and accessible? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Can the receptionist/sales clerk clearly see incoming visitors/customers? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is the reception area/sales counter visible to fellow employees or members of the public? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is your reception area staffed at all times? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Can outsiders enter the building when there is no receptionist present? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is the reception area the first point of contact for visitors? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Do you have a policy for receiving, escorting and identifying visitors? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Does the area function well as a security screening area? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Does your receptionist work alone at times? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there an emergency call button at the reception area? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Sample Inspection Form Continued

If yes, have response procedures been developed? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there objects/tools/equipment that could be used as a missile/weapon in this area? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Signage

Upon entering the building are there signs to identify where you are? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Once in the building are there signs showing you where to get emergency assistance if needed? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If no, what signs are needed and where? _____

Are visitor areas and private areas clearly marked? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are rules for visitors clearly posted? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there exit signs? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there areas where exit signs are not present but are needed? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, where? _____

Are signs posted to be highly visible to all? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If no, where are these signs? _____

Are the hours of operation adequately posted? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are signs posted notifying the public that limited cash, ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
no drugs, or other valuables are kept on the premises?

Impression of overall signage:

☐ **very poor** ☐ **poor** ☐ **satisfactory** ☐ **good** ☐ **very good**

What other signs should be added? _____

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Work Practices

Do you or any of your co-workers:

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| -work with the public? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -handle money, valuables or prescription drugs? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -carry out inspection or enforcement duties? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -provide service, care, advice or education? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -work with unstable or volatile persons? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -work in premises where alcohol is served? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -work alone or in small numbers? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -work in community-based settings? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -drive a vehicle as part of your job? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -work during the late hours of the evening or
early hours of the morning? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -use public transit during your work day? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -travel to other cities/countries? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| -stay in hotels? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |

Note: If you have answered “yes” to any of the above work practices questions, you should consider auditing your organization’s procedures using the advice provided in CCOHS’s Violence in the Workplace Prevention Guide.

Lighting

List areas where lighting was a concern (too dark or too bright) during the inspection. _____

Is the lighting evenly spaced? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there any lights out? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, where? _____

Can you access main light control switches? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, where? _____

Stairwells & Exits

Do exit doors identify where they exit to? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there places at the bottom of stairwells where someone could hide? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, where? _____

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Is the lighting adequate? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Can lights be turned off in the stairwell? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there more than one route? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are there any exit routes which restrict your ability to get away? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, where? _____

Do stairwell doors lock behind you:

During regular hours of operation? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

After regular hours of operation? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Possible Entrapment Sites

Are there unoccupied rooms that should be locked? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, where? _____

Are there small, well defined areas where you would be hidden from the view of others, such as:

☐ Recessed doorways

☐ Unlocked storage areas

☐ Stairwells

☐ Elevators

☐ _____ ☐ _____

Natural Surveillance

Are there physical objects/structures that obstruct your view? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, could someone hide behind such objects/structures? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If so, where? _____

Are windows kept clear of advertising displays or other items that obstruct view? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

What would make it easier to see?

☐ transparent materials like glass ☐ mirrors

☐ windows in doors ☐ angled corners

☐ less shrubbery ☐ other _____

Do members of the public only approach staff from the front? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Working Alone

At the time of the inspection did any areas feel isolated? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, what areas? _____

In these areas, is there a telephone or a sign directing you to emergency assistance? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

In these areas, how far is the nearest person to hear calls for help? _____ ft/m

Do you have alarms or panic buttons installed? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are the alarms or panic buttons easily accessible? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Do you periodically check the functioning of alarms or panic buttons? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

How many people (other than fellow inspectors) were there around you at the time of this inspection? _____

Is it easy to predict when people will be around? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Movement Predictors

How easy would it be for someone to predict your patterns of movement?
☐ **very easy** ☐ **somewhat obvious** ☐ **no way of knowing**

Is there an alternative well-lit and frequently travelled route available? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Can you tell what is at the other end of each walkway or corridor? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
If no, where? _____

In walkways/corridors are there corners or alcoves where someone could hide and wait for you? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
If yes, where? _____

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Elevators

Do you have full view of whether the elevator is occupied before entering? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there an emergency phone or emergency call button in each elevator? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there a response procedure for elevator emergencies? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Washrooms

Is public access to washrooms controlled? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Can the lights in the washrooms be turned off? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are washrooms checked before building is vacated? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Interview Rooms

Do you have a separate interview/meeting room? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, is natural surveillance possible? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is there an alarm system in this room? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Is the furniture arranged to allow emergency exits? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Individual Offices

Are certain employees at higher risk of violence? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Has their furniture been arranged to:
– allow a quick exit from the office? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
– maintain a minimum distance (approx. 4-6 feet) between themselves and the client? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Have they reduced the number of objects that can be used as missiles or weapons? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Do these offices have good natural surveillance through the use of shatterproof glass in walls/doors? ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Emergency Assistance

Has an emergency contact number been established:

During regular hours of operation?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

After regular hours of operation?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are emergency numbers posted on phones?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Are emergency phones accessible in all areas?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If no, where is access needed?

Do you have a designated "safe" room where
employees can go during an emergency?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Does this room have a telephone and a door which
can be locked from the inside?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Training

Have employees been trained in preventive work
practices relevant to their jobs?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Have employees been trained in appropriate responses
for violent situations that they may encounter?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Have employees been trained in the procedures for
reporting suspicious persons or incidents?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Areas of Improvement

What improvements would you like to see?
(If you need more space, use a blank page)

Sample Inspection Form Continued

Overall Impression

How safe do you feel in each area listed below?

Check the box that indicates your feeling of safety in each area.

	very safe	safe	neutral	unsafe	very unsafe	N/A
parking lot						
perimeter of building						
main/front entrance						
other entrances						
elevators						
stairwells						
corridors/hallways						
on your floor						
at your desk						
other						

Sample Reporting Form

CONFIDENTIAL

Violence Incident Report Form

Date of Report: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Day of Week of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Employee

Name: _____

Work Address: _____

Job/Position: _____

Department/Section: _____

Age: _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

What were you doing at the time of the incident?

Offender(s)

Name(s): _____

Address(es): _____

Age: _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Description: _____

Relationship between employee and offender (if any):

☐ co-worker ☐ patient ☐ client ☐ student

☐ member of public ☐ other (specify) _____

Other details (e.g. use of drugs or alcohol, possession of a weapon): _____

Apparent motive: _____

Witness(es)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Details of the Incident

Type of Incident: (physical injury, verbal abuse, threatening behaviour, verbal threat, written threat, damage to personal/ other property) _____

Location of Incident: (attach a sketch if possible) _____

Outcome: (assailant apprehended, police called, fatal injury, medical assistance required, first aid treatment required, time lost, emotional shock or distress, legal action initiated) _____

Other Relevant Information
(to be completed, as appropriate)

Possible Contributing Factors: _____

Relevant Events Which Preceded the Incident: _____

Suggested Preventive/Remedial Actions: _____

Submit this report to:

Name _____

Title _____

Location _____

Notes

[illegible]

e-Courses

now available from CCOHS

e-Courses

Accident Investigation

NEW! Accident Investigation in Ontario (CCOHS/IAPA)

NEW! Business Case for Health & Safety **FREE!**

Canada Labour Code, Part II: An Overview

Confined Spaces: The Basics

Confined Space Management

Contractor Health & Safety

Contractor Health & Safety in Ontario (CCOHS/IAPA)

Developing an Occupational Health and Safety Program

NEW! Due Diligence Package - *Includes six e-Courses, a full e-Course Training Manual (PDF format) plus three print Health & Safety Publications*

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Emergency Preparedness for Workers

Emergency Response Planning

Federal Hazard Prevention Program

NEW! Fire Safety: The Basics

Health & Safety Committees

Health & Safety Committees in the Canadian

Federal Jurisdiction

NEW! Health & Safety for Managers and Supervisors *

Health & Safety for Managers and Supervisors
in the Canadian Federal Jurisdiction *

Health & Safety for Managers and Supervisors
in Ontario (CCOHS/IAPA)

Health & Safety for Office Managers

**also available as a classroom course*

Visit www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/course_listing.html
for a complete list and descriptions of courses.

e-Courses

now available from CCOHS

e-Courses

NEW!

Health & Safety for Senior Executives: Legislation & Liability

Health & Safety for Small Business

Indoor Air Quality: An Introduction

Joint Health and Safety Committees in Ontario (CCOHS/IAPA)

Ladder Safety

NEW!

Ladder Safety in Ontario (CCOHS/IAPA)

Lockout

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs): Awareness **FREE!**

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs): Prevention

Occupational and Environmental Cancer:

Recognition and Prevention **FREE!**

UPDATED

Office Ergonomics

NEW!

Office Ergonomics in Ontario (CCOHS/IAPA)

Office Health & Safety

Orientation on Health and Safety for New Workers

UPDATED

Pandemic Awareness **FREE!**

UPDATED

Pandemic Planning

Personal Protective Equipment: The Basics

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References to oh&s books, journals, articles and reports

OSH References [CISILO (English/French), HSELINE,
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