

Workplace Violence

SCF Arizona

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What is a Workplace?

- The workplace is any location, permanent or temporary, where an employee performs work or work-related activities
- This includes lunchrooms, restrooms, break rooms, vehicles used for work and parking facilities



Workplace Violence

- Violence or the threat of violence against employees
- Harassment of any nature
- Psychological trauma
- Physical violence



Why Should You Care?

- U. S. Department of Justice reports that approximately 2 million assaults and threats of violence occur each year in the workplace



High Risk Employees

- Those who handle money
- Workers who deliver passengers, goods or services
- Those who work alone or at night
- Those who work in high crime areas
- Those who work in community settings and who have extensive contact with the public



Workplace Violence

- U.S. Department of Labor Statistics show:

Year	Deaths in workplace	Homicides reported
2006	5840	540
2007	5488	610
2008	5071	444



Workplace Violence

- 2006 –There were 788 assaults and violent acts reported
- 2007 – There were 838 assaults and violent acts reported
- 2008—There were 16,033 assaults and violent acts reported

Source: U.S. Department of Labor Statistics



Categories of Workplace Violence

- Stranger on employee
- Customer on employee
- Partner on employee
- Employee on employee



Workplace Violence

- You may have months or years to observe typical and non-typical behavior of your employees
- With strangers you may have only a few seconds to determine if there is a potential problem



Warning Signs

- Increased employee absenteeism
- Major changes in personal appearance, attitude or behavior
- Change in personal relationships
- Reduction in job productivity
- History of violent, reckless or antisocial behavior



Warning Signs

- Unexplained interest or preoccupation with weapons, including bringing them to work
- Serious stress in employee's life
- Substance abuse
- Unexplained signs of physical injury
- Serious stress in employee's life



Warning Signs

- Substance abuse
- Unexplained signs of physical injury
- Reluctance to leave the workplace at the end of the shift
- Agitation
- Inability to make eye contact



Preventing Workplace Violence

- How do customers enter your place of business?
- Can you secure the workplace?
- Video surveillance may be appropriate
- Extra lighting
- Alarm systems



Preventing Workplace Violence

- If your business handles cash—limit the amount on hand
- Have established procedures in place in the event of a robbery
- Employees working outside the office should have cell phones or hand held alarms



Preventing Workplace Violence

- GPS devices on company cars may be useful
- Have employees working outside the office update calendar on a regular basis
- Have clearly established policies for employees making home visits



How Secure is Your Facility?

- Use physical barriers to protect employees
- Install silent alarms or panic buttons
- Use bright lighting
- Install video surveillance equipment
- Use mirrors or raised platforms—be certain that the area where money is exchanged is clearly visible.



Preventing Workplace Violence

- Control or limit access to the facility
- Don't work alone
- Train workers how to react when confronted with a violent situation
- Meet often with employee so they can express their concerns



Employee Precautions

- Learn to recognize, avoid or diffuse potentially violent situations
- Alert supervisors to any safety concerns and report all incidents in writing
- Avoid traveling alone whenever possible
- Carry minimal amounts of cash into community situations



Workplace Violence Policy

- Review all workplace violence incidents, even if they are considered minor
- Have a written policy indicating workplace violence will not be tolerated
- Your policy should clearly state what is and what is not acceptable behavior
- Report violent incidents immediately to the police



Workplace Violence Policy

- Provide medical attention if necessary
- Inform victims of their right to prosecute the perpetrator
- Offer stress debriefing sessions
- Use Employee Assistance Programs for post traumatic stress counseling



Potentially Violent Employees

- Watch for changes in attitude, behavior or appearance
- Allow the employee to express his or her feelings and relax
- Document employee actions and conversations



Potentially Violent Employees

- Conduct a performance review of the employee: Set performance measures for acceptable and inappropriate behavior
- Develop an action plan with frequent opportunities to re-evaluate the situation



Potentially Violent Employees

- Assist in finding solutions such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Support victims and other affected workers after an incident



Potentially Violent Non-employees

- Work with human resources or security to determine the appropriate response
- Restrict or deny access to the workplace
- Have a third party present; if possible document the conversation



Potentially Violent Non-employees

- Respond to attacker's concerns and assist in finding solutions
- Create a pre-determined code word or signal to alert colleagues of an emergency



Workplace Safety

- Know how to reach your organization's security officials
- Know where security equipment is located and how to use it
- Be aware of escape routes for emergencies
- Post emergency numbers near the phone



Workplace Safety

- If you use a security card/key to enter your workplace, do not permit strangers to enter behind you
- In an elevator, stand near the control panel—if attacked, press the alarm and as many buttons as possible to improve your chances of escape
- Do not wear your workplace badge in public



Safety While Traveling

- When traveling on business stay in a room above the first floor and close to the lobby
- Always lock the door to your hotel room
- Ask for identification from unexpected hotel employees or visitors knocking on your door
 - Call the front desk to verify



General Safety

- Do not wear flashy jewelry or expensive watches
- Keep your handbag and other valuables out of sight and under lock and key when at work
- Carry a whistle
- Consider taking a self-defense course



Personal Safety

- Develop a personal safety plan
 - Call before leaving work to let someone know when you plan to arrive
 - Let coworkers know your schedule
- Keep a cell phone for emergency use



Vehicle Safety

- Lock your car as soon as you enter or exit it
- Have car keys in your hand as you reach the vehicle
- Look under the car and in the back seat for anything unusual
- When driving, pay attention to vehicles around you; consider changing your route if you suspect unusual behavior



Vehicle Safety

- Do not pull directly beside another vehicle at red lights
 - Give yourself the best view and opportunity to flee or change directions
 - When stopped, leave enough room to see the rear tires on the car in front of you



Parking Safety

- Park close in well-lighted, busy area
- If dark when leaving the workplace arrange for a coworker or guard to escort you
- Be cautious in parking garages:
 - Dimly lighted
 - Places to hide
 - Write down level and row



Questions?



Resources About Safety?

- Call your SCF Loss Control Consultant
- Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (ADOSH)
- Local Police Department
- Arizona Department of Public Safety

