Resources and Tips for Preventing Workplace Violence



TIPS FOR PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Workplace homicides accounted for 392 of the 4,764 fatal workplace injuries that happened in the U.S. in 2020, according to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). Workplace violence is a serious issue that impacts the lives of millions of U.S. workers each year. Employers and managers must take preventive measures to combat the possibility of workplace violence and ensure employee safety.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE STATISTICS

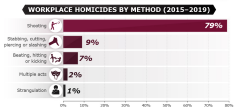
Workplace violence is "any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site," according to the U.S. Department of Labor. "It ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide."

NONFATAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

From 2015 to 2019:

- About **1.3 million** U.S. workers reported being victims of nonfatal workplace violence.
- Eight violent crimes were reported for every **1,000** workers.
  - **18.9** out of every **1,000** government employees reported being victims of simple assault.
- Strangers committed **47%** of nonfatal incidents.
- The victim was injured in **12%** of nonfatal incidents.
- **15%** of victims suffered severe emotional distress due to the incident.
- Roughly 529,800 nonfatal injuries resulting from workplace violence were treated in hospital emergency rooms.
  - **33%** treated for contusions and abrasions
  - **13%** treated for sprains and strains
  - **11%** treated for traumatic brain injuries

WORKPLACE HOMICIDES BY METHOD (2015–2019)



SITUATIONS WITH INCREASED RISK OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



JOBS WITH INCREASED RISK OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



In 2020, homicide was the fourth most common cause of fatal workplace injuries in the country after:





Workplace fatalities by type

- 705 fatalities caused by violence and injuries due to other people or animals

Top fatalities by job role:

- Retail: 132
- Leisure and hospitality: 72
- Government agencies: 132
- Public administration: 68

WARNING SIGNS OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



While clear warning signs don't always precede workplace violence, it may be possible to mitigate violent escalation by paying attention to indications of troubled or disgruntled employees.

WORK-RELATED SIGNS



BEHAVIORAL SIGNS



PHYSICAL/NONVERBAL SIGNS



OTHER WARNING SIGNS



SOME BEHAVIORAL SIGNS MAY ALSO BE INDICATIVE OF OTHER ISSUES (NOT WORKPLACE VIOLENCE)



IMPACT OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE ON WORKFORCE



TIPS FOR PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Employers and managers have easy, and free access to many government resources that can help stop a workplace incident before it starts.



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA) TIPS FOR PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



LEVELS OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



TIPS FOR RESPONDING TO WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



Response to early warning signs

- Observing and documenting behavior
- Reporting concerns to the appropriate level of supervision
- Supervisor meeting with the employee in question in private
  - Supervisor should directly identify problem, ask for employee input and establish a time frame for resolution



Response to escalation

- Documenting observed behavior
- Calling 911, if warranted
- Immediately alerting the appropriate work contact, such as a supervisor
- Securing personal safety, if possible
- Supervisor meeting with the employee in question in a private area
  - Supervisor should ask relevant questions regarding the incident:
  - What can the employee do to regain self control?
  - How can the supervisor help?
  - What does the employee want to achieve by acting out?



Response to further escalation

- Calling 911
- Remaining calm
- Immediately alerting the appropriate work contact, such as a supervisor
- Securing personal safety
- Leaving the area if staying may compromise safety
- Cooperating with law enforcement

MAINTAIN A SAFE, SECURE WORKPLACE

Thanks to the efforts of government agencies and employers, workplace homicide levels have decreased significantly in the past few decades. Safety, science and emergency management personnel must address the challenges of developing stronger preventive procedures to keep workplaces safe and secure.

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Sources
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