CrewSigned

Workplace Violence Toolbox Talk

5-minute read-aloud · Last reviewed November 24, 2026

Workplace violence is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation or threatening behavior at work. It runs from yelling and threats to shoving to assaults, and at its worst, homicide. Violence is one of the leading causes of death on the job in this country. It can come from customers, patients, the public, coworkers, or someone in a worker's personal life who shows up at the site.

Some jobs carry more risk. Working alone or at night, handling cash, dealing with upset customers or patients, delivering goods, and working in high-crime areas all raise the odds. Healthcare and social service workers face more assaults than almost anyone. But it can happen anywhere.

Know the warning signs. A person who is getting violent often gives clues first: raised voice, swearing, clenched fists, pacing, staring, getting into your space, or making threats, even as a joke. With a coworker, it can be a big change in behavior, talk about getting even, or an obsession with a grudge. Take all threats seriously.

If a situation is heating up, your goal is to calm it down and stay safe, not to win. Stay calm and speak slowly and quietly. Listen and let the person talk. Do not argue, threaten or make sudden moves. Keep a safe distance and keep something between you and the person if you can. Always know where your exit is, and never let the person block it. If it is not working, leave and get help. Your stuff and your pride are not worth getting hurt over.

If someone is in danger, call 911. Then tell me. Report every threat, assault or incident, even small ones, because they often come before something bigger. Nobody will get in trouble for reporting in good faith.

We take steps too. We control who comes on site, keep areas well lit, avoid having people work alone in risky spots, and make sure everyone can call for help. If something about your work makes you feel unsafe, tell me so we can change it.

And look out for each other. If a coworker is going through something hard and you are worried, say something. Getting help early can stop a lot of trouble.

Discussion questions

1. What situations on this job tend to get tense, and how could we lower the heat before they start?
2. If someone threatened you or a coworker, who would you tell and how fast?
3. Where would you go to get away from an angry person on this site?

OSHA standard

OSHA Workplace Violence guidance
https://www.osha.gov/workplace-violence

SOURCES

Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers (OSHA 3148): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/osha3148.pdf
NIOSH, Violence and Work: https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/violence/about/index.html

This talk does not replace training that an OSHA standard requires. Scripts are based on OSHA and NIOSH publications and rewritten in plain language.

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

TOPIC
Workplace Violence Toolbox Talk

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

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