Lone Workers in Hospitality Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Lone workers in hospitality face unique risks due to working alone, often at night. This includes handling potentially aggressive guests, cash, and working in isolated areas. These situations raise concerns for their safety, with the potential for verbal threats, physical violence, and robberies. Ensuring their well-being requires proactive measures from employers.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

Lone workers in hospitality are exposed to various dangers, including accidents like slips and burns, health emergencies without immediate aid, and potential harassment or conflict with customers. Here's a breakdown of the dangers and hazards lone hospitality workers face:

- **Physical Violence and Assault:** Lone workers are more vulnerable to physical attacks from intoxicated or aggressive guests.
- **Robbery:** Handling cash and working alone, especially at night, increases the risk of robberies and theft.
- **Verbal Abuse:** Lone workers might experience verbal harassment or threats from customers, causing distress and emotional harm.
- **Accidents and Emergencies:** Working alone increases the risk of injuries like slips, trips, or falls, as immediate assistance may not be available.
- **Medical Emergencies:** With no one nearby, a lone worker experiencing a sudden illness or medical emergency is at greater risk.
- **Stress and Mental Health Issues:** The isolation and risks associated with lone working can lead to increased stress,

and anxiety, and negatively impact mental well-being.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Lone workers in hospitality can take several steps to minimize hazards:

- **Planning and Communication:**
  - **Inform others:** Always tell a colleague (or use a check-in system) about your work schedule, location, and expected return time.
  - **Plan escape routes**: Be familiar with exits and emergency escape routes in your work area.
- **Increased Awareness and Vigilance:**
  - **Trust your intuition:** If a situation feels unsafe, remove yourself and seek help from colleague or security personnel.
  - **Maintain awareness:** Be mindful of your surroundings and avoid working in isolated areas alone for extended periods.
- **Safety Measures and Procedures**:
  - **Utilize safety devices:** Consider carrying a personal safety alarm or discreetly wearing a panic button if allowed by your workplace policies.
  - **Follow safe cash handling practices:** Avoid carrying large amounts of cash, and utilize secure cash registers and deposit procedures.
- **Seek Support and Training**:
  - **Communicate concerns:** Openly discuss any safety concerns with your manager and seek additional training if needed.
  - **First Aid and CPR Training:** Being trained in basic first aid and CPR can be crucial in case of emergencies.

If a lone worker in hospitality experiences an incident, immediate steps should be taken to ensure their safety and well-being.

If it’s a non-emergency situation, like verbal abuse or a minor

incident:

1. **Stay calm and assess the situation.** Is it safe to continue engaging with the person or situation?
2. **If possible, de-escalate the situation**. Use polite and professional communication, avoid arguments, and try to calmly explain your position.
3. **Seek help if needed.** Alert a colleague, supervisor, or security personnel for assistance.
4. **Report the incident.** Document the details of the incident, including the date, time, what happened, and any potential witnesses.

If it’s an emergency, like a physical assault, robbery, or medical emergency:

1. **Prioritize your safety.** If possible, remove yourself from the immediate danger and call for help.
2. **Dial emergency services.** If immediate assistance is needed, call the appropriate emergency number (e.g., 911 in the US).
3. **Use any available safety devices.** If you have a personal alarm or panic button, activate it to alert for help.
4. **Seek medical attention if necessary.** If you are injured, call for medical assistance or proceed to the nearest emergency room.

FINAL WORD

Remember, your safety is important. Don’t hesitate to seek help or remove yourself from a potentially dangerous situation. Additionally, it’s important to follow your workplace’s specific emergency response procedures.