Personal Protection Against Workplace Violence Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Workplace violence is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

EMPLOYMENT THAT POSES HIGHER RISKS OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- Duties that involve the exchange of money.
- Delivery of passengers, goods, or services.
- Duties that involve mobile workplace assignments.
- Working with unstable or volatile people in health care, social service, or criminal justice settings.
- Working alone or in small numbers.
- Working late at night or during early morning hours.
- Working in high-crime areas.
- Duties that involve guarding valuable property or possessions.
- Working in community-based settings.
- Working in a location with uncontrolled public access to the workplace.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION AND TRAINING

- Employees need to be consulted on the potential workplace violence hazards and know the measures in place for their protection. They must be properly trained in how to use equipment in place, how to avoid risks, and what to do if a workplace violence hazard occurs.

- Employee must get training on recognizing and reporting the signs of a disturbed coworker, customer, or member of the public. Seek training on handling hostile customers and diffusing violent situations. Immediately report violent incidents and threats to management.

BEST PRACTICES TO PROTECT AGAINST WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

1. **Hazard Identification in Workplace**

- Check incident and injury reports, and Workers Compensation records to identify past injuries.
- Ensure you have an effective consultation process in place. Consult your employees who can use their own experiences to highlight problem areas or procedures. Encourage them to express their feelings and concerns regarding workplace violence.
- Consult with the local police about what is happening in your area.
- Survey staff (in confidence if necessary). Ask about incidents that may have occurred or other matters that had the potential to become violent.
- Collect information about incidents or situations in workplaces similar to yours.
- Consult industry experts who have experience with workplace violence.
- Conduct workplace inspections to assess potential for workplace violence.
- Set up a system for the reporting of incidents and injuries and ensure all staff are aware of and encouraged to report all incidents.
- Employee Assistance Program information/data (if you have a program in place).

RISK ASSESSMENT

Once the hazard identification is completed, the next step is to assess risk associated with each hazard. The purpose is to determine:

- which of the identified hazards is most likely to occur.

- what are the likely injuries that may result.
- how severe the injuries are likely to be.
- how many employees are likely to be exposed or affected.

ELIMINATE HAZARDS OR CONTROL THE RISK TO PROTECT PEOPLE

Having established the hazards, take preventative action to eliminate the hazards or reduce the risk.

The preferred option is, of course, to eliminate the risk in total, and every effort must be made to achieve this goal.

Adopt A Zero-Tolerance Policy Against Violence

One of the best policies you can enact is zero-tolerance regarding violence both within and outside of the workplace.

Create and share a written plan

Violence prevention plans are only as good as they are accessible. A violence prevention plan should include:

- How employees and management should commit and participate in violence prevention.
- Analysis of risk factors like dimly lit areas and lone workers.
- Hazard prevention and control measures.
- Health and safety training.
- How to keep records and evaluate the success of the plan.

Never Retaliate Against Employees

One of the most essential aspects of maintaining a violence-free workplace is ensuring that employees do not feel they will be punished for reporting problematic incidents. HR teams and disciplinary structures should never retaliate against employees who experience violence themselves or report witnessing it against another person.

Create programs and gather resources

When it comes to violence prevention, the resources employees have on hand are key. Make sure your library of educational sources,

programs, affiliates, and more has enough information to provide the workplace.

FINAL WORD

There are a number of ways to reduce workplace hazards. In some situations, a combination of actions may be required to manage a hazard. In other situations, short- and long-term measures may be needed to reduce the risk of workplace hazards.