

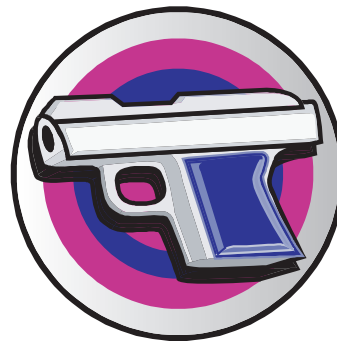
YOUTH ON THE JOB

#6 VIOLENCE@WORK

VIOLENCE ON THE JOB is a BIG CONCERN for YOUNG WORKERS. One out of every five injuries to young workers (20 percent) is caused by assaults or violent acts. (OSHA, 2003)

A 16-year-old female restaurant cashier died when she was shot in the head during an armed robbery attempt. The victim worked there when not attending high school, and assisted in most of the business activities, including food preparation, receiving customers' food orders, and tending the cash register. She was a 10th grade high school student at the time of her death.

(Wisconsin FACE Report #00W1012)



It's not Just 'Going Postal'

Violence at work occurs when a worker is made to feel unsafe or threatened, or is the target of violent acts. Violence includes harassment, verbal threats, abuse, assault and homicide.

Although the media talks about the violence done to workers by other workers, studies show that most violent acts against workers are done by strangers, clients or patients, and not by co-workers.



Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted, repeated sexual attention, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can be devastating to its victim, interfering with his/her ability to work because of a threatening, hostile and/or intimidating work environment. The majority of victims of sexual harassment are women, but men can also be victims.

What to do About Sexual Harassment

OBJECT!

MAKE IT CLEAR to the harasser that his/her behavior is unwelcome.

KEEP A RECORD. Write down what is happening to you and be detailed and accurate. Your account should answer the questions: Where and when did it happen? What was said and done?

TALK TO CO-WORKERS. If you think other workers are experiencing the same thing as you, get together and find out. Like with any other workplace hazard or abuse, it is always better not to go it alone. Co-workers may also have witnessed your harassment and can support your account.

FILE A COMPLAINT. Depending on where you work, you can file a complaint with either the management, a union representative, or through a company grievance procedure. It is important to let the employer know and have the opportunity to stop it.

You may be at risk for violence on the job if you

- ✦ Work at night or early in the morning (e.g., at a convenience store, or a fast food restaurant).
- ✦ Exchange money with the public (e.g., at a store or a restaurant).
- ✦ Work alone (e.g. at a store, restaurant).
- ✦ Work with the public (in social services).
- ✦ Work with patients or clients who may be violent (e.g., at a hospital or nursing home).
- ✦ Guard property or possessions.
- ✦ Work in community settings (e.g., cab drivers and employees "working in the field").
- ✦ Work in high crime areas.

If you do not get satisfaction, you can contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) 800-669-4000. They will conduct a telephone interview to determine if they or another agency can help you.

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IS YOUR WORKPLACE SAFE?

It is your employer's responsibility to provide you with a **safe and healthy workplace**. There are steps your boss should take to protect you from work-related violence. The best thing to do is to develop a workplace violence prevention program, which should include:

Hazard Analysis

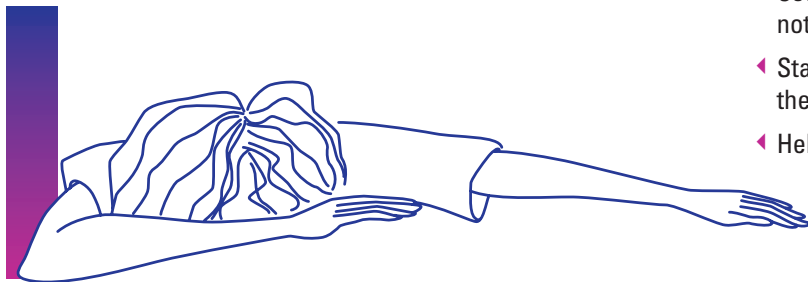
To find out the risks at any workplace, employers should

- ◀ Review the records of violent incidents, including threats.
- ◀ Conduct regular workplace security inspections, using a checklist of possible security concerns for your particular workplace.
- ◀ Survey workers to hear about their concerns, and to find out about incidents not reported or "near-misses".

Prevention Strategies

To prevent incidents of violence from occurring, employers should

- ◀ Correct unsafe conditions, such as improve lighting.
- ◀ Change practices and procedures, such as to hire security or add more staff.
- ◀ Use technology, such as alarm systems and surveillance cameras.



Training of Managers and Workers about the Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

Everyone in the workplace needs to be provided with

- ◀ Training about the proper procedures to follow to prevent incidents, and how to respond during and after an incident.
- ◀ Training on how to recognize security hazards, and actions to take to prevent workplace assaults.
- ◀ Training in conflict resolution and/or alternatives to violence programs, if necessary.



Incident Reporting and Follow-Up Procedures

If a violent incident does occur, there needs to be

- ◀ Counseling and support provided for the workers, whether or not they were directly involved.
- ◀ Standard incident report forms for the workers to complete; these should be reviewed in order to revise plan as needed.
- ◀ Help for victim in filling out police reports, if necessary.

Workplace Violence Prevention Programs should be evaluated every year to make sure that they are effective.

NEED HELP????

CALL NYCOSH. The New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH) is a worker-friendly organization that will provide advice to you about where to go for help. NYCOSH is a non-profit coalition of 200 local unions and more than 400 individual workers, physicians, lawyers and other health and safety activists – all dedicated to the right of every worker to a safe and healthful workplace.

CONTACT: NYCOSH 212-227-6440
www.nycosh.org



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