

Preventing Workplace Violence

Presented by MNHIT and Maxim Insurance Solutions

Preventing Workplace Violence

1. Define Workplace Violence/OSHA
2. Prevalence of Workplace Violence in Healthcare
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Define Workplace Violence

OSHA defines workplace violence broadly to include “any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. It can affect and involve workers, clients, customers, and visitors. Workplace violence ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide.”

Define Workplace Violence

Other Regulatory

DHSS - may require additional training and specific drills (active shooter) if you have had an incident of workplace violence that they become aware of.

Prevalence of Workplace Violence in Healthcare

According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, between 2016 and 2020, there were 207 fatalities caused by workplace violence within the healthcare and social assistance industry, highlighting the significant risk of death for healthcare workers due to workplace violence.

Prevalence of Workplace Violence in Healthcare

In nursing homes, workplace violence incidents, including physical assaults and verbal abuse, are significantly higher than in other industries, with nursing and personal care facility workers experiencing a rate of **21.8 per 10,000 full-time workers** for injuries from assaults.

Prevalence of Workplace Violence in Healthcare

A 2007 study of nurses (RNs/LPNs) showed a rate of 13.2 physical assaults per 100 nurses per year and 38.8 non-physical violent events (threats, sexual harassment, verbal abuse) per 100 nurses per year.

Types of Workplace Violence

- Violence by strangers
- Violence by customers or clients
- Violence by coworkers
- Violence by personal relations

Case Studies

1. Employee to Employee
2. Estranged Spouse to Employee
3. Former Employee to Current Employee
4. Resident Family Member
5. Burglary - Drugs

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

- Staff Training
 - Situational Awareness
 - Identifying Behaviors
 - De-Escalation/Dementia Training
- Zero Tolerance Policy - OSHA
- Screening of employees
- Set realistic expectations for families

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Situational Awareness

Situational awareness training in the workplace **equips employees with the skills to identify and respond to potential hazards, fostering a safer environment and reducing incidents by promoting vigilance and proactive risk management.**

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Situational Awareness - Key Aspects

Observation:

Training should emphasize the importance of actively observing the environment and identifying potential hazards.

Comprehension:

Employees should understand the situation they are in, including potential risks and how to respond to them.

Anticipation:

Training should help employees anticipate what might happen next based on their understanding of the situation.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Situational Awareness - Key Aspects

Communication:

Clear and concise communication is crucial for sharing information and coordinating actions, especially in emergency situations.

Vigilance:

Employees should be encouraged to remain vigilant and attentive to their surroundings.

Exit Strategy:

Knowing how to exit a situation safely is a vital aspect of situational awareness, so regular drills and familiarization with evacuation routes are important.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Situational Awareness - Key Aspects

Use of Visual and Auditory Signals:

Supplement verbal communication with visual and auditory signals to ensure messages are received clearly, especially in noisy or fast-paced environments.

Identifying Risk Factors:

Training should cover identifying human, environmental, and situational factors that influence the threat level.

Promoting Good Mental Health:

Stress and fatigue can impair situational awareness, so promoting good mental health and encouraging employees to take breaks and get enough sleep is important.

Interactive and Inclusive Training:

Training should be interactive and inclusive for all employees, regardless of their occupation or experience level.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Identifying Behaviors

To spot behaviors of concern in the workplace, look for sudden and significant changes in behavior, including increased employee absenteeism, poor job performance, withdrawal from colleagues, outbursts of anger, excessive negativity, making threats, verbal abuse, physical aggression, or expressing feelings of being victimized, especially when accompanied by a change in demeanor or communication style.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Identifying Behaviors - Key Signs

- **Changes in attitude or demeanor:**
 - Sudden mood swings
 - Increased irritability or hostility
 - Withdrawn or isolated behavior
 - Excessive complaining or negativity
- **Communication issues:**
 - Aggressive or threatening language
 - Yelling or shouting at colleagues
 - Inappropriate comments or jokes
 - Difficulty accepting criticism

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

Identifying Behaviors - Key Signs

- **Performance changes:**
 - Significant decline in work quality
 - Missed deadlines
 - Excessive tardiness or absences
 - Difficulty collaborating with others
- **Physical signs:**
 - Clenched fists or jaw
 - Visible shaking or trembling
 - Sudden changes in body language

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Identifying Behaviors - Key Signs

- **Concerning statements:**
 - Talking about harming themselves or others
 - Expressing paranoia or feeling persecuted
 - Making threats against colleagues or the workplace

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

What To Do If You Notice Concerning Behavior

- Document everything:** Keep a record of specific incidents, dates, times, and witnesses.
- Talk to the individual privately:** Express your concerns in a respectful and supportive manner, encouraging them to seek help if needed.
- Report to Administrator/HR:** If the behavior is serious or continues, inform your Human Resources department to take appropriate action.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence – Staff Training

Important Considerations

- Context matters:** Consider the individual's usual behavior and whether the change is significant.
- Seek professional help:** If you believe someone is at risk of harming themselves or others, encourage them to seek professional mental health support.
- Maintain a safe workplace:** Be aware of your company's policies on workplace violence and harassment reporting procedures.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

De-Escalation Training

Nursing facility staff will learn how to assess and regulate their own emotions that may escalate an already tense situation. They will discover how fear, stress, and anxiety may be manifested and examine strategies to de-escalate potential crisis situations with residents.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health in Nursing Facilities

De-Escalation Toolkit

- PDF format
- Simple 5 page handout
- Email me and I'll send to you
 - pbehen@showmeinsurance.net

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

De-Escalation Tips

- Remain calm and speak in a neutral voice.
- Listen to the concern(s) and answer questions.
- Keep expressions and posture relaxed. Limit hand gestures.
- Summarize what the person has expressed –
 - "Tell me if I have this correct...."
- Empathize with feelings and be nonjudgmental.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

De-Escalation Tips

- Set clear and enforceable limits. Avoid making threats or promises.
- Allow the person to speak without interruption when appropriate. Being heard is a valuable tool.
- Focus on the solution, not the problem.
- Know when to step away, or request assistance from a peer or supervisor.
- Don't take it personally.

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

De-Escalation Debriefing - The 5 "Whats"

- What happened?
- What went well?
- What are areas for improvement?
- What will be done differently?
- What did I learn about myself or the perpetrator?

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Dementia Training/Combative Residents

- Combative Resident situations are the leading type of injuries within workplace violence category
- Training Should Include the following:
 - Understanding Dementia and Related Behaviors
 - Identifying Triggers
 - De-escalation Techniques
 - Effective Communication
 - Person Centered Care

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Dementia Training/Combative Residents

- Training Should Include the following (continued):
 - Creating a Safe Environment
 - Documentation
 - Recognizing and Responding to Violence

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence - Staff Training

Dementia Training/Combative Residents

- Specific Strategies for Managing Combative Behaviors
 - Redirecting Attention
 - Validating Feelings
 - Adjusting Tone and Body Language
 - Providing Physical Support
 - Consistency in Routines
 - Consistent Staffing Assignments

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

Zero Tolerance Policy



Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

Zero Tolerance Policy

- Management Commitment and Worker Participation
- Worksite Analysis and Hazard Identification
- Hazard Prevention and Control
- Safety and Health Training
- Recordkeeping and Program Evaluation
- Email me for a copy of the OSHA publication: pbehen@showmeinsurance.net

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

Screening Employees

- Family Care Registry/CBC
- Employment References
- Social Media

Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

Set Realistic Expectations for Family

Frequently a difficult process, but having conversations with family about current diagnoses, care needs, and prognosis can be helpful in dealing with potential anger, stress, and violence aimed at employees.

Active Shooter Training

Contact:

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Questions?

Thank you!!


