

Slide 1.1 Welcome

Welcome to today's training. Today's topic is Violence in the Workplace, a part of the myLearningPointe course library.

Slide 1.2 Course Instructions

When viewing this course, you will need to click the Next button on the bottom right of this course player at the end of each slide. To view the last slide watched, click Previous. The Pause and Play buttons are on the bottom to the left of the green Progress bar. The Progress bar also performs the fast forward and rewind functions. Click in the Progress bar to move back or forward in the current slide. You can also navigate the course using the menu outline on the left. You might find other information relevant to the course in the Resources tab located at the top. When viewing the final slide of this course, please let it play to its end.

Slide 1.3 Introduction

Violence happens in the workplace on a daily basis. According to the OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, "Nearly 2 million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year. Unfortunately, many more cases go unreported."

OSHA defines workplace violence as "any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the worksite. It ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide."

Recently, the Bureau of Labor statistics reported nearly 4,600 fatal injuries on the job, of which an estimate of 800 were caused by violence. In the healthcare industry there were approximately 100 deaths, of which 35 were caused by violence.

While the risk of death may be small, the risk of being a victim of or witness to violence is high. This course is designed to give you an overview of workplace violence, what to look for, and how to protect yourself, your co-workers, and your clients. This course does deal with violence and some viewers may find some of the images and descriptions disturbing. Please keep in mind that this course is designed to prepare you to deal with situations when they occur. Ignoring them won't make them less likely to happen.

Slide 1.4 Course Objectives

By the time you complete this course, you should be able to:

- Recognize who is vulnerable to workplace violence
- Classify the four types of workplace violence
- List the risk factors which may indicate a person is prone to violence
- Describe ways you can protect yourself, your co-workers, and your clients
- State what you should do if you are the victim of or observe violent behavior

Please click the button to hear the disclaimer.

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Slide 2.1 Am I At Risk?

Am I really at risk for workplace violence?

Slide 2.2 Examples

Intro

Click each cloud for a recent example from the news.

Colorado

A suicidal Colorado hospital worker who was going through a divorce and struggling with alcohol abuse was killed in an officer involved shooting.

Florida

A Florida social worker was killed by a client whom she was helping with his Medicaid benefits.

Pennsylvania

A Pennsylvania woman was killed by her husband as she left work.

Slide 2.3 The Numbers

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, the BLS, does not separate illnesses from injuries in the statistics, nevertheless, you are more likely to have an injury or illness if you are a male and if you are between the ages of 45 and 54. Click the graph to see the specifics for the incidence per 10,000 full-time workers by gender and age group.

The BLS does keep statistics for fatal injuries by selected type. Once again, those with the greatest risk are males between the ages of 45 and 54. Click the graph to see the specific number of fatal homicides by gender and age group. Eighteen percent of healthcare fatal injuries were due to homicide.

Let's look at one year's data. In 2012 the rate for injuries and illness in all occupations was 3.5 per 100 workers. The rate for the healthcare occupations was 4.6 per 100 workers. The good news is that this number has fallen – in 2007 the rates were 4.2 and 5.6 respectively.

Slide 2.4 Risk Factors Work Type

Some workers are at a higher risk for workplace violence than others. These workers include persons who deliver passengers, goods, or services which includes cab drivers and delivery drivers. People who exchange money with the public, such as those in a retail business or bank. Those who work alone or in small groups during late night or early morning hours, including small retail businesses. People working in community settings and homes and have extensive contact with the public, such as healthcare and social service workers are included in this group. And finally, people who work in high-crime areas.

Slide 2.5 Additional Risk Factor in Healthcare

OSHA notes a number of additional risks for those working in the healthcare industry in their publication “Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers.” These additional risk factors are quoted here.

- Prevalence of handguns and other weapons among patients, their families or friends;
- Increasing use of hospitals by police and the criminal justice system for criminal holds and the care of acutely disturbed, violent individuals;
- The increasing number of acute and chronic mentally ill patients being released from hospitals without follow-up care (these patients have the right to refuse medicine and can no longer be hospitalized involuntarily unless they pose an immediate threat to themselves or others);
- The availability of drugs or money at hospitals, clinics and pharmacies, making them likely targets;
- Factors such as the unrestricted movement of the public in clinics and hospitals and long waits in emergency or clinic areas that lead to client frustration over an inability to obtain needed services promptly;
- The increasing presence of gang members, drug or alcohol abusers, trauma patients or distraught family members;
- Low staffing levels during times of increased activity such as mealtimes, visiting times and when staff are transporting patients;
- Isolated work with clients during examinations or treatment;
- Solo work, often in remote locations with no backup or way to get assistance, such as communication devices or alarm systems (this is particularly true in high-crime settings);
- Lack of staff training in recognizing and managing escalating hostile and assaultive behavior; and,
- Poorly lit parking areas.

Slide 2.6 Activity

What type of workers are at a higher risk for workplace violence? (Select all that apply)

Exchange money with the public

Deliver passengers, goods, or services

Work alone or in small groups during late night or early morning hours

Work in high crime areas

Work in community settings and homes and have extensive contact with the public

Slide 2.7 Activity

Healthcare workers have a _____ risk than the average worker for a workplace injury or illness.

Higher

Lower

Slide 3.1 Classification of Risk Types

There are four classifications for workplace violence.

Slide 3.2 Types

The four broad categories of workplace violence are:

Type 1 Criminal Intent

This is violent acts by criminals. These persons have no connection with the workplace, other than the intent to commit some other crime.

Type 2 Customer or Client

These are violent acts against an organization's employee or employees by a customer, client, patient, student, and others who have received a service from the organization.

Type 3 Employee-on-Employee

These are violent acts by a present or former employee against a co-worker, supervisor, or manager.

Type 4 Personal Relationships

These include violent acts committed by someone who doesn't work at the organization, but has a personal relationship with an employee. This might be a family member or acquaintance of the employee.

Slide 3.3 Type Risks in Healthcare

Type 1, criminal intent workplace violence is more likely to affect healthcare workers who have access to money or drugs. This could include personnel in the accounts receivable department, pharmacists, and nurses with access to drug cabinets.

Type 2 customer or client workplace violence is the most common in the healthcare industry with violence aimed at nurses, doctors, aides, admission employees, and mental health workers.

Slide 3.4 When and Where

Although violence can happen at any place and any time there are studies which show that violent actions are more likely to happen during the hours of 10 pm to 6 am, followed by 2 pm to 10 pm. The daytime hours of 6 am to 2 pm are least likely to have an act of violence.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publication “Violence: Occupational Hazards in Hospitals”, violence may occur anywhere in the hospital, but it is most frequent in the following areas:

- Emergency rooms
- Psychiatric wards
- Waiting rooms
- Geriatric units

Keep in mind – violence can happen any time anywhere. Check the resources for this course to see a court case on workplace violence.

Slide 3.5 Activity

The four categories of workplace violence are:

Criminal Intent, Customer/Client, Employee-on-Employee, Personal Relationships

Criminal Intent, Customer/Client-on Employee, Employee-on- Client, Personal Relationships

Criminal Intent, Customer/Client-on-Employee, Employee-on-Employee, Non-Related to Organization

Slide 3.6 Activity

Which time period(s) is workplace violence most likely?

6 am to 2 pm

2 pm to 10pm

10 pm to 6 am

Slide 4.1 Examples and Effects

Examples of workplace violence behaviors and effects of workplace violence

Slide 4.2 Examples of Violent Behavior

Workplace violence can take many forms including

- Bullying
- Domestic violence
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Physical or the threat of physical violent actions
- Stalking
- Verbal and non-verbal threats, and
- Any behavior which makes an employee or client feel unsafe

While you may not be the victim of any of these types of behavior you may be a witness. You should be aware of these behaviors in your workplace.

Slide 4.3 Effects of Workplace Violence

A National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) paper notes that violent behavior in your workplace could result in:

- Minor physical injuries
- Serious physical injuries
- Temporary or permanent physical disability
- Psychological trauma; or even
- Death

Slide 4.4 Activity

Workplace violence must include some sort of physical violence.

True

False

Slide 5.1 Red Flags Risk Factors Indicating Violent Behavior

There are many risk factors or red flags which COULD indicate a person has a tendency to violent behavior.

Two scenarios are very unlikely. The first is that a person who commits a violent act has NEVER exhibited any of these red flags. The second scenario is that a person who exhibits one or more of these red flags WILL commit a violent act.

Any list of risk factors is controversial. These risk factors are listed here to give you clues to look for when observing people in your workplace. If you observe one or more of these behaviors and don't feel qualified to make a judgment on your own, talk to your supervisor, human resources, a clinician, or law enforcement official.

Slide 5.2 Red Flag History

Past actions can be predictors of future actions. These include:

- A history of drug or alcohol abuse
- A history of conflicts with co-workers, clients, or others
- A history of violence toward co-workers, clients, or others, or
- Convictions for violent crimes

Slide 5.3 Red Flag Verbal

Some verbal behaviors can be predictors of future violent actions.

- Comments about “putting things in order”
- Empathy with or increasing talk about persons committing violent crimes
- Homicidal or suicidal comments or threats
- Increase in unsolicited talk about firearms or other dangerous weapons
- Increasing talk of problems at home
- Outbursts of anger or frustration, or
- Talk of financial problems

Slide 5.4 Red Flag Job Behavior

Changes in behavior and attitude toward the job may be predictors.

- Extreme disorganization
- Hypersensitive to criticism
- Increased resistance or overreaction to organizational policy/procedure changes
- Multiple violations of company policies/procedures
- Obsession with a supervisor, co-worker, or employee grievance, or
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism

Slide 5.5 Red Flag Environmental

The physical environment or organization changes can be factors.

- Downsizing or reorganization
- High injury rate of employees – the injury rate may indicate problem with safety issues that are not being addressed
- Inadequate security
- Labor disputes
- Long wait time for service
- Overcrowded or uncomfortable waiting rooms
- Poor lighting in parking lots, corridors, or rooms
- Poor management styles
- Poorly defined job tasks/responsibilities, or
- Understaffing

Slide 5.6 Red Flag Additional

There are other red flags such as:

- Depression
- Domestic problems occurring in the workplace
- Extreme mood swings
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs – on or off the job
- Increased belligerence
- Noticeable change in attention to attire and personal hygiene
- Noticeably unstable or emotional responses, or
- Withdrawal

Slide 5.7 Red Flags Summary

There are many red flags listed here and this list is not all inclusive. As we stated before, there are many risk factors or red flags which could indicate a person has a tendency to violent behavior.

A person who may become violent in the workplace will not exhibit all of these red flags. Conversely, even if multiple red flags are evident, this does not mean a person will commit violence.

Staying sensitive to persons you come into contact with in your workplace, whether co-workers, clients, or others, can provide you clues to potential violent behavior.

Slide 5.8 Activity

Paul recently lost his father. He has quit going to afterwork functions and while always a stylish dresser has recently begun wearing soiled clothes and neglecting his personal hygiene. Yesterday he berated two staffers for returning from lunch 15 minutes late. Match your observation to the risk factor.

Berated two staffers	Depression
Lost father	Noticeable change in attention to attire & personal hygiene
Quit going to functions	Outbursts of anger or frustration
Soiled clothes and neglected hygiene	Withdrawal

Slide 6.1 Response to Detected Clues

There is no one right way to respond to the clues that violent behavior may be forthcoming. There is, though, a wrong reaction – that is NO ACTION. The following slides suggest ways you might manage situations before they happen.

Slide 6.2 First Response

The first response to any situation should be a calm and caring attitude toward the person indicating stress or violence. During and following this training, realistically assess your skills and determine your comfort level in handling situations. Review your organization’s policies and procedures for Employee Assistance and Emergency Response Programs. Think about how you would or should respond to various situations.

Slide 6.3 Do Responses

Be calm in your demeanor and voice. Be caring in your attitude. You should acknowledge the person’s feelings, even if you don’t agree with their perception of the situation. Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Maintain eye contact, but don’t stare. Alert your supervisor or the appropriate organizational personnel to the situation as soon as it is feasible. Evaluate each situation when entering a room or meeting with a client or visitor to determine if the potential for violence exists. Keep an exit path open between you and the potentially violent person. Finally, remove yourself if the situation is getting out of control.

Slide 6.4 Don’t Responses

Don’t match threats with an aggressive person, this may escalate the situation. Don’t give the person orders. Don’t act aggressively, for example, moving rapidly, speaking loudly, moving too close, or touching a person. Don’t challenge statements the person is making, their view of the situation may be different than yours. Don’t isolate yourself if you feel the person may become violent. And very importantly, don’t ignore the situation, go with your “gut feeling”.

Slide 6.5 Activity

There is no wrong reaction to potential workplace violence.

True

False

Slide 6.6 Activity

Which of these responses is **not** a “DO” response?

- Be calm
- Acknowledge the person’s feelings
- Give orders
- Maintain eye contact
- Alert your supervisor

Slide 7.1 Scenarios

Let’s look at some scenarios and see possible actions you could take. Keep in mind that there is no “one size fits all” approach, so these scenarios are provided to help you think about how you would or could respond to a situation before it occurs. Your organizational policies and procedures should always be followed for each situation.

After each situation is described, take a minute or two to write down what you would do in the situation before you click to see the course suggestions.

Slide 7.2 The Bully

Two months ago, Anna was promoted to a new position within the organization. She now reports to Nancy, who has always hired staff from outside the organization and was not particularly thrilled with management’s decision to move Anna to her department.

Nancy consistently assigns Anna a disproportionate workload, setting impossible deadlines, then criticizes her when she is unable to meet deadlines. Nancy also makes an “example” of Anna in department meetings.

What should Anna do?

- Document all occurrences including the time/date, place, witnesses and an accurate description of what happened. Keep these records.
- Schedule a meeting with Nancy to discuss the assignments and deadlines, expressing concerns about the unrealistic expectations. Anna should ask Nancy to work with her to set realistic goals. Anna should also ask that Nancy speak with her privately when she is dissatisfied with her work efforts rather than bring it up in staff meetings. Following the meeting, Anna should document the meeting including the time and date of the meeting, where the meeting occurred, and what was discussed.
- If the situation does not improve, Anna should follow her organization’s “chain of command” or speak with someone in Human Resources. Anna should make sure her records are accurate, complete, and were created immediately following each event. If nothing happens, Anna should continue pursuing the issue up the “chain of command.”
- Anna should not retaliate or exaggerate the situation. Most organizations recognize bullying behavior could happen and have policies and procedures to address the situation.

Slide 7.3 Personal Stress

Mike and Kal have been co-workers and hunting buddies for years. Recently Kal has been financially stressed after his home was flooded in a storm. Kal and his wife have been at odds over the home repairs and he is spending several nights a week with drinking buddies after work. The company has announced there will be some reorganization and possible downsizing. Although Mike and Kal have been assured that no changes are being made in their department, lately Kal has been coming in late, dressing in wrinkled clothes, and talking about what a waste his entire life is.

What should Mike do?

- First, Mike should show a calm and caring attitude. If the company has an Employee Assistance Program, or EAP, Mike should remind Kal of the options and encourage him to take advantage of available resources. If the company does not have an EAP, Mike could direct Kal to outside programs.
- If the situation does not improve, or Mike feels that Kal may present an eminent danger to himself or others, he should speak with their supervisor, manager, organization security, or other contacts as directed by organization policy.
- Mike should not ignore the situation and think it will resolve itself. Although Kal may never become violent, the signs are present and Kal most certainly needs support.

Slide 7.4 Angry Client

Inez works at the front desk in a large clinic. Today “walk-ins” have been particularly high and the wait time to see a clinician is over two hours. Rick has been waiting several hours, becoming more and more agitated as time passes. Rick walks up to the desk and begins to swear at Inez. He also makes vague threats about “getting even with this place.” What should Inez do?

- Inez should remain calm, look Rick in the eyes and tell him she understands that he is frustrated with situation. She should be courteous and patient, while offering to see if she can get him a better estimation of the additional time he will need to wait and assuring him that he is important and will be seen as soon as possible.
- If Rick does not calm down or his behavior escalates, Inez should signal a co-worker or supervisor she needs help and/or use a duress alarm or pre-arranged code word. Her co-worker should call security or the local police if necessary. Inez should follow the organizations policies and procedures in responding to the escalated situation.
- Inez should not match Rick’s threats or give him orders. She should not speak loudly or make any move into his personal space. Unless there is no alternative, Inez should not make the phone call to security or law enforcement herself, as this may agitate Rick more.

Slide 7.5 Dangerous Family Member

Helen works in the geriatric unit of a large hospital. Doug's wife has been in the unit for a few weeks and her condition is not improving. Doug walks up to Helen with a knife and demands the doctor be called immediately to come in and see his wife. What should Helen do?

- Helen should stay calm and maintain eye contact with Doug. She should immediately signal a co-worker or press a duress alarm to signal she needs help. She should keep talking calmly to him, but follow his instructions. She should look for an opportunity and a way to move to a safe area.
- Helen should not give Doug orders or attempt to disarm Doug. If Doug proceeds to attack Helen, she should attempt to shield vital organs and do what she can to minimize injury.

Slide 7.6 Dangerous Places

Alan is a caseworker who often visits his clients in their homes. Alan is visiting a new client who lives in a high-crime area and has had violent outbursts in the past. What should Alan do?

- In preparing for the appointment, Alan should schedule it for daylight hours if possible. He should make sure he has the exact location and driving directions prior to leaving his office. He should remove any excess valuables and equipment from his person and car before going to the appointment. If equipment will be needed, it should be secured in a non-visible location, such as a locked trunk before he leaves. Alan should leave information, such as the time, length, and location of the appointment with a co-worker or friend. He should arrange to call that person when he arrives at his destination and as he prepares to leave.
- While driving to the appointment Alan should make sure his windows are rolled up and his doors locked. He should park his car in a well-lit area, away from large trees, shrubs, or other objects where a person could hide. Before he exits the car he should scan the area for unsafe activities. If the situation makes him uncomfortable, he should not leave the car, but should either leave the area or contact his manager or local law enforcement.
- During the visit, Alan should be alert to the behavior of the client and other persons in the home. He should evaluate each for possible signs of imminent violence such as verbal threats or aggression, anger, threatening gestures, drug or alcohol intoxication, or visible weapons. Unsecured weapons should be reported to his supervisor. If a situation does not feel right, Alan should cut the visit short and notify his supervisor of the situation.
- If the client or another person becomes aggressive or violent, Alan should remain calm, not give orders, and should acknowledge the person's feelings. He should avoid any move that might be considered threatening such as moving toward or touching the person, moving rapidly, or talking loudly. He should watch for an open pathway and exit as soon as possible. As soon as it is feasible, Alan should notify his employer or call 9-1-1 if the situation warrants.

Slide 7.7 Dangerous Calls

Sue answers the phone and the person on the other end says a bomb is planted in the facility and will go off in forty-five minutes. What should Sue do?

- Sue should keep calm and keep talking while signaling a co-worker to listen in. If time permits, security should be notified while the caller is on the line. Sue should not hang up, but get as much information as possible. The exact wording of the threat should be written down immediately. If Sue's organization does not have a Bomb Threat Checklist to prompt her for questions to ask and what to listen for, a copy of the Department of Homeland Security's Checklist can be found under the resources for this course or from the FEMA website. http://emilms.fema.gov/is906/assets/ocso-bomb_threat_samepage-brochure.pdf. Sue or her co-worker should notify security or local law enforcement as soon as it is feasible.
- Sue should not hang up the phone or dismiss the call as a hoax.

Slide 7.8 Active Shooter

Tom works in a rehab facility. He is in the cafeteria when a man walks in with a gun and begins to shoot. What should Tom do?

- First, he should look for any available escape route or place to take cover.
- If Tom sees that it is possible to escape. He should leave, even if others refuse to go, this includes leaving any belongings. If it is possible and he is capable, he should assist others in leaving. Tom should prevent others from entering the area where the shooter is located. When law enforcement or security officials arrive, he should keep his hands visible and follow their instructions. If people are injured, it is usually best not to move them. As soon as possible, Tom should call 9-1-1.
- If Tom sees that he cannot escape, he should hide himself away from the shooter's view. For example move behind a desk or into a closed, locked room. If in a room, blockade the door with heavy furniture if possible. If a secure room is not possible, Tom should not put himself in a place where he could restrict his movement. Once out of sight, he should silence his cell phone, pager, radio, television, or any other source of noise. While there is a possibility of an active shooter he should remain calm and quiet. As soon as it is feasible, he should dial 9-1-1. If he cannot talk, he should leave the line open so the dispatcher can listen to the situation.
- If Tom is standing next to the door when the shooter enters and he fears he will be shot, he should follow his organization's guidelines. If your organization does not have guidelines, the Department of Homeland Security offers a publication "Active Shooter How to Respond" if you would like additional information.

Slide 8.1 After an Event

After an Event

Slide 8.2 Document

Following any event of violence in the workplace you should document the incident following your organization's procedures. If a formal documentation process is not in place create your own documentation recording the date and time, the place, witnesses, and the details of the event. Depending on the situation, you may transmit this to your supervisor, human resources, organizational security, local law enforcement, or others.

Slide 8.3 Injuries

After an incident you may have physical and/or psychological injuries.

A healthcare professional should document any physical injuries, even if you feel they are insignificant. If the violent behavior is escalating in an individual the documentation can establish a pattern which you may not see.

Whether you were the victim of workplace violence or just a witness, the incident can leave a mark. Take advantage of debriefing sessions, trauma counseling, and other support services offered to you. Debriefing sessions with professionals can help you determine strategies to manage or avoid similar situations in the future. Counseling and other support may help with recovery. Everyone reacts differently to an incident of violence. Work with your employer to access the services you need.

Slide 8.4 Activity

A co-worker and social acquaintance has been a victim of domestic violence and recently moved into her own apartment. Her husband walks into the clinic appearing agitated and demands you call her to the front or he will go and get her. You should:

- Take him into a private consultation room to try and calm him down.

- Signal a co-worker that this could potentially become a violent incident and talk to him calmly.

- Order him to leave the building at once or you will call the police.

Slide 9.1 Summary

Summary

Slide 9.2 Summary What and Who

The scenarios presented in no way represent all possible situations and responses. While not dwelling on the possibility of violence in your workplace, you need to be aware and prepared. Workplace violence can take many forms from bullying and harassment, verbal and non-verbal threats, domestic violence, stalking, emotional or psychological abuse, intimidation, physical or the threat of physical violent actions, to any behavior which makes an employee or client feel unsafe. Violence may come from a criminal, client or patient, co-worker, or person only peripherally connected to the organization.

Slide 9.3 Summary Actions

To prepare for and in reaction to violence in the workplace you should:

- Stay calm
- When appropriate, be caring and affirm the feelings of the person
- Seek help for anyone showing signs of potential violent behavior
- Be aware of your surroundings and actions you can take to keep yourself safe
- Follow the policies and procedures of your organization
- Document any workplace violence whether you are the victim or a witness

You should not:

- Make any verbal comments which could escalate the situation
- Make any aggressive moves, such as moving quickly, moving toward a person, talking loudly
- Ignore situations which are indicators of potentially violent behavior

Slide 9.4 Summary Objectives

You should now be able to

- Recognize who is vulnerable to workplace violence
- Classify the four types of workplace violence
- List the risk factors which may indicate a person is prone to violence
- Describe ways you can protect yourself, your co-workers, and clients
- State what you should do if you are the victim of or observe violent behavior

Slide 9.5 Key Take-Away

Be aware and sensitive to your surroundings and your environment. While not dwelling on workplace violence, consider what YOU can do to detect, deter, and respond to an incident. Keep yourself and your workplace safe.