

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Workplace violence is defined as:

- Knowingly or intentionally touching another person in a rude, insolent or angry manner;
- Engaging in a course of conduct involving repeated or continuing verbal, non-verbal or physical harassment of another person that would cause a reasonable person to feel frightened, intimidated, threatened or terrorized;
- Knowingly or intentionally communicating a threat to another person with the intent that the other person engage in conduct against his/her will or that the other person be placed in fear of retaliation for a prior lawful act;
- Tampering with, vandalizing, damaging or destroying organization property, including the organization's computer or voice communication systems, or the property of other personnel.

Typology of Workplace Violence

1. **Criminal Intent:** the perpetrator has no legitimate business relationship to the workplace and usually enters the affected workplace to commit a robbery or other criminal act.
2. **Customer/client:** the perpetrator is either the recipient or the object of a service provided by the affected workplace or the victim. The assailant may be a current or former client, patient, or customer.
3. **Co-worker:** the perpetrator has some employment-related involvement with the affected workplace. Usually this involves an assault by the current or former employee, supervisor or manager.
4. **Personal relationship:** the perpetrator is someone who does not work there but has or it known to have. Had a personal relationship with an employee.

Workplace Violence Prevention Strategies:

- Cash control
- Lighting control
- Entry and exit control
- Surveillance
- Hours of operation
- Implementing safety and security policies for all workers
- Recognition of behavior cues
- Hiring process (criminal background screens, check former employer references)
- Training in policies (new-hire orientation, intimate partner violence traits and cues, identification of co-workers as victims or perpetrators, no penalties for coming forward)
- Safety and security protocol implementation

Time of day and location of work, such as working late at night or in areas with high crime rates, are also risk factors for workplace violence. Among those with higher risk factors are workers who exchange money with the public, delivery drivers, **healthcare professionals**, public service workers, customer service agents, law enforcement personnel, and those who work alone or in small groups.

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Every employee is responsible to report any potential or actual act of threat or violence occurring in the workplace to his/her immediate supervisor.

Retaliation against any employee for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

Any employee who was found to have threatened harm or perpetrated violence in the workplace shall be evaluated regarding the need for counseling or disciplinary action. The employee shall be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation and resolution.

Workers' Rights

Workers have the right to:

- Working conditions that do not pose a risk of serious harm.
- Receive information and training (in a language and vocabulary the worker understands) about workplace hazards, methods to prevent them, and the OSHA standards that apply to their workplace.
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect their workplace if they believe there is a serious hazard or that their employer is not following OSHA's rules. OSHA will keep all identities confidential.
- Exercise their rights under the law without retaliation, including reporting an injury or raising health and safety concerns with their employer or OSHA. If a worker has been retaliated against for using their rights, they must file a complaint with OSHA as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days.

Healing Hands adheres to zero-tolerance for workplace violence, verbal and nonverbal threats and related actions.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to help ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit www.osha.gov or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.