

# WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM (WVPP)

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The information and suggestions contained in this program have been developed from reliable sources. SAFECO accepts no legal responsibility for the correctness or completeness of this material or the application to specific factual situations.

This publication does not itself alter or determine compliance responsibilities, which are set forth in OSHA standards and in the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Moreover, because interpretations and enforcement policy may change over time, for additional guidance on OSHA compliance requirements, the reader should consult current administrative interpretations and decisions by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission and the courts.

## INTRODUCTION

Workplace violence causes a significant number of fatalities and injuries throughout the United States. In 1996, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reported that, in any given week, about 20 workers are murdered in the United States. Data on workplace fatalities show that assaults and other violent acts are among the leading causes of workplace fatalities in the United States.

Nonfatal acts of workplace violence are even more numerous. According to estimates from the National Crime Victimization Survey, nearly one million workers are assaulted annually in the United States.

One step that can be taken to control this widespread problem is to develop a Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP).

This booklet will assist you in developing your own Workplace Violence Prevention Program. It covers the following areas:

- **Policy Statement.** This is a very important part of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program because it demonstrates management's commitment to prevention of workplace violence. To illustrate the areas such a statement might include, a sample policy statement is provided. You should customize a policy statement to address the needs of your work site. A copy of the policy statement should be posted in conspicuous locations for employees to read.
- **Workplace Violence Risk Factors.** This section identifies the most common workplace violence risk factors.
- **Categories of Workplace Violence and Workplace Security Analysis.** This section describes the different categories of workplace violence and then provides key elements to analyze your workplace.
- **Communication of Workplace Security Issues.** This section identifies the different methods in which workplace security issues can be communicated to your employees.
- **Recordkeeping and Review.** This section identifies the different reports and records that can be used to track occurrences of workplace violence.
- **Employee Training & Instruction.** This section identifies workplace violence training elements, as well as how often this training should be provided to employees.

To further assist you in your efforts to prevent workplace violence, this program includes appendices at the end.

**Appendix 1 — WVPP Action Plan.** This form can be used to develop an action plan for each workplace violence hazard identified in the workplace security analysis. This form contains the following elements to assist you in developing an action plan: accountability person, corrective actions required, specific action steps needed to accomplish the corrective actions, and target and completion dates to track progress of corrective actions.

**Appendix 2 — Incident Report Form.** The employee's supervisor can fill out this form in the event of a violent incident occurring in the workplace. This form serves as a guide to the supervisor to ensure all important pieces of information associated with a workplace violence incident are included.

**Appendix 3 — Threat & Assault Log.** This form can be used to assist you in tracking the number of violent threats and assaults that occur in the workplace. This comprehensive log is broken down by category of violence, gender of the victims and assailants, time of threat or assault, location of threat or assault, other considerations associated with the threat or assault, and the result of the threat or assault.

To ensure you have an adequate supply, please make multiple copies of these forms before you use them.

# WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM (WVPP)

## *Policy Statement*

The safety and security of our employees is extremely important to \_\_\_\_\_. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on our property will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action that could result in dismissal.

Any person who makes substantial threats, displays threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts on our property will be removed from the premises in a quick and safe manner and shall remain off our property pending the outcome of an investigation. \_\_\_\_\_ will initiate a decisive and appropriate response. This response may include, but is not limited to, suspension and/or termination of any business relationship, reassignment of job duties, suspension or termination of employment, and/or criminal prosecution of the person or persons involved.

We encourage prompt employee reporting of any threatening behavior observed in the workplace. The identity of the employee reporting the observed threatening behavior will be protected to the extent possible.

A copy of this policy statement along with our WVPP is readily available to all employees from our manager(s) and supervisor(s).

\_\_\_\_\_ management is responsible for ensuring that all safety and health policies and procedures involving workplace security are clearly communicated and understood by all employees. Uniform enforcement of the rules in a fair and uniform manner is expected of all manager(s) and supervisor(s) within our company.

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program Manager is \_\_\_\_\_. This individual has the authority and responsibility for implementing the provisions outlined in this program. All managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing and maintaining the WVPP in their respective work areas and for answering employee questions regarding the program.

All employees, including managers and supervisors, are responsible for using safe work practices, for following all directives, policies and procedures, and for maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS

There are risk factors that could increase the likelihood of workplace violence. Some of these risk factors include the following (check all that could potentially apply to your operations):

- Working in isolation
- Working after regular work hours
- Lack of controlled access to the work site
- Dealing with customers with past violent behavior
- Potential weapon easily visible and accessible
- Lack of a quick communication mechanism to security personnel
- Lack of an alternative escape route

## CATEGORIES OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE & WORKPLACE SECURITY ANALYSIS

Workplace analysis involves a step-by-step, common sense look at our workplace to determine existing or potential hazards for workplace violence. First, we need to define the different types or categories of workplace violence. Generally, there are four different categories of workplace violence that will be defined.

Immediately following each defined category is the workplace security analysis for each applicable category. When conducting the workplace security analysis phase of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program, it is important to address the categories of workplace violence that could likely occur in conjunction with any of the above workplace violence risk factors mentioned.

### VIOLENCE BY STRANGERS

This involves verbal threats, threatening behavior or physical assaults by an assailant who has no bona fide business relationship in the workplace.

#### *Workplace Security Analysis*

*Please answer Yes or No to each of the following questions:*

- \_\_Y\_\_N     Are security surveillance measures, such as mirrors or cameras, in place where needed? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- \_\_Y\_\_N     Are there posted signs notifying the public that limited cash is kept on the premises? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- \_\_Y\_\_N     Are procedures in place for employee response during a robbery or other criminal act? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- \_\_Y\_\_N     Are procedures in place for reporting suspicious persons or activities? If no, corrective action may be needed.

- YN Are there posted signs of emergency telephone numbers for law enforcement, fire and medical services where employees have access to a telephone? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Are procedures in place for limiting the amount of cash on hand and using time access safes for large bills? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Are staffing levels appropriate for evening hours of operation or other high-risk time periods? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Are work practices such as the “buddy system” in place and appropriate for identified risks (i.e., walking employees to their cars at the end of the work day)? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Is there adequate lighting and security for designated parking lots or areas? If no, corrective action may be needed.

#### VIOLENCE BY CUSTOMERS OR CLIENTS

This category of workplace violence involves verbal threats, threatening behavior or physical assaults by an assailant who either receives services from, or is under the custodial supervision of, the workplace or the victim. Assailants can be current or former customers and clients such as passengers, patients, retail customers, students, criminal suspects and prisoners. The affected workers typically provide direct services to the public. Examples of direct services include health care employees, retail service employees and teachers.

#### *Workplace Security Analysis*

*Please answer Yes or No to each of the following questions:*

- YN Are there adequate workplace security systems, such as door locks, security windows, physical barriers, and restraint systems? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Do employees possess the skills needed to safely handle threatening or hostile service recipients? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Are systems and procedures in place to warn others of a security danger or to summon assistance (i.e., alarms, panic buttons)? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Are work practices such as the “buddy system” in place and appropriate for identified risks (i.e., walking employees to their cars at the end of the work day)? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Is there adequate lighting and security for designated parking lots or public areas? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- YN Are there available employee escape routes? If no, corrective action may be needed.

## VIOLENCE BY CO-WORKERS

This category of workplace violence involves verbal threats, threatening behavior or physical assaults by an assailant who has some employment-related involvement in the workplace.

### *Workplace Security Analysis*

*Please answer Yes or No to each of the following questions:*

- \_Y\_\_N     Has the establishment's antiviolenace policy been communicated to employees, supervisors and managers? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Do employees, supervisors and managers know the warning signs of potential workplace violence? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Is there access to, and freedom of movement within, the workplace by nonemployees, specifically recently discharged employees? If yes, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Have there been frequently reported cases of verbal abuse or severe threats of physical abuse by managers, supervisors or other employees? If yes, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Are there any prior violent acts, threats of physical violence, verbal abuse, property damage or other signs of stress or pressure in the workplace? If yes, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Are there employee disciplinary and discharge procedures in place? If no, corrective action may be needed.

## VIOLENCE BY PERSONAL RELATIONS

This category of workplace violence involves verbal threats, threatening behavior or physical assaults by an assailant who, in the workplace setting, confronts an employee with whom he or she has a personal relationship outside of work. Personal relations include a current or former spouse, relative, friend or acquaintance.

### *Workplace Security Analysis*

*Please answer Yes or No to each of the following questions:*

- \_Y\_\_N     Is there access to, and freedom of movement within, the workplace by nonemployees, specifically personal relations with whom one of your employees is having a dispute? If yes, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Have there been reported threats of physical or verbal abuse that may lead to violent acts by a personal relation? If yes, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Are adequate workplace security systems in place, such as door locks, security windows, and physical barriers? If no, corrective action may be needed.
- \_Y\_\_N     Are work practices such as the "buddy system" in place and appropriate for identified risks (i.e., walking employees to their cars at the end of the work day)? If no, corrective action may be needed.

Please see Appendix 1 — WVPP Action Plan form that can be used to track completion of observed workplace security hazards.

## COMMUNICATION OF WORKPLACE SECURITY ISSUES

To maintain a safe, healthy and secure workplace, we must have open, two-way communication between all employees, including managers and supervisors, on all workplace safety, health and security issues. We have a communication system designed to encourage a continuous flow of safety, health and security information between management and our employees without fear of reprisal and in a form readily understandable. Our communication system consists of the following items (check all of the boxes that apply):

- New employee orientation on our company's workplace security policies and procedures and work practices
- Periodic review of our WVPP with all personnel
- Training programs designed to address specific aspects of workplace security unique to our establishment
- Regularly scheduled safety meetings with all personnel, which include workplace security issues
- A system to ensure that all employees, including managers and supervisors, understand the workplace security policies
- Procedures for protecting employees who report threats from retaliation by the person making the threats
- Our workplace has fewer than 10 employees and communicates with and instructs employees verbally about general safe work practices with respect to workplace security

## RECORDKEEPING AND REVIEW

Periodic updates and reviews of the following workplace violence reports and records will be made to the following items (check all that apply):

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Log (Form 200)
- Workplace violence incident reports (see Appendix 2 for details)
- Information compiled for recording assault incidents or near-assault incidents (i.e., Threat & Assault Log — see Appendix 3 for details)
- Insurance records
- Police reports
- Workplace survey
- Accident investigations
- Training records
- Grievances
- Inspection information
- Other relevant records and information

## EMPLOYEE TRAINING & INSTRUCTION

We have implemented the following policy on training all employees with respect to workplace violence and security.

All employees, including managers and supervisors, will review the program and procedures on general job workplace security practices. Training and instruction will be provided when the WVPP is established and periodically throughout the life of the program. Training will be provided to all new employees and to other employees who have not received training previously. Additional training and instruction will be given to all employees whenever we are made aware of new or previously unrecognized security hazards.

General workplace violence and security training and instruction includes the following (check all that apply):

- Explanation of the WVPP, including procedures for reporting any violent acts or threats of violence
- Recognition of workplace security hazards, including the risk factors associated with the four categories of violence
- Measures to prevent workplace violence, including procedures for reporting workplace security hazards or threats to managers and supervisors
- Ways to defuse hostile, tense or threatening situations
- Measures to summon others for help and assistance
- Employee routes of escape
- Notification of law enforcement authorities when a criminal act may have occurred
- Emergency medical care provided in the event of any violent act committed upon an employee
- Post-event trauma counseling for those employees desiring such assistance

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM ACTION PLAN

Item Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Target Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Identified Hazard:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Assigned to: \_\_\_\_\_

Corrective Action Required:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Action Steps:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

1. Victim's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Department/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Incident Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. (circle one) Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

4. Type of Incident: (circle one):      Assault      Robbery      Disorderly Conduct  
Other (please specify)

5. Was employee injured?    Yes    No    (circle one)

If yes, please specify the injuries and the location of any treatment:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Did the police respond to the incident?    Yes    No    (circle one)

7. Which police department? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Police report filed?      Yes    No    (circle one)    Report Number: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please describe incident in detail, include the category of violence (see Categories of Workplace Violence for details), and also include any previous incidents:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Action Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

THREAT & ASSAULT LOG

Threat & Assault Log Year: \_\_\_\_\_

THREAT & ASSAULT INFORMATION	January-June		July-December	
Category of Threat or Assault	#Threats	#Assaults	#Threats	#Assaults
Category I <i>Threat or assault by stranger</i>				
Category II <i>Threat or assault by customers/clients</i>				
Category III <i>Threat or assault by co-workers</i>				
Category IV <i>Threat or assault by personal relations</i>				
GENDER OF VICTIMS & ASSAILANTS	#Threats	#Assaults	#Threats	#Assaults
Number of female victims				
Number of male victims				
Number of female assailants				
Number of male assailants				
TIME OF THREATS & ASSAULTS	#Threats	#Assaults	#Threats	#Assaults
Day shift				
Evening shift				
Night shift				
Weekend shift				

Threat & Assault Log Year: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION OF THREATS & ASSAULTS	January-June		July-December	
	#Threats	#Assaults	#Threats	#Assaults
On work premises				
Parking lot				
Other duty station				

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	January-June		July-December	
	#Threats	#Assaults	#Threats	#Assaults
Threats & assaults involving firearms				
Threats & assaults involving other weapons (not firearms)				
Number of cases where the victim was working in isolation				

RESULTS OF THREATS & ASSAULTS	January-June		July-December	
	#Threats	#Assaults	#Threats	#Assaults
Death				
Physical injury				
Stress/psychological impairment				
No injury				