

## Reduce the Risk of Workplace Violence

Office workers everywhere experience acts of workplace violence — sometimes never giving them a second thought. Hostilities such as physical and verbal assaults, threats, coercion, intimidation and all forms of harassment constitute acts of workplace violence.



### Warning Signs of Violence

- Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees.
- Change in mood or attitude.
- Statements indicating desperation over family, finances or other problems.
- Drugs and/or alcohol use. Often people with substance abuse problems will act out in the workplace.
- Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior.
- Direct or veiled threats of harm.
- References to weapons.
- An employee who consistently leaves his/her workday early without authorization, or presents numerous excuses for shortening the work day, should set off an alarm. This is a significant sign if an individual is typically prompt and committed to a full work day.
- Inability to concentrate. If an employee is suddenly unable to concentrate, this may indicate that he/she is distracted and in trouble. A manager should be notified to try to encourage the employee to seek assistance.

### What You Should Do

Talk to your supervisor immediately if you observe unusual behavior in others. Never underestimate the potential for a co-worker to act out violently. Being proactive can help prevent an incident of workplace violence.

### In The Event of an Act of Violence

- › Your goal is to help defuse the person's anger so that he/she can cool down and talk calmly and rationally.
- › Maintain your composure. You cannot help someone calm down if you are emotional.
- › Try to signal for help from a co-worker who can then contact management, the police or paramedics.
- › Listen attentively. Hostile individuals who feel that they have your attention are sometimes less likely to act out physically.
- › Maintain eye contact. This also helps to calm the person because the individual feels that he/she has your attention.
- › Be courteous and patient until help arrives.
- › If the person is threatening you with a weapon, follow his/her instructions and stall for time.
- › Never try to intercept the weapon or act aggressively against the individual. You do not want to risk harm to yourself or others.

For more workplace violence prevention resources, view this topic online at [www.AlliedBarton.com/Tips](http://www.AlliedBarton.com/Tips)



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