

Take Formal Steps to Prevent Workplace Violence

Healthcare and service providers are more prone to violence than other industries.



Workplace violence is a growing concern for human services organizations. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines workplace violence as “any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation or other threatening disruption behavior that occurs at the worksite”. The facts below highlight the prevalence of this epidemic:

- Approximately two million people annually report some type of workplace violence.^{1,2}
- 25 percent of workplace violence goes unreported.^{1,2}
- Second only to transportation, workplace violence is one of the major causes of death in the corporate world with a comprehensive annual cost of \$130 billion.^{1,2}
- Healthcare and service providers are more prone to violence than other industries.³
- In 2016 and 2017, active shooter incidents occurred in 21 states.⁴
- 60 percent of the active shooter incidents ended before the police arrived, lasting between two to five minutes in length.⁵

¹ Alertfind.com/workplace-violence-statistics/

² Advantagenews.com/news/workplace-violence-affects-2-million-american-per-year

³ www.NSC.org/work-safety/safety-topics/workplace-violence

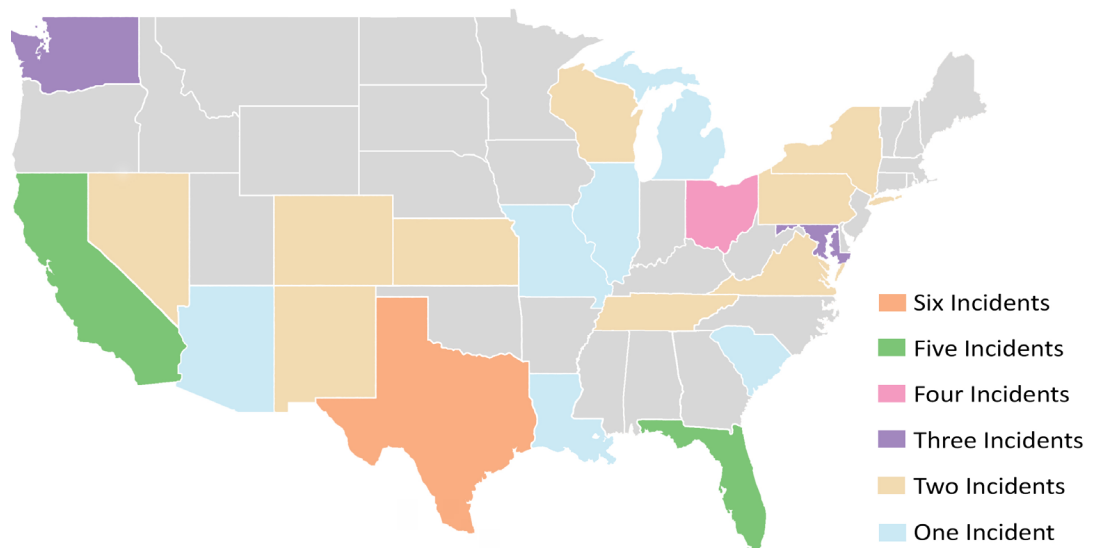
⁴ NWAhomepage.com/.../a-closer-look-mass-shootings-on-rise-over-recent-years

⁵ “A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 and 2013”
<http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2014/september/fbi-releases-study-on-active-shooter-incidents/pdfs/a-study-of-active-shooter-incidents-in-the-u.s.-between-2000-and-2013>

Why implement a Workplace Violence Program?

- The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 mandates all employers have a general duty to provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. The assailants may be your employees, clients, or outsiders.
- The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) published the Standard for an Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response Program (NFPA 3000). This was developed and released in 2018 and is intended to provide guidance on many aspects of preparing for and responding to active attack situations. This guidance provides facility risk assessments that can help organizations evaluate the probability and consequences of an attack by location.
- NFPA 3000’s focus is on shootings and other workplace violence, referred to as “hostile events”, in private businesses, large planned events/venues and public places. Attackers, also defined as “active assailants”, can use other tools to commit violence, such as chemicals, knives, explosives, and motor vehicles.
- Failing to have a well-developed Workplace Violence Program, which includes training employees and clients, can lead to a decrease to your organization’s reputation. If an incident were to occur and your organization was determined to be negligent in prevention, it could negatively impact future outcomes such as client enrollment, employee retention, community recognition and funding sources.

For the overall safety of employees, clients, customers, visitors, and the general public, organizations should establish and implement a formalized Workplace Violence Prevention Program.



Active shooter incidents, 2016-2017. Data courtesy Federal Bureau of Investigation: [fbi.gov/file-repository/active-shooter-incidents-us-2016-2017.pdf/view](https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/active-shooter-incidents-us-2016-2017.pdf/view)

Workplace Violence Prevention

Types of Workplace Violence

Workplace Violence falls into four categories:

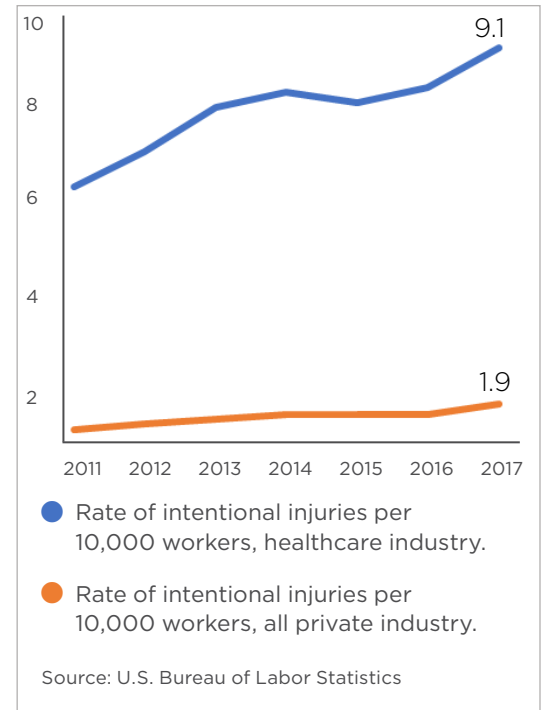
Type 1: Criminal Intent: There is no relationship to the victim or the organization, the criminal is there to commit robbery or another crime.

Type 2: Customer/Client: There is a relationship with the organization and the violence is directed at employees by clients, patients, residents, students, inmates or any others for whom an organization provides services.

Type 3: Worker-on-Worker: Current or former employees act out toward their past or present places of employment.

Type 4: Personal Relationship: Violence committed by someone outside the workplace who has a personal relationship with an employee, i.e. domestic violence.

In addition to the above risk categories, health care and social assistance workers experience more injuries as compared to private industry.



Basic Overview of an Effective Program

Elements of a Workplace Violence Prevention Program should include:

- Workplace Violence Policy Statement/written program supported by management
- Planning with the involvement of the community (law enforcement, fire/EMS, emergency management, facility management, business leaders, community leaders and education leaders).
- Establishment of a threat assessment team
- Hazard assessment of each property location, center, workplace
- Implementation of Hazard Controls and Prevention measures
- Employee training and education
- Formal drills to test the program (mock drills can include active involvement with local law enforcement or private security companies)
- Record keeping, incident reporting, investigation, and evaluation
- Recovery plan following an incident

Taking the Necessary Actions to Protect Your Organization

Recognizing that the potential for violence is real and more common than ever, is the first step to begin protecting businesses and communities from acts of violence. Obtaining a “prevention of workplace violence” mindset from all staff levels can be achieved by heightening awareness of the crisis facing communities and businesses today. When senseless, unthinkable acts occur, it is important that planning has taken place and everyone within an organization knows their role and how to respond.

Begin the process through researching available resources provided in your communities and through government agencies. Review credible publications from the experts such as OSHA, Homeland Security, NIOSH, NFPA, the National Safety Council, the FBI and Local Law Enforcement. Nationwide has developed three additional tools available for members to use. These include the following:

- [Workplace Violence Prevention: Security Assessment](#)
- [Sample Workplace Self-Inspection Security Checklist](#)
- [Workplace Violence Prevention: Supporting Clients](#)

Nationwide’s tools were developed to assess your organization’s vulnerabilities so you can eliminate or strengthen weak areas identified. Once completed, the findings should help steer your organization to develop a specific plan, train employees and clients, and be ready to act at a moment’s notice.

Recommended Resources:

[OSHA: Workplace Violence](#)

[NFPA 3000, Contact Your Local Law Enforcement Resources](#)

[NFPA 3000 General Info](#)

[Department of Homeland Security](#)

[NIOSH](#)

[National Safety Council](#)

[U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation: Workplace Violence Issues in Response, Critical Incident Response Group, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime](#)

Other sources of information include Niosh and [Freemaninstitute.com](#)

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