

Workplace Violence: Three Steps to Developing Administrative Controls

Administrative controls can help increase the likelihood that staff will be better prepared to make key lifesaving decisions.



Creating a Workplace Violence Prevention Program that meets organizational needs can feel overwhelming. What works for one organization may not specifically work for another. When an incident occurs, staff and clients may have mere moments to make a decision. Implementing strong administrative controls can help increase the likelihood that staff will be better prepared to make key lifesaving decisions.

A well-conceived program can help an organization quickly identify, assess, and respond to potential threats before they cause harm. An effective program's goal is to reduce the severity of injuries, loss of life, property damage, and the amount of time needed to return to normal operations.



Leadership Support

As with any program, success or failure is dependent on strong leadership support. Promoting open lines of communication helps staff feel comfortable reporting potential threats.

Management buy-in is crucial for implementation of an effective workplace violence prevention program, as it may require capital investment and significant time from key employees.

Three Steps to Creating a Successful Program:

STEP ONE: CONDUCT A RISK ASSESSMENT

Before a program can be developed, it's important to know your organization's unique vulnerabilities. Nationwide's Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Resources, such as the Workplace Security Checklist and Supporting Clients Through Workplace Violence Incidents, can assist in this process. Additional items to consider:

- Has your organization experienced any past workplace violence incidents? What lessons could be learned to prevent future incidents by reviewing past incident reports, insurance claims, and mandatory government reporting documentation? How can your response be improved?

What lessons could be learned from past incidents?

- Consult with outside security professionals and local authorities, to assist in the assessment. For example, security consultants, local law enforcement, and even facilities management staff can provide feedback on physical security and access controls to the facilities, staff, clients, and utilities.
- Conduct walkthroughs of each facility, interviewing staff to understand distinctive services provided, special needs of clients, and access controls by consulting [Nationwide's Workplace Security Checklist \(CMO-1132AO\)](#).
- Consider developing a risk assessment team, with staff from various departments and shifts. Diversity of opinions and experience will provide unique perspectives when assessing potential risk.

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STEP TWO: DEVELOP THE PROGRAM

Having a written prevention and response program can save lives by ensuring everyone is united in reporting and acting on suspicious activity. Consider the following:

- Is the program specific to your organization's exposures? Does it include a zero-tolerance statement for violence in the workplace? Instead of using a cookie-cutter safety plan, develop a program based on the risk assessments completed in Step One.
- Are there several ways for employees and clients to report potential incidents, including anonymous reporting? Multiple avenues help ensure that system breakdowns and interpersonal conflicts don't prevent timely reporting.
- Who is responsible for investigating reported incidents? A Workplace Violence Emergency Response Team should be a small and impartial group with the power to act quickly, ideally within 24 hours of a report.
- How will staff and clients be trained on your zero-tolerance policy, signs of workplace violence, reporting procedures, and response to incidents? Will this be conducted during orientation, and annually thereafter?
- Do you plan to provide recovery services such as support through an employee assistance plan and/or other contracted counseling services for victims of workplace violence? How will you leverage outside agencies and governmental partners to resume your organization's mission?



STEP THREE: ADAPT WITH CHANGE

Regular review is important as operations change, services evolve, and clients transition to different programs. As more information becomes available regarding the effectiveness of controls and/or new risks are identified, your workplace violence program should be updated.

- As program changes create new vulnerabilities, risk assessments from Step One should be repeated. Have renovations to a building, or the introduction of a new client, rendered a current control ineffective?
- Could new technology and security strategies provide further support to the program? Even a small investment in security controls could mean the difference between life and death.

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- Is the Workplace Violence Emergency Response Team accountable to leadership for their response to incidents? An annual review of all incidents, including root cause analysis and areas for improvement, can significantly improve future response.
- As state, federal, funding, and referral sources requirements change, it may become even more important to ensure review by your legal counsel.

Workplace violence can be a significant threat to not only your employees, but the community your organization supports. Careful consideration, planning, and training can significantly decrease the impact of an incident, and ultimately save lives.

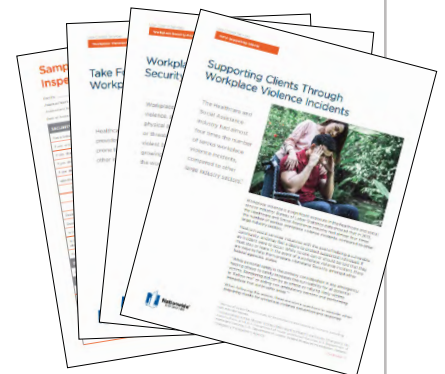
Please go to MyLossControlServices.com for more information on workplace violence resources from Nationwide.

References and Additional Resources to Consider

- **NFPA3000 Standard for Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Program**
- **NFPA 730 Guide for Premises Security**
- **NFPA 2800 Standard for Emergency Action Planning**
- **Incorporating Active Shooter Incident Planning into Health Care Facility Emergency Operations Plans:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Federal Emergency Management Agency 2014

Make use of these additional resources.

To learn more about preventing workplace violence, ask your agent or our Loss Control Services team for our [Self-Inspection Security Checklist \(CMO-32AO\)](#), as well as bulletins on [Formal Steps to Prevent Violence \(CMO-1133AO\)](#), [Security Assessment \(CMO-1134AO\)](#), and [Supporting Clients \(CMO-1135AO\)](#).



Providing solutions
to help our members
manage risk.®

For your risk management and safety needs, contact Nationwide Loss Control Services: 1-866-808-2101 or LCS@nationwide.com.