

October, 2005

Chicago Dept of Public Health



OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Violence Prevention E-Brief

October is Violence Prevention Awareness Month

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE... *rudeness, incivility, danger?*

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, WORKPLACE VIOLENCE is any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting. It includes but is not limited to beatings, stabbing, suicides, shootings, rapes, near suicides, psychological traumas such as threats, obscene phone calls, an intimidating presence, and harassment of any nature such as being followed, sworn at or shouted at.



Employers Are Legally and Morally Obligated to Provide a Safe Workplace

Each year, up to two million American workers become victims of violent crime while at work. Some estimates place the annual cost to US companies as high as 36 billion dollars per year.



Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent. Salvador Hardin

Behaviors that place the workplace at risk for violence:

- Weapons
- Bullying- intimidation, abuse of power
- Terrorism
- Hostile work environment
- Domestic Violence
- False or malicious statements
- Retaliation

Tool Box for Preventing Workplace Violence

All Employees Should Be Taught

- To alert supervisors about any safety and security concerns and follow up in writing
- Techniques for recognizing and defusing potentially violent behavior or situations
- Procedures, policies and work environment arrangements developed to control the risk to workers
- Proper use of security hardware and communications procedures- access to telephones, etc
- The appropriate response to violent incidents, including emergency and hostage situations
- What to expect from supervisors AFTER a violent incident - de-briefing, support, referrals, etc

Manager/Supervisor Responsibilities

- Be current and alert to the quality of the workplace environment and to behavioral, attitudinal and morale changes that might occur
- Provide appropriate support and timely information to employees about violent incidents
- Effectively use employee assistance program referrals
- **Respond** to victims of workplace violence- utilize local resources
- Identify and respond to at-risk behavior- prevent escalation!

Workplace Violence Websites

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/violcont.html>
http://www.osha.gov/workplace_violence

<http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence.html>
<http://www.workplace-violence.com>