

Workplace Violence

About 8 minutes to deliver

Most of it comes from outside — an upset customer, a member of the public, a domestic situation that follows someone to work.

Violence at work is a real occupational hazard and it is covered by the general duty clause — an employer has to provide a workplace free from recognised hazards likely to cause death or serious harm, and this is one.

Most of it does not come from a colleague. It comes from a member of the public, an upset customer or homeowner, someone on the site who should not be there, or a domestic situation that follows somebody to work.

WARNING SIGNS

Aggression escalates, and it usually gives you a run-up:

- Voice rising, speech speeding up, swearing that gets personal.
- Getting closer, squaring up, blocking a doorway or your route out.
- Clenched fists, jaw set, pointing, jabbing.
- Fixed staring, or a sudden unnatural calm after being loud — that one is often the last step before it happens.

DE-ESCALATING

- Stay calm and quiet. Your tone sets theirs. Speaking more slowly and softly than they are is the most effective thing you can do.
- Give them room. Do not close the distance, do not touch them, do not point.
- Let them talk. A lot of anger runs out if it is allowed to be said. "Tell me what happened" beats "calm down" — nobody in history has calmed down when told to.
- Do not argue about who is right, do not defend the company, do not be sarcastic, do not take it personally even when it is personal.
- Say what you can do, not just what you cannot.
- Keep your exit behind you. Position, not confrontation.
- Leave. Walking away is winning. Nothing on this job is worth taking a punch for, and no property is worth it either.

THE HARD RULES

- Never physically confront a thief or a trespasser. Tools and copper are replaceable and insured. Get a description, get clear, call it in.
- A weapon means leave and call 911. Do not negotiate.
- Report every threat, including the one they "did not really mean." A threat is information, and the pattern only exists if the parts get written down.

IF SOMETHING IS HAPPENING AT HOME

If someone has a protective order or a situation that could reach you at work, tell me. There is a lot we can do quietly — where you park, who has your schedule, who is told not to let somebody through the gate, and not sending you out alone. None of it works if nobody knows, and none of it goes any further than it needs to.

AND BETWEEN US

Zero tolerance for threats, intimidation and bullying inside the crew, including the kind that gets called banter. There is a line, everybody knows where it is, and somebody who does not is told once.

ASK THE CREW

- Has anyone had an aggressive encounter on a job in the last year?
- Who is working alone or in a customer's home this week?
- If somebody walked onto this site angry right now, what would we actually do?

29 CFR 1910.132 · OSH Act § 5(a)(1)

This is a toolbox talk, not a course. It is general awareness on one topic — not site-specific, not a hazard assessment, and not a substitute for assessment of your workplace by a competent person, your written programs, or manufacturers' instructions. It does not by itself satisfy any OSHA training requirement. Regulations change; verify against the current standard. Whoever delivers it is responsible for deciding it is suitable and sufficient for the work. Where a talk covers first aid, resuscitation, or mental health it is general safety information, not medical advice, not a substitute for professional medical care or certified emergency-response training, and it confers no certification — in an emergency, call 911. Free to print and use, as is, with no warranty of any kind. Migna Safety Solutions · training.mignasafety.com

v2026-09-08 · <https://training.mignasafety.com/toolbox-talks/workplace-violence>

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Workplace Violence

About 8 minutes to deliver · 29 CFR 1910.132 · OSH Act § 5(a)(1)

Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			

I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

Form supplied by Migna Safety Solutions · v2026-09-08 · <https://training.mignasafety.com/toolbox-talks/workplace-violence>

Keep this sheet with your training records. This form is supplied blank by Migna Safety Solutions — we did not deliver this session, were not present, and make no representation about what was said or who attended. A toolbox talk is general awareness on one topic and does not by itself satisfy any OSHA training requirement. The employer remains responsible for site-specific hazard assessment and for the training its workers are required to have. Where a talk covers first aid, resuscitation, or mental health it is general safety information, not medical advice, and confers no certification — in an emergency, call 911. Free to print and use, as is, with no warranty of any kind. training.mignasafety.com