

Workplace Violence Toolbox Talk

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A ready-to-run 5-minute crew talk · Workplace Violence Prevention · OSHA General Duty Clause §5(a)(1)

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How to run this talk (5 minutes): Gather your crew before the shift. Read each talking point aloud, then ask the discussion questions and let people answer. Close with the one rule and remind everyone how to report. **Federal OSHA** has no specific workplace-violence standard — the General Duty Clause may apply case by case, and OSHA publishes prevention guidance. Covered **California** employers must maintain an effective written Workplace Violence Prevention Plan and training under Labor Code §6401.9. This is an awareness refresher; it does **not** replace your site-specific plan or formal training.

Know the Warning Signs

- **No single behavior or personal trait predicts violence.** Report observable **conduct and context** — not diagnoses, stereotypes, or labels.
- Behaviors needing prompt assessment: **direct or veiled threats**, statements of retribution ("getting back at" someone), stalking or targeted harassment, escalating aggression or intimidation, violent acts or property destruction, fixation on a target or prior attacks, threatening weapon behavior, or evidence of planning.
- Also report a sudden **pattern** of escalating concerning behavior, viewed in context — a trained threat-assessment or response team should evaluate it.

Recognize Aggressive Behavior

- **Threats** come in three forms: **veiled** (hinting at harm), **conditional** ("do this or else"), and **direct** (a clear stated intent).
- **Sexual harassment** — unwelcome conduct based on sex that becomes a condition of employment or is severe or pervasive enough to create a hostile environment. A single extremely serious incident can be enough — report it under the anti-harassment policy; don't wait for repetition.
- **Verbal abuse** — bullying, mocking, intimidation, and insults. It is not "just being mean," and it isn't acceptable.

Report It — Every Time

- Report through the route named in the workplace plan — **supervisor, security, HR, or a designated confidential hotline**; call **911** for an immediate threat. An EAP can support you, but contacting it doesn't replace the safety report unless the employer expressly designated it as a reporting channel.
- **Don't confront** a person with an unauthorized weapon or one displayed threateningly — move to safety and use the emergency procedure. Authorized law-enforcement or security weapons are handled under the site plan. Report objective security violations (like bypassing access controls), not people who are merely unfamiliar.
- Threats and physical assaults also go to **local law enforcement** per the workplace plan, and every incident should be documented.

If Someone Gets Aggressive

- **De-escalate only when it's safe and within your training:** calm, respectful tone; no arguing, threats, or sudden movements; don't block their exit; keep **as much distance as conditions allow** and your own escape route. If they escalate or have a weapon — disengage, warn others, activate the emergency plan, and call security or 911.
- If challenged to a fight, **turn it down and walk away**; get help if you can. Never fight back unless your life is in danger.
- **Active shooter: Run · Hide · Fight.** Run if a safe escape exists; otherwise hide, lock or block entry, and silence devices; fight only as a last resort when life is in imminent danger. Call 911 when safe. **Property-demand robbery is different:** if escape isn't safely available, avoid sudden movements and follow your robbery-response training — property is replaceable.

Discussion — Ask the Crew

1. What warning signs would make you concerned about a coworker — and who would you tell?
2. Exactly how and to whom do we report a threat, a weapon, or an unfamiliar person in *our* facility?
3. If an angry person got in your face, what would you do — and what should you never do?
4. Where are the spots in our workplace where violence is most likely (cash handling, working alone, late hours, public contact)?

The one rule to remember today: Report concerning behavior early and put personal safety first. De-escalate only when it is safe and within your training; otherwise disengage, move to safety, warn others as directed, activate the emergency plan, and call security or 911. Never remain in danger merely to "win" or defuse a confrontation.

This talk is a refresher, not a complete program. A strong program pairs employee training with a written prevention plan — required by law in some states (e.g. California Labor Code §6401.9) and recommended in OSHA's prevention guidance. The **Workplace Violence Training Kit** gives you the full professional video (available in English or Spanish), the employee quiz and answer key, a Presenter's Guide, sign-in sheets, and a printable Certificate of Completion — reusable for every employee. **SafetyVideos.com/Workplace_Violence_Training_Video_Package_p/37.htm**

Toolbox Talk Sign-In Sheet

Attendance record · Workplace Violence Toolbox Talk · OSHA General Duty Clause §5(a)(1)

Date Location / Facility Presented by

#	Name (print)	Signature	Job title / Department
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By signing above, each attendee acknowledges they participated in this workplace violence toolbox talk on the date shown. Retain this sheet with your training records. **Note:** attendance at a toolbox talk is not complete workplace-violence training — keep it with, not in place of, your written prevention program and each employee's formal training records.