



AmTrust North America
An AmTrust Financial Company

Safety Zone

Violence in the Workplace / Program Development Overview for Management – Grocery

Any job where public contact occurs, such as retail premises, is particularly fertile ground for workplace violence. All grocery stores and warehouses should have an up-to-date policy on violence in the workplace. Violence in the workplace policies and training help reduce violent incidents and manage them better if they do occur. Violence in the workplace policies are a best practice in the retail setting.

Workplace homicides are mostly robbery-related. The main point to stress to your employees both in your policy, and as reminders, is that no merchandise or money is worth an employee's or a customer's life.

As part of their due diligence, businesses need to define workplace violence and identify hazards associated with the likelihood of violence. Consult your corporate attorney for specifics and the latest information on this subject. A formal program provides goals and expectations, a communication plan, and a training plan with implementation guidelines.

Think of your plan as a four-step process.

1. Develop a store-specific policy.
2. Determine the process, including what to do in the event of a threat.
3. Outline how training will occur.
4. Determine ways to minimize the potential for workplace violence.

Here are ways to help deter violence.

- Hiring and supervising – Conduct criminal background checks on all applicants. Also make sure your interview questions are appropriate and strictly aligned with relevant employment laws. For instance, in the interview process, many questions are off limits. Know the law with regard to what you can and cannot ask about.
- Threat management team – Form a team. This team could include professionals from human resources, employee assistance program, legal counsel, upper management, security, a front-line supervisor, and an employee representative.
- Evaluate your risks – What are some of your most pressing safety challenges relating to theft and employee violence?
- Audit – Regular security audits should include workers' compensation records, employee disciplinary files, OSHA reports, security reports, and personnel files.
- Violence prevention policies – This will include a zero-tolerance rule for violence initiated by an employee to result in immediate termination. Also have referrals ready to local resources for victims of violence. Protect the confidentiality of victims. Consult your corporate attorney before writing or implementing a workplace violence prevention program.
- Terminations – Terminations handled with respect and dignity reduce the likelihood of workplace violence. Never schedule an exit interview if that employee has exhibited violent tendencies or made threats. Talk to your legal counsel and security team to determine the best way to handle matters such as returning personal belongings.
- Training - Train all employees on workplace violence facts, your organizational policies, warning signs of violence, and proper response and defusing techniques.

- Train managers frequently on threat management and security implementation.
- Weapons – Develop and post a written weapons policy that prohibits weapons in the workplace.

Are You In The Zone?

1. Have you developed a Violence in the Workplace policy?
2. If so, is it site-specific? Does it consider differences in locations, for example 24-hour stores versus stores open fewer hours or stores with pharmacies?
3. If you have a policy, have you followed the four-step process shown above? If not, which steps need improvement?
4. How well trained are your managers? Do they need more intense or more frequent training?

I have received information on violence in the workplace, program development overview – management zone.

Employee Name: _____ Date: _____

For additional information and resources on this topic and other safety and risk management subjects be sure to visit the Loss Control section on our website:

<https://www.amtrustgroup.com/small-business-insurance/claims/prevention>

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