



# 5-minute safety talk

## What Is **Workplace Violence**?

**Workplace violence** is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. *U.S. Department of Labor, 2016*  
Anyone in an organization can be a perpetrator.

- ✓ Verbal/non-verbal abuse
- ✓ Harassment and bullying
- ✓ Threatening behavior
- ✓ Physical assault
- ✓ Domestic violence

### **LEVEL 1: INITIAL SITUATION TO DIFFUSE**

(verbal/non-verbal abuse, rude/disrespectful or intimidating behavior)

- Stay calm and speak softly and slowly.
- Demonstrate understanding through body language such as nodding and short statements.
- Don't argue or tell the person outright that he or she is wrong.
- Ask how you can help or propose a solution if possible.
- Involve another employee or a supervisor if appropriate for the situation.
- Be firm but respectful about what is unacceptable such as "Please don't shout" or "Let's step to the side so we can discuss this."

### **IF BEHAVIOR CONTINUES:**

- Disengage from the situation as quickly as you can.
- Document the incident in case it becomes a pattern and ends up being investigated.
- Ask for assistance from your supervisor or Human Resources (HR) representative.

### **LEVEL 2: ESCALATED SITUATION TO**

**MANAGE** (repeated verbal/non-verbal abuse, harassment or bullying, threatening behavior, physically, in writing or verbally)

- Take actions to secure your own safety such as leaving the area, calling for assistance, or involving a supervisor or HR representative.
- Contact your supervisor or HR representative to report the incident and get direction on what to do.
- Document the incident.
- Call for security or 9-1-1 if needed.

### **LEVEL 3: EMERGENCY RESPONSE NEEDED**

(extreme and out of control anger, suicidal statements, display or talk of weapons, domestic violence, criminal incidents such as property damage, physical assault and armed robbery)

- Take actions to secure your own safety such as leaving the area, calling for assistance or involving a supervisor or HR representative.
- Call 9-1-1 immediately and cooperate with law enforcement officials.
- Document the incident.

Visit [nsc.org/members](https://www.nsc.org/members)  
for more safety tips