

# Costs of Violence in the Workplace

## Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs

Based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration, *Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late-Night Retail Establishments* **OSHA 3153-12R 2009**

# Definition of Workplace Violence

- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act)
- Incident Report Forms

# OSHA Act

## General Duty Clause:

Requires employers to provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm

# Definition of Workplace Violence Classifications

- Fatal
- Nonfatal

# Sample Incident Report Form 1

- Grabbed
- Kicked
- Hit with object
- Shot (or attempted)
- Threatened with weapon
- Bomb threat
- Vandalism (employer's property)
- Arson
- Pushed
- Scratched
- Bitten
- Sexually assaulted
- Verbally harassed
- Animal attack
- Vandalism (own property)
- Slapped
- Hit with fist
- Knifed (or attempted)
- Assaulted with weapon
- Verbally threatened
- Robbery
- Other

The elements from this incident report was adapted from *Violence on the Job: a Guidebook for Labor and Management*, published by the Labor Occupational Health Program, University of California, Berkeley.

# Sample Incident Report Form 2

- Assault
- Criminal Mischief
- Disorderly Conduct
- Harassment
- Larceny
- Menacing
- Reckless Endangerment
- Robbery
- Sex Offense

The elements from this sample list are taken from Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc., *Workplace Violence Prevention Program Loss Control TIPS—Technical Information Paper Series*.

# Costs of Workplace Violence: Placement with the Framework

- Individual
- Interpersonal/Familial/Generational
- Community
- Society

# Societal Costs of Workplace Violence

- Total Economic Costs \$121 billion
  - Fatalities
  - Nonfatalities



# Workplace Fatalities

- Hartley, Biddle, Jenkins (2005)
  - (cost-of-illness approach: combines direct and indirect)
  - (direct: medical expenses; Indirect: wage-based, including base wage, benefits, economy-wide productivity growth, and life-cycle wage growth)
- 7,925 workplace homicides between 1992 and 2001  
(excluding 9/11)
- \$6.5 billion
  - » Ranging from \$470 million in 1999 to \$768 million in 1994

# Workplace Nonfatalities

- NIOSH
  - Nonfatal Assaults
    - » 876,000 lost workdays
    - » \$16 million lost wages

# Risk Factors: Industry Context

- Fatalities
  - Taxicab services
  - Liquor stores
  - Detectives and protective services
  - Commercial gas stations
  - Retail jewelry
- Nonfatalities
  - Service and retail trades (nursing homes, social services, hospitals, grocery stores, and eating and drinking establishments)

# Risk Factors: Occupational Characteristics

- Exchange of money
- Solo work and isolated work sites
- Sale of alcohol
- Poorly lit stores and parking areas
- Lack of staff training in recognizing and managing escalating hostile and aggressive behavior

# Violence Prevention Programs

- Management commitment and worker involvement
- Worksite analysis
- Hazard prevention and control
- Safety and health training

# Management Commitment and Worker Involvement

- Management Commitment
  - Demonstrating organizational concern for worker emotional and physical safety and health, which includes medical and psychological counseling and debriefing for personnel who experience or witness assaults and other violent incidents
  - Exhibiting equal commitment to the safety and health of workers and patrons
  - Assigning responsibility for the various aspects of the workplace violence prevention program to ensure that all managers, supervisors and workers understand their obligations
  - Allocating appropriate authority and resources to all responsible parties
  - Maintaining a system of accountability
  - Supporting and implementing appropriate recommendations from safety and health committees
  - Working constructively with other parties, such as landlords, local polices and other public safety agencies to improve security in and around the worksite

# cont. Management Commitment and Worker Involvement

- Worker Involvement
  - Contributing to the development of procedures that address safety
  - Understanding and complying with the workplace violence prevention program
  - Reporting violent incidents promptly and accurately
  - Participating in safety and health committees
  - Taking part in training programs

# Worksite Analysis

- Analyzing and tracking records
  - Job titles
  - Workstations
  - Date and time of day
- Conducting screening surveys
- Analyzing workplace security



# Hazard Prevention and Control

- Minimizing risk through engineering controls and workplace adaptations
- Minimizing risk through administrative and work practice controls
- Employer responses to incidents of violence

# Safety and Health Training

- Training for all employees
- Training for supervisors/managers and security personnel

# Recordkeeping and Program Evaluations