Workplace Violence: Recognizing, Preventing And Responding Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. **Escalation Warning Signs:** Verbal aggression, clenched fists, pacing, or hostile tone signal rising tension that can quickly transition into violent behavior.
2. **Threat Indicators:** Direct threats, intimidating comments, or fixation on a grievance indicate a high-risk individual who may move toward action.
3. **Environmental Vulnerabilities:** Uncontrolled access points, isolated work areas, and inadequate visibility increase the chance of surprise attacks or assaults.
4. **High-Risk Interactions:** Disciplinary meetings, customer disputes, terminations, and enforcement tasks often trigger emotional reactions that escalate into violence.
5. **Delayed Reporting:** Workers who ignore or minimize early warning cues allow threatening behavior to grow unchecked, increasing the likelihood of physical incidents.
6. **Lack of De-Escalation Skills:** Without training, employees may respond with anger, defensiveness, or poor communication—behaviors that can intensify conflict.

STATS

- In Canada, nearly 1 in 2 workers (about 49%) experienced sexual harassment and violence in the workplace over the last two years (2020-2021 survey data), with underreporting due to fear of retaliation hindering prevention efforts.
- Over 70% of Canadian employees have experienced at least one form of workplace harassment or violence (2020-2021), including verbal abuse and intimidation, often in healthcare and education where response protocols are critical.
- In the US, workplace violence costs businesses $130 billion annually in lost productivity, medical costs, and legal fees (2020-2025 estimates), with 85% of training programs recognizing bullying as a form of violence to improve prevention.
- Canadian nurses reported 61% experiencing serious workplace violence issues, including 30% sexual harassment and 21% physical violence (2020-2023), underscoring gaps in early recognition and rapid response systems.
- Workplace violence accounted for about 14% of all occupational fatalities in the U.S. in 2022.