Workplace Violence

What is workplace violence?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines workplace violence as; any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site.

Workplace Violence Facts:

Workplace violence ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide. It can affect and involve employees, clients, customers, and visitors.

Homicide is currently the fourth-leading cause of fatal occupational injuries in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), of the 4,679 fatal workplace injuries that occurred in the United States in 2014, 403 were workplace homicides. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a major concern for employers and employees nationwide.

Identifying Potential Problems and Risk Factors of Current Employees

There is no particular "profile" or litmus test to indicate whether an employee might become violent. It is important for employers and employees to remain alert to problematic behavior which could indicate a possible violent situation.

Risk Factors Which May Lead to Violence

- Conflicts between coworkers or workers and supervisors.
- Mishandled termination or other disciplinary action.
- Bringing weapons onto a worksite.
- Drug and/or alcohol use on the job.
- A grudge over a real or imagined grievance.

Risk Behavior That Can Be Problematic

- Increase belligerence.
- Ominous, specific threats.
- Hypersensitivity to criticism.
- Recent acquisition/fascination with weapons.
- Apparent obsession with violent themes.
- Interest in recently publicized violent themes.
- Outbursts of anger.