

Violence Free Workplace


Prevention, Response, and Recovery

Organizational Development
and Training

Christie Lee
Instructor








Ground Rules

- Treat others with respect
- Avoid stereotyping and discriminatory remarks
- No legal advice or debating VTA Policy
- Do not discuss incidents at your unit due to confidentiality
- Turn off or silence your electronic devices



Course Goal

- To communicate VTA's policy, standards, and expectations regarding violence in the workplace and to promote a violence free workplace.
- To provide VTA employees with the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize, appropriately respond to, and recover from workplace violence.

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Course Objectives

- Define workplace violence and recognize warning signs of potentially violent behavior
- Identify security measures that can reduce the risk of workplace violence incidents
- Describe strategies for dealing with different, difficult, and dangerous people
- Discuss the value of reporting workplace violence
- Review the importance of recovering from workplace violence

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Course Outline & Objectives

- Defining Workplace Violence
- Recognizing Warning Signs
- Dealing with Different, Difficult, and Dangerous People
- Recovering from Workplace Violence

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

National Statistics

Incident Type	Count
Homicides	517
Rapes	36,500
Robberies	70,000
Aggravated Assaults	325,000
Simple Assaults	1.3 Million
Threats, Intimidation, Harassment	6 million +

Source: U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Justice: 2007

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Overview of Work Environment

- Working in an open and accessible environment
- Handling money or items of value
- Working alone
- Interacting with the public and dealing with customer and/or employee complaints



SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Module 1

Defining Workplace Violence

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

VTA's Violence Free Workplace Policy


2.0 Scope

VTA property and off premises

In or around VTA buildings	Parking lots
Maintenance facilities	Bus or train yards
All other VTA and transit grounds	Vehicles
In the vicinity where transit vehicle picks up and carries passengers	
Anywhere else work is being performed	

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 Employees
- 3.2 Supervisors, Managers, Chiefs
- 3.3 Human Resources Department
- 3.4 Risk Management
- 3.5 Protective Services Department
- 3.6 Visitors, Vendors, and Consultants
- 3.7 General Manager




SANTA CLARA

Valley Transportation Authority

VTA's Violence Free Workplace Policy

5.0 Definition
5.1 Workplace Violence

4.0 Policy - Behaviors
Any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse (4.0 A-L) pg 3-4





SANTA CLARA

Valley Transportation Authority

Types of Workplace Violence

- Employee/Employee Conflicts
- Criminal Intent
- Customer Conflicts
- Domestic Violence





SANTA CLARA

Valley Transportation Authority


Learning Activity 1

What is Workplace Violence?


SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

What is Workplace Violence?

1. An employee is robbed at gunpoint in the agency's parking lot.




2. A customer who is upset and angry that service is behind schedule spits on you as he enters the vehicle.




SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

3. A recently fired employee says to his supervisor, "You haven't heard the last of me. I don't get mad, I get even!"




4. As you are driving the bus through an underpass someone from above throws a brick that hits the roof of the vehicle.




SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

5. While at work another employee grabs your hand and asks you out on a date. When you say "no" he/she doesn't let go of your hand and says, "I don't take no for an answer."




6. A customer yells at you that the train is "late again." When you try to check his fare he calls you "stupid" and makes a racial slur.




SANTA CLARA
VTA Valley Transportation Authority

7. Your ex-boyfriend unexpectedly shows up on your route and says to you, "You'll never get rid of me." He then walks away.




8. You are driving a transit vehicle when an impatient driver behind you gives you the middle finger and cuts you off almost causing an accident.




SANTA CLARA
VTA Valley Transportation Authority

9. A mechanic yells at another mechanic that he is a "worthless employee" who should never have been hired by the agency.







10. Several teenagers sit down in the back of your bus, start acting rowdy, and are being disruptive to other customers.



SANTA CLARA
VTA Valley Transportation Authority

Physical Assault



SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Threatening Behavior

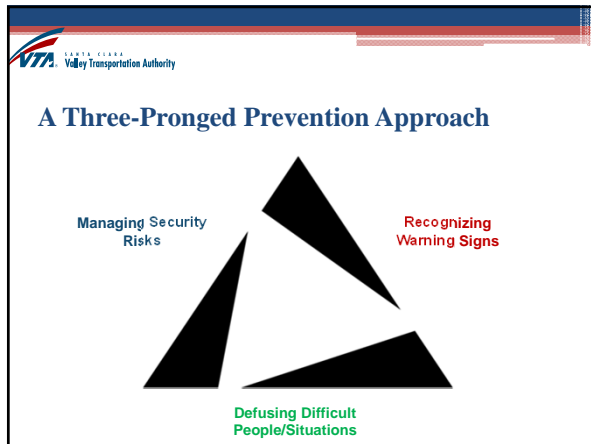
SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Verbal Abuse

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Different Perspectives

- Determination is often times made by an individual's assessment based on his/her perception
 - Perception is based on individual's cultural background, upbringing, occupation, and work and life experiences.
 - Trust your judgment in determining what is a threatening or intimidating situation
 - Do not second-guess yourself
 - Be prepared to ask for help
- Management – take report seriously no matter how minor you think the incident is




Managing Security Risks

- Your work environment is open and accessible, you may work alone, or handle money/valuables.
- Your risks are reduced through:
 - Physical protective measures (p7)
 - Procedural security measures (p7)
 - Employee actions (p8)


Images: A security station with multiple monitors and a person working; a red 'STOP' sign with text 'VTA ID Badge Visitor Badge' and 'Required beyond this point'; a security station in a lobby.

Conclusion

- The transit environment involves a variety of security risks
- Workplace violence includes a broad range of situations often based on a personal assessment of the situation
- A proactive approach can help minimize the risk of workplace violence
- Take action on a daily basis to reduce your risks

 **Module 2**

Recognizing Warning Signs

 **Recognizing Signs**

- A change in behavior on the part of a co-worker or “regular” customer that causes concern
- Behavior that is unacceptable or inappropriate for the situation displayed by employees, customers, or “strangers”

 **Lesson Learned**

- Missed warning signs
- Ignored or unreported warning signs
- Reported warning signs that were not acted upon

Examples: [Select Violence cases](#)



 **Warning Signs**

Expressions of violence and/or an unusual interest in weapons



Exhibits signs of depression




 **Warning Signs**


Increased work problems




Signs of domestic violence



 **Learning Activity 2**
Recognizing Warning Signs
Case Study 1 – 4, pg 10-13
Group Activity






Conclusion

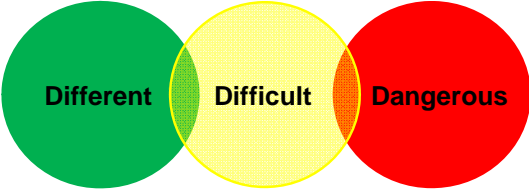
- Remain alert to warning signs of potentially violent behavior, but keep in mind that not all “warning signs” are indicators of potential workplace violence.
- Be aware of a negative change in behavior, or behavior that is inappropriate or unacceptable for the situation.
- If you recognize a warning sign, report your concerns in a timely manner to appropriate agency personnel.









Module 3

Dealing with Different, Difficult, and Dangerous People






Dealing with People





Different

- We all have differences
- Recognize your own biases
- Be aware of responses to differences that don't value diversity and increase conflict
- Don't act upon inaccurate assumptions and stereotypes
- Treat others with dignity and respect regardless of your personal views and opinions

Offer Help, Options, or a Referral



Dealing with People



Difficult

- **Maintain self-control**
 - Project Calmness
 - Slow down your responses – pause, deep breath, think before speaking
 - Identify your “hot buttons” and don't take the bait

Acknowledge the Person's Feelings

 **Valley Transportation Authority**


Dealing with People



Difficult

- Avoid confrontation

Summarize with Empathy



Dealing with People


Difficult

What to do?

Diffuse the situation.




Difficult Interaction




Top 10 Guidelines for Defusing Difficult People

1. Acknowledge the person's feelings to indicate that you can see that they are upset or angry.
2. Use respectful and non-confrontational language.
3. Summarize with empathy to show concern.
4. Don't take things personally. Accept criticism in a positive way.
5. Allow the person to maintain his/her dignity.



Top 10 Guidelines for Defusing Difficult People

6. Be patient and tolerant when dealing with a difficult person.
7. Give reasonable choices and consequences to defuse a difficult person by encouraging him or her to modify behaviors.
8. Don't let the person push your "hot buttons."
9. Avoidance is not always the best defense, especially when there is a policy violation or the situation needs to be addressed.
10. Maintain self-control.



Difficult Interaction – Re-visited

Difficult Interaction Re-Visited

VTA SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Dealing with People






Dangerous

- Protect yourself
- React appropriately to the situation
- Call for help – 911, VTA Alert, OCC, Protective Services
- Report the incident

VTA SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Identifying the Perpetrator

Eyes		Hat
Ears		Jewelry
Mouth/Nose		Shirt/Blouse/Dress
Hair/Facial Hair		Coat
Forehead		Pants/Skirt
Cheeks/Chin		Socks/Shoes
Neck		Oddities/Tattoos
Complexion		General Appearance
Body Shape/Size		Accessories

WB Pg 28

VTA SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Report the Incident

- Policy AS-HR-PL-2600 4.1 Reporting Acts or Threats of Violence, page 5
- Policy AS-HR-PL-2600 4.2 Mitigating Measures (Managers and Supervisors) page 5
- Policy AS-HR-PL-2600 3.0 & 3.1 Responsibilities (All Employees) pg 1
- Incident Report (last 2 pages)
- 9-1-1
- VTA Alert App
- O.C.C.

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Conclusion

- Protecting yourself is your top priority
- Call for immediate assistance when the person becomes (or is) dangerous
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect regardless of differences
- When dealing with difficult people, apply defusing strategies based on the situation
- Report all incidents so appropriate measures can be taken

SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

Module 4

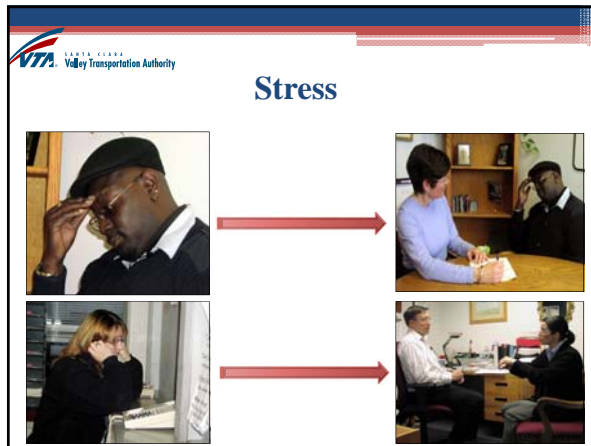
Recovering from Workplace Violence

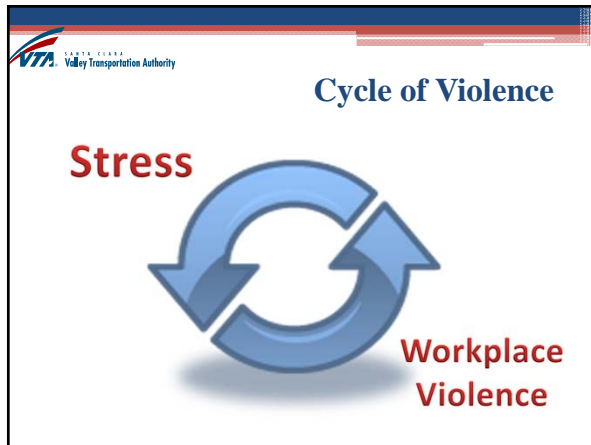
SANTA CLARA Valley Transportation Authority

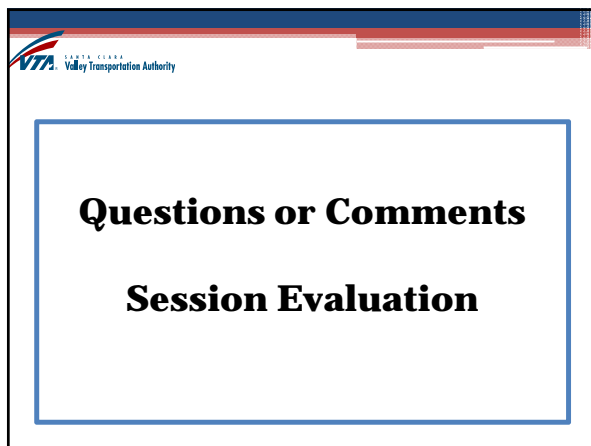
Who is Affected

```

graph TD
    WV((Workplace Violence)) --> V((Victims))
    WV --> W((Witnesses))
    WV --> F((Friends))
    WV --> CP((Customers and the Public))
    WV --> Fam((Family))
    WV --> CW((Co-Workers))
  
```









Emergency: Operations Control Center (OCC)
VTA Employees (800) 922-4321
Security Threat Line (408) 952-6835,

Emergency: Protective Services (408) 321-7171

Non-Emergency: Office Civil Rights (408) 321-5600

EAP (Employee Assistance Program)
www.mylifevalues.com
Log in ID: Valley Transportation Authority
Password: eap
