

Corporate Security & Safety

Workplace Violence Prevention

Hi there! Today, we're going to take a few minutes to talk about Workplace Violence. We'll start by going over McKesson's Workplace Violence Policy, review the behaviors and signs you need to watch out for, and then go over some need-to-knows should you ever find yourself face-to-face with violence. Ready? Let's get started!

First things first, let's make sure everyone's on the same page when it comes to workplace violence. Workplace violence is a complex issue, and contrary to popular belief, it is not limited to physical assaults. It includes any threatening behavior or communications, harassment, verbal or mental abuse, bullying or any terrorist-related action.

Millions of people report being victims of workplace violence every year. Unfortunately, many more incidents go unreported. Cases of workplace violence can include verbal threats, attacks, and in the most severe cases, fatalities. And while fatalities only make up a very small portion of all reported incidents, it shows us what can happen when workplace violence goes unreported.

Here at McKesson, we're committed to providing every employee a safe working environment. We have a Workplace Violence Policy that prohibits any workplace-related act that causes fear, intimidation, or physical injury. This includes threats made physically, in writing, verbally, electronically or by any other means that makes you or a colleague feel unsafe.

Every McKesson employee is responsible for reporting all incidents of workplace violence and maintaining a respectful work environment, free from threats and violence.

Our Workplace Violence Policy also includes incidents prompted by domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence can be easy targets at the workplace as their abusers know when and where they'll be.

We continually strive to create a workplace culture where we watch out for one another. Keep an eye out for signs that a colleague is suffering domestic violence at home. They may come to work with bruises, receive harassing calls, come in early or stay late, or frequently be absent. You may notice a general decline in job performance or difficulty focusing on their tasks.

If you notice these signs in a colleague, notify your supervisor or HR so McKesson can offer them the help they may need. Also remember the Employee Assistance Program is available to every McKesson employee 24/7 if you need help.

Be sure to notify and coordinate with Corporate Security if someone is served with an order of protection.

One of the most important things to understand about workplace violence is that it's both predictable and preventable. It almost always follows an escalation of behavior – we call this the Workplace Violence Continuum. Recognizing the signs is essential to protecting yourself and your coworkers. The continuum follows five levels, let's review so you know the behaviors you need to watch out for.

At level one in the continuum, an individual may display menacing behavior or make indirect threats. They could be looking for attention or blowing off steam about their job. Maybe they feel like they're being teased or talked down to. Whatever the reason, these signs need to be reported to prevent an escalation of behavior. Connect with a supervisor, human resources or security and let them know about the conflict.

When somebody doesn't get the attention they wanted by making indirect threats, the individual's behavior may escalate into level two of the Workplace Violence Continuum. You might see the individual slamming doors, kicking something over or throwing things around. Even though these outbursts aren't necessarily directed at people, they're still unacceptable.

As a McKesson employee, you have to remain professional and stay in control of your emotions. Speak with your supervisor, HR or security if you witness loud outbursts or tantrums.

People reach level three when indirect threats or loud outbursts turn into direct threats. These will be explicit messages about their intention to commit a violent act, and will be made directly to the intended victims. At stage three it is probable that a violent incident will occur. In cases like this, the need for immediate reporting becomes more important.

At level four, you may notice obvious signs of depression, substance abuse, poor hygiene, or a sudden change in a colleague's appearance or behavior. It is critically important that you report changes like this. Even if the individual has no plans for violent behavior, they may need professional help.

When an individual reaches level five they'll likely display signs of withdrawal. They may remove personal belongings from their workspace without resigning from their position. At this point, they likely have "an end game" so they might cash out their pension plan, make changes to their will or have stacks of past-notice bills. If you overhear or observe this type of behavior, know that it is very likely a violent incident will occur. Report your observations to security immediately. In the event there is a weapon present or fear of imminent violence, dial 911.

Workplace violence prevention depends on three main components: Observation, Reporting and Follow-up. Use the Workplace Violence Continuum as a tool to make effective observations. See something? Say something – report incidents promptly to your supervisor, HR, corporate security or through the Ethics Hotline. Dial 911 when violence is imminent. McKesson is committed to following up on all reports and ensuring appropriate and responsible action is taken.

When reporting, provide as much detail about the incident as possible. Include the name of the person who committed the act, the affected parties and what actions were taken. It's also important to use discretion and keep reports between you, your supervisor, security, HR or the Ethics Hotline private. Do not discuss alleged cases of workplace violence with colleagues unless necessary. Rumors can be very damaging.

So what do you do if you're confronted with aggression? Most importantly, stay calm. Do not mirror their behavior or act with aggression as it may worsen the situation and escalate their behavior.

Acknowledge the person, but don't engage. They want to know they are being heard; let them speak. This will help regulate their breathing, slow down their heart rate, and in turn, promote more rational thinking. Give yourself time and room to react by maintaining your personal space.

Try to make sure you're not alone with the person. Make eye contact and do not act defensively or argue, it's much more important to be safe than right.

Okay, so you know how to deal with aggressive behavior. Now let's go over the worst-case scenario: an active shooter event.

Just a quick reminder: Legal authorities regulate the possession of firearms. McKesson strictly prohibits the possession of firearms and any other weapon in McKesson buildings, parking lots and vehicles, except to the extent such a prohibition is unlawful under applicable law.

So, what do you do if the unthinkable happens? Know that every second counts and what you do matters. Based on strategies from past mass shooting survivors, the top three options are to Run, Hide or Fight.

RUN. If there is a clear path, you need to escape. Leave your belongings behind and proceed with caution. Look – is there a clear pathway? Listen for voices, gunshots, and smell for gunpowder. Make your escape when the path is clear. Try to convince others to follow you, but don't let anyone's indecisiveness slow you down. Once you reach safety call 911 and do what you can to prevent others from entering the building.

If an escape path is not available and you're unable to evacuate, you should HIDE. Try to find a private room or somewhere you can lock or barricade the doors. Conceal yourself: turn off the lights, silence your phone, wipe off perfume or cologne, and take cover. If an escape path becomes available, take it. Do not reveal your location until police declare "All Clear".

As a last resort only, you may have to FIGHT for your life. Trying to plea with the assailant or begging for mercy is typically ineffective during an active shooter event. Instead, act with aggression – you're fighting for your life and your goal is to take the shooter down. Work as a team. Improvise weapons. Try to disarm the shooter. Be sure of yourself and commit to your actions. Most importantly, remember that fighting is a last resort option ONLY. Run when possible. Hide when possible.

When law enforcement arrives their #1 priority is to locate and control the shooter. They are not there to evacuate the building or provide medical attention. Remain calm and follow their instructions. Keep your hands visible at all times and avoid pointing or yelling. Help for the wounded will come.

Active shooter events are rare, but they show us what can happen if workplace violence goes unreported. Understand that your ability to think clearly will be impaired in a high stress situation, so run through scenarios in your head in advance. Know where exits are located and identify rooms that could provide safety. Having a plan is the best thing you can do to prepare.

That was a lot of information. Now let's make sure you understand these important concepts with a short quiz. Remember what we just covered and you'll ace this one. Good luck!