KASEWARE

Identifying the Pathway to Violence: Tools and Strategies for Workplace Safety

Proactive Strategies to Identify, Document, and Prevent Workplace Threats

2025

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Why Workplace Violence Prevention Is a **Critical Priority**

Workplace violence is an increasingly pressing issue, affecting businesses across all industries. From verbal threats to physical attacks, incidents of workplace violence have far-reaching consequences for employees and organizations alike. A well-structured prevention strategy not only safeguards employees, but also enhances organizational stability and resilience. This guide provides a framework for developing an effective workplace violence prevention program, covering risk assessment, training, reporting mechanisms, and compliance with evolving legal requirements.

Understanding
Workplace Violence

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Workplace violence encompasses a range of harmful behaviors, including verbal abuse, threats, harassment, and physical assaults. According to the **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**, over 2 million U.S. workers report being victims of workplace violence annually. Certain industries, such as healthcare, retail, and public service, face a higher risk of violence due to their interactions with the public and volatile workplace conditions.

The effects of workplace violence extend beyond the immediate victims. **Witnessing or experiencing violence can lead to increased stress, reduced productivity, and higher employee turnover.** A proactive prevention strategy is essential to fostering a safe and supportive work environment.

2 MILLION
Annual Victims of Workplace Violence

Types of Workplace Violence

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Criminal Intent: The most common type, occurring when the perpetrator has no legitimate connection to the workplace and commits violence as part of a criminal act.

Customer/Client: When a customer, client, patient, or other service recipient becomes violent toward an employee, often in high-stress environments like healthcare, education, or retail.

Worker-on-Worker: Also known as horizontal or lateral violence, this occurs between employees due to interpersonal conflicts, power dynamics, or workplace disputes.

Personal Relationship: When the perpetrator has a personal connection with the victim, such as a current or former spouse or family member, but the violence occurs in the workplace, endangering others.

The Hidden Costs of Workplace Violence

Organizations must also consider the significant financial, reputational, and operational impacts. A lack of proactive prevention measures can lead to increased expenses, decreased productivity, and long-term damage to a company's stability.

FINANCIAL COSTS

- **Legal and Compliance Expenses:** Lawsuits, settlements, and regulatory fines resulting from incidents.
- **Medical and Workers' Compensation Costs:** Treatment for injured employees and associated claims.
- **Increased Security Spending:** Additional investments in security personnel, surveillance, and access controls.
- **Productivity Loss:** Absenteeism, lower employee engagement, and reduced efficiency.

Studies show that workplace violence costs U.S. businesses over **$167 billion annually** in lost productivity, legal fees, and medical expenses. However, **preventative strategies significantly reduce these costs**—companies that implement workplace violence prevention programs experience **lower turnover, fewer claims, and improved workplace morale**, leading to a strong return on investment.

REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE

- **Negative Publicity:** High-profile incidents can cause damaging media coverage.
- **Recruitment Challenges:** Job seekers may avoid organizations with a history of workplace violence.
- **Customer Trust:** Clients and partners may sever relationships with companies perceived as unsafe.

OPERATIONAL DISRUPTIONS

- **Workplace Closures and Investigations:** Critical business functions may halt during internal reviews.
- **Increased Turnover:** Employees may leave due to safety concerns.
- **Loss of Productivity:** A culture of fear and stress reduces efficiency and teamwork.

Workplace violence prevention isn't just about safety—it's a smart business decision. Organizations that prioritize safety see better retention, higher productivity, and a stronger workplace culture.

$167 BILLION
Lost Annually to Workplace Violence

The Evolving Legal Landscape of Workplace Violence Prevention

Regulatory frameworks surrounding workplace violence prevention continue to expand, with specific mandates emerging at both state and federal levels. Several new and far-reaching mandates have been introduced. Although other requirements exist, such as those specific to certain industries and evolving state-level regulations, the following are some of the newest and most important. Employers must proactively address these regulations to ensure compliance and reduce liability risks.

CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 553 (SB 553)

California's SB 553 mandates that employers in high-risk industries develop workplace violence prevention plans, including hazard identification, employee training, and reporting procedures. The law also requires companies to establish clear protocols for responding to violent incidents, maintain detailed records of reported incidents, and conduct regular reviews of their prevention strategies to ensure ongoing compliance and effectiveness. **Laws similar to this one are likely to emerge in other states in the near future.**

TEXAS SENATE BILL 240

Texas Senate Bill 240, now Chapter 331 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, required that healthcare facilities adopt a written workplace violence prevention plan by September 1, 2024. Given that healthcare workers are among the most vulnerable to workplace violence, this regulation underscores the necessity of proactive safety measures.

OSHA GUIDELINES

While no specific federal standard exists, OSHA enforces a **general duty clause** requiring employers to provide a safe workplace. Employers are encouraged to implement prevention programs, maintain detailed incident records, and conduct ongoing employee education focused on recognizing early warning signs, de-escalation techniques, and appropriate response strategies for workplace violence threats.

Industry-Specific Workplace Violence Resources:

Certain sectors have tailored guidelines for workplace violence prevention. Healthcare organizations must implement protections for staff, including mandatory training on de-escalation techniques and protocols for handling violent incidents. Schools must ensure the safety of both students and staff by implementing threat assessment programs, enhancing physical security measures, and providing training on emergency response procedures. Public-facing businesses, such as retail and hospitality, must establish clear policies for handling aggressive customers, invest in security personnel or surveillance systems, and provide employees with training on conflict resolution and personal safety strategies.

HEALTHCARE:

- **Joint Commission Standards**: Specific guidelines for healthcare facilities to prevent and manage workplace violence, including patient-to-staff aggression.
- **American Nurses Association (ANA)**: Resources on preventing and responding to workplace violence for nurses.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**: Information on healthcare worker safety, including violence prevention.

RETAIL:

- **National Retail Federation (NRF):** Guidance on retail security practices, including managing customer aggression.
- **Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA):** Best practices for retail workplace violence prevention.

TRANSPORTATION:

- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA):** Regulations and guidance on preventing and responding to violence on public transportation.
- **American Trucking Association (ATA):** Information on truck driver safety, including protection against potential violence.

CORRECTIONS:

- **American Correctional Association (ACA):** Standards and training materials for correctional facilities to manage inmate violence.
- **Bureau of Prisons (BOP):** Guidelines for staff safety in federal prisons.

Tools to Stop Violence Before It Starts

Effective workplace violence prevention requires more than policies and procedures — it requires the right tools. And while many organizations employ both physical security measures as well as real-time incident management tools to mitigate these threats, organizations need robust systems to gather information, connect the dots, and take action to mitigate these risks. Below, we outline some of these key categories of additional tools essential for creating safer workplaces.

Documentation and Analysis Tools

Accurate documentation isn't just about recording events—it's about creating a structured, reliable source of truth that can inform decisions in real time. By documenting and having a means to analyze findings and incidents, organizations can shift from reactive responses to proactive prevention by leveraging the data collected.

By systematically collecting and analyzing information, teams can identify emerging threats, track risk trends, and make informed decisions that prevent escalation. **Proper documentation serves as the foundation for everything else**, providing insights that improve incident responses and prevent similar occurrences from happening in the future.

LOOK FOR TOOLS THAT OFFER:

1. **Centralized Data Management:**
Securely store all incident-related information in one place, such as incident reports, witness statements, and security footage. This ensures accessibility and consistency in handling sensitive data.

2. **Historical Data Analysis:**
Understanding past incidents helps uncover risk factors and vulnerabilities, enabling organizations to better allocate resources and refine their strategies.

3. **Link Analysis:**
These tools visually map connections between individuals, events, and locations, revealing patterns and hidden relationships that may signal risks.

ARE INSIDER THREATS PUTTING YOUR WORKPLACE AT RISK?

Not all workplace violence originates from outside threats—sometimes, the danger comes from within. Learn how to detect and mitigate internal risks with Kaseware's **Insider Threat Guide**

[Download]

Detection and Reporting Tools

The sooner a potential threat is identified, the easier it is to defuse before it leads to violence. Early detection allows organizations to take proactive measures and intervene before an incident escalates. Effective reporting tools not only streamline the process of collecting concerns but also build a safety culture by encouraging employees to report issues without fear.

Anonymity in reporting, for instance, helps ensure that employees aren't deterred from speaking out by concerns about retaliation or stigma. Kaseware helps organizations set up systems that make detecting and addressing threats faster and more efficient.

LOOK FOR TOOLS THAT OFFER:

1. Anonymous Reporting Mechanisms: Providing employees with the ability to report concerns anonymously removes barriers to reporting. This encourages a culture of openness, where safety issues can be addressed without fear of retaliation.

2. Real-Time Alerts: Immediate notifications for critical incidents allow organizations to respond quickly and efficiently. Fast response times help minimize the potential impact of violence and protect those involved.

3. Advanced Reporting Analytics: Identify trends or high-risk individuals and locations using advanced analytics. These insights allow organizations to take preventative measures based on concrete data and emerging risks.

HOW KASEWARE HELPS

Early threat detection prevents escalation. The right tools make reporting easy, encourage employees to speak up, and enable swift intervention. Kaseware provides anonymous reporting, real-time alerts, and advanced analytics to help organizations identify risks before they become serious threats.

Learn More About Kaseware's Reporting Solutions

Learn More
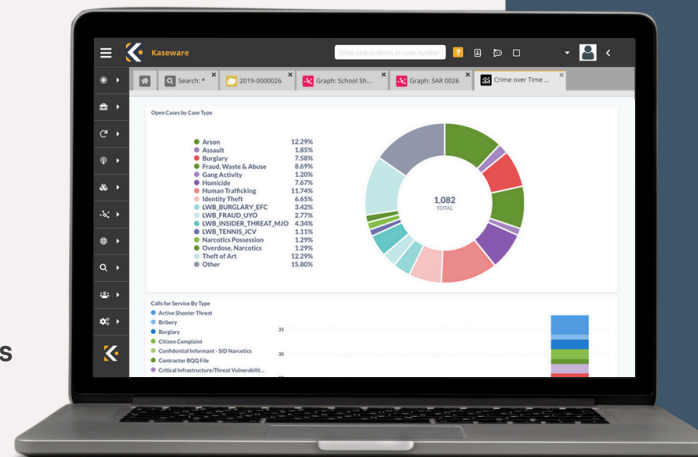
Post-Incident Investigation and Refinement Tools

After an incident occurs, it's essential to learn from it to prevent future occurrences. A well-conducted investigation can identify gaps in existing protocols, uncover risk factors, and provide actionable insights for improvement. Every investigation offers valuable lessons to refine policies, training, and security measures, strengthening an organization's resilience.

Beyond identifying immediate causes, post-incident investigations help uncover patterns and weaknesses that may not be obvious. Communication gaps, unclear reporting, or slow response times create safety risks. A thorough review enables leadership to identify these issues and strengthen prevention efforts.

LOOK FOR TOOLS THAT OFFER:

**1. Detailed Incident Analysis:**
Investigating each incident helps organizations understand contributing factors. This analysis identifies gaps in policies or training that can be addressed to prevent future incidents.

2. Policy and Training Updates:
Use insights from incidents to revise policies and improve training programs. This continuous improvement ensures teams are equipped to handle evolving threats.

3. Comprehensive Case Management:
Managing follow-up investigations ensures that actions are tracked and issues are resolved in a timely manner. This creates a feedback loop that helps organizations build a more resilient and responsive safety program.
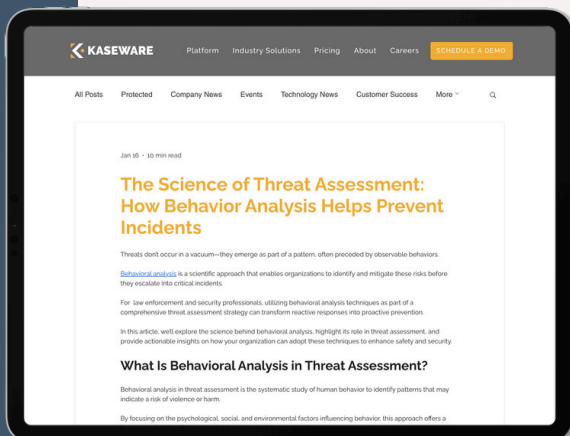
BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT IN ACTION

Understanding behavior patterns is key to preventing workplace violence before it escalates. Learn how threat assessment strategies and behavior analysis can help identify risks early and enhance safety.

Stay proactive—explore the science behind prevention.

Read More

Strength in Collaboration

Workplace violence prevention becomes significantly more effective when organizations can leverage expertise and integrated tools to proactively assess, respond to, and mitigate risks. For example, **Kaseware's case management platform supports collaboration by incorporating specialized partners**, enabling a more robust and coordinated approach to creating safer work environments.

WAVR-21: PREDICTIVE RISK ASSESSMENT

WAVR-21 is a powerful tool integrated within Kaseware's platform that assists organizations in assessing the potential risk of violence in the workplace. Through a structured questionnaire, WAVR-21 helps evaluate various factors, such as past behavior and environmental influences, that can contribute to the likelihood of violent incidents.

By identifying individuals who may be at an increased risk of violent behavior, organizations can take proactive steps to intervene and prevent escalation before it occurs. This tool's integration with Kaseware allows for seamless case management and easy access to critical information, enabling security teams to act swiftly and efficiently.

SIKICH: EXPERT GUIDANCE FOR COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Sikich offers valuable consulting services that help organizations build and implement effective workplace violence prevention strategies. With years of experience, Sikich provides tailored advice on policies, training programs, and crisis management plans, ensuring that an organization's approach is comprehensive and aligned with best practices.

Their expert consultants work alongside internal teams to refine security measures, improve response protocols, and foster a culture of safety. By partnering with Sikich, Kaseware users gain access to the guidance needed to enhance their strategies and ensure ongoing success in maintaining a secure workplace.

Strength in Collaboration

A comprehensive workplace violence prevention program necessitates a multi-faceted approach. While technology like Kaseware and its integrated WAVR-21 tool and expert consulting from firms like Sikich are crucial for assessment and strategy, **organizations should also actively cultivate relationships with local law enforcement, mental health professionals, and employee assistance programs.**

These partnerships create a vital support network, enabling swift intervention and access to specialized resources when needed. Furthermore, participation in industry security forums and peer networking groups allows for the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, strengthening collective resilience against evolving threats. This collaborative ecosystem, combined with robust technology and expert guidance, forms the bedrock of a truly effective and proactive security posture.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Kaseware's platform not only integrates essential tools but also collaborates with a range of trusted partners who provide specialized expertise in workplace violence prevention. These partnerships enhance Kaseware's capabilities, allowing organizations to access the latest resources, insights, and best practices for building a comprehensive and effective strategy. By working together with industry-leading experts, Kaseware helps organizations stay ahead of potential threats, ensuring a safer, more resilient workplace for everyone.

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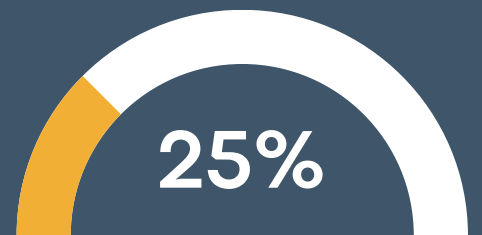
Reduction in workplace violence incidents when organizations have a comprehensive prevention strategy [1]

[1] Society for Human Resource Management. (2023). SHRM Workplace Violence Research. SHRM

Take Action With the
Right Tools

Preventing workplace violence requires more than policies—it demands the right technology to detect threats, streamline reporting, and coordinate responses. **Kaseware provides a centralized platform that simplifies incident tracking, ensures thorough investigations, and enhances overall security.**

With real-time data, automated workflows, and comprehensive case management, Kaseware helps organizations proactively identify risks before they escalate. Our platform enables teams to track suspicious activity, analyze trends, and respond swiftly to emerging threats.

Kaseware integrates case management, evidence tracking, and communication tools to improve collaboration and ensure critical information is always accessible. With a data-driven approach, you can create a safer, more resilient workplace.

Ready To Take The Next Step?

Kaseware provides the tools, resources, and expertise to help you build a safer workplace with a comprehensive strategy that works. Ready to get started? Schedule a demo today to learn how Kaseware can support your workplace violence prevention efforts.

Schedule a Demo

KASEWARE

Our secure case management platform easily handles your operations, cases, records, evidence, and more, while providing convenient features like dashboards, link analysis, the ability to work securely from any location, and intelligent forms so you never have to fill out duplicate information again. **Our goal is to make your job easier and the world a safer place.**

Backed by Expertise

Kaseware was founded by former Special Agents in the FBI who created Sentinel — the investigation case management software still used by the FBI today.

Advanced Technology

Our link analysis and graphing capabilities are second to none. With Kaseware, your teams get the analytical tools needed for intelligence and insights.

Highly Configurable

Kaseware is designed to be easily modified and configurable to the needs of your organization or agencies and even individual units and users.

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Respond · Investigate · Resolve