Work-Related Violence

Preventing and responding to
work-related violence

safe, fair, productive working lives

Contents

Based on material developed in consultation with the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities working group (Australian Capital Territory, Comcare, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia).

Work-related violence

Work-related violence is any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.

This definition covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that can create a risk to the health and safety of workers. Some industries describe behaviours that fit this definition as 'acting out', 'challenging behaviour' or 'behaviours of concern'.

Examples of work-related violence include:
- biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking
- throwing objects
- pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing
- verbal threats, armed robbery, sexual assault
- attacking with knives, guns, clubs or any type of weapon.

Sources of work-related violence
This guide covers two types of work-related violence: external violence and service-related violence.

External violence is usually associated with robbery or other crimes and the perpetrator is someone from outside the workplace. It can happen in any industry but often occurs in the retail, hospitality, security, cash-handling, finance and banking industries.

Examples of external violence include:
- a sales assistant, working alone at night, threatened with a knife and robbed
- a construction worker hit by a bottle thrown by an aggravated motorist
- a receptionist experiencing domestic violence, which eventually extends to her workplace via abusive visits and phone calls.

Service-related violence arises when providing services to clients, customers, patients or prisoners. It generally occurs in the hospitality, retail, health, aged care, disability, youth services, education and enforcement industries. In some circumstances service-related violence is unintentional, but it still has the potential to cause harm and is therefore a risk to a worker's health and safety.

Examples of service-related violence include:
- a nurse slapped by a patient, who wakes up in a confused state after surgery
- a teacher pushed over, while intervening in a schoolyard brawl.

Preventing work-related violence

Work-related violence is most common in industries where people work with the public or external clients. It often causes physical or psychological injury, and sometimes can be fatal. It can also impose costs on industries and the community through increased workers compensation and insurance premiums.

Occupations affected by work-related violence include:
- doctors, nurses, ambulance officers, welfare workers, personal carers
- hotel receptionists, waiters, housekeeping staff
- police officers, prison guards, sheriffs, teachers, probation officers, debt collectors
- front-office staff, call centre staff, cashiers, security guards
- bus drivers, taxi drivers, couriers, pilots, cabin crew
- sales people
- those who work alone or in remote locations
- shift workers.

Your obligations
Work health and safety laws are designed to ensure the health and safety of workers, and others, in the workplace. 'Health' includes physical and psychological health.

PCBU duties
A person who conducts a business or undertaking (PCBU) has a primary duty of care to ensure the health and safety of their workers, and others, in the workplace.

They must provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy working environment. They must also consult with their workers – and with other PCBUs when applicable – about health and safety issues.

Worker duties
A worker must take reasonable care of their own health and safety in the workplace, and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their actions.

They must also cooperate with reasonable instructions given by the PCBU.

Consultation
Consulting with workers and other PCBUs about work-related violence should occur when:
- identifying risks in the workplace
- making decisions about ways to prevent and manage work-related violence risks
- making decisions about information and training on work-related violence

- witnessing signs that work-related violence is affecting the health and safety of workers
- proposing changes that may affect the health and safety of workers.

For more information about consultation, refer to the *Code of Practice – Work Health and Safety Consultation, Co-operation and Co-ordination* – visit **safework.sa.gov.au**.

Risk management

Managing the risks of work-related violence is a planned, systematic process. It involves:
- identifying hazards and assessing risks to determine:
  - what could harm workers
  - how likely it is that harm may occur
    e.g. not very likely, very likely
  - how serious the harm could be
    e.g. minor, serious, fatal
- controlling risks, which focuses on determining the most effective risk control measures for any given circumstance
- reviewing and improving the effectiveness of control measures, to ensure prevention measures are working as planned and, when necessary, improved.

Consulting with workers, health and safety representatives (HSRs) and health and safety committees (HSCs) is required at each step of the risk management process. Drawing on the experience, knowledge and ideas of workers is more likely to result in the identification of all hazards and the selection of effective control measures.

For more information about the risk management process, refer to the *Code of Practice – How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks* – visit **safework.sa.gov.au**.

Identifying hazards and assessing risks

Work-related violence hazards generally arise as a result of:
- the work environment
- the work tasks and how they are carried out
- the way work is designed and managed.

Typical hazards that give rise to work-related violence include:
- handling cash, drugs or valuables
- working alone, working in isolation, working in the community, working at night
- providing services to distressed, angry or incarcerated people
- enforcement activities.

When identifying work-related violence hazards and assessing the risk of violence at work, it is important to recognise that it is known to be under-reported, particularly in occupations where incidents occur on a regular basis.

Sometimes, a worker may be deterred from reporting a violent incident because of misconceptions or other factors such as:
- it is thought to be 'part of the job' and nothing can be done about it
- incidents are so common that only those that are serious are reported
- there is a perception that nothing will happen if the incident is reported
- the worker believes they will be blamed for the incident
- the reporting process is time-consuming and complex
- they just want to forget about it.

To determine if violence is a potential hazard in the workplace you should:
- review the hazard and incident reports
- talk with HSRs, HSCs, workers, customers and clients
- walk-through and inspect the workplace
- review workers compensation claims
- refer to industry standards and guidelines.

Local crime statistics may also prove useful.

To determine the likelihood that someone will be harmed by work-related violence, ask yourself these questions:
- Has it happened before, either in this workplace or somewhere else?
- If it has happened, how often does it happen?
- What are the consequences?
- Will it cause minor or serious injury, or death?

A risk assessment tool is included as Appendix 1 to help identify and address work-related violence risks to workers. Check whether the risk factors described in the tool occur at your workplace or other places where workers do their job. It is important to recognise that risk factors are often interrelated, and may be present concurrently, so consider those risk factors at the same time.

Note: the risk assessment tool is not an exhaustive list of all the factors that can create a risk of violence.

Controlling the risks

There are many ways to control the risk of work-related violence, however some measures are more effective than others. Risk control measures should be selected on the basis of highest protection and most reliability.

The most effective control measures eliminate the hazard and associated risk e.g. eliminate cash handling in a public car park by introducing an electronic payment system.

If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the hazard, the risk should be minimised, perhaps by implementing a range of control measures.

In a bank, for example, engineering controls such as anti-jump barriers, CCTV and other security measures could be used, as well as administrative controls such as cash-handling procedures. Administrative controls are designed to minimise exposure to a hazard – they rely on human behaviour, are open to error and are the least effective way of minimising risks.

Control measures must eliminate or minimise the risk – and must not introduce a new hazard.

Physical work environment and security

The physical work environment can affect the likelihood of violent incidents occurring and the ease with which people can respond to those incidents.

The following control measures are the most reliable and will provide the highest protection for workers. Multiple measures should be used.
- The building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose.
- Security measures are used e.g. CCTV, anti-jump screens, timer safes.
- Where possible, workers are separated from the public e.g. with protective barriers or screens.
- Access to the premises and vulnerable areas is appropriately controlled.
- There is no public access to the premises when people work alone or at night.
- Workers can see who is coming into the premises and can restrict access when necessary.
- Communication and alarm systems are in place, regularly maintained and tested.
- Cash, valuables and drugs are stored securely.
- Cash-handling procedures are developed and implemented e.g. electronic funds transfer only, locked drop safes, carry small amounts of cash, vary banking times, 'limited cash held' signs displayed.
- Where possible, limit the amount of cash, valuables and drugs held on the premises.
- The workplace uses safe glass e.g. laminated, toughened or perspex (in picture frames and mirrors also).
- There is no access to dangerous implements or objects that could be thrown or used to injure someone.
- Internal and external lighting is installed to assist visibility.
- Workers and others have a safe retreat to avoid violence.
- Furniture and partitions are arranged to allow good visibility of service areas and avoid restrictive movement.
- There is appropriate signage to direct clients and visitors.

Work systems

Work systems and procedures are administrative controls and should be part of the overall work health and safety prevention strategies. They are insufficient on their own to reduce the risk of violence and should be used together with control measures relating to the physical work environment and security.

Work systems and procedures may include the following:
- Have procedures for working in isolation and in uncontrolled environments.
- A policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence.
- Responsible service of alcohol policy and practices is used.
- Have procedures for opening and closing the business.
- Workers are monitored when working in the community or away from the workplace e.g. a supervisor checks in regularly throughout the shift.
- A system to map and record areas of concern for safe access and egress.
- Regular handover of information occurs e.g. with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers.
- A process is in place for client compatibility and suitability assessment.
- Work practices are evaluated to see if they contribute to aggression.
- Behaviours and their triggers are identified, and strategies to address them are implemented.
- Identification system is in place e.g. workers and authorised visitors are clearly identified.
- Understanding client condition/disability/triggers/care and behaviour management plans.
- Behaviour and treatment programs are reviewed after incidents or changes in behaviour.
- Where client is known to have a history of aggression, a management plan is in place that has been developed in consultation with appropriately qualified people.
- Policy on the ongoing treatment of clients known to be aggressive or abusive, such as treatment contracts.

Training

Training should not be viewed as the main way to control the risk of work-related violence, but rather part of an overall approach.

Training could be provided in:
- violence prevention measures e.g. part of the induction training package before starting work
- workplace policy and procedures, including emergency response
- de-escalating aggression e.g. identify signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encourage reasoning, listen carefully, acknowledge concerns
- communication skills
- situational risk assessment e.g. when visiting homes or working off-site
- positive behaviour strategies and managing behaviours of concern.

Reviewing risk control measures

A review of risk control measures should occur:
- at regular intervals e.g. annually
- when worker or HSR feedback indicates risk control measures are ineffective or not as effective as they should be
- when an HSR or HSC requests a review
- when there have been significant changes in the work environment or work tasks
- after incidents.

A review of risk control measures can include an examination of:
- the physical work environment
- work functions and tasks
- consultation processes
- prevention measures
- issue resolution procedures.

Improving the effectiveness of risk control measures can arise with:
- changes to the physical work environment
- new working procedures
- additional training.

Case studies – preventing violence

Social worker

A community services organisation employs workers who go to households to assess their client's welfare. They often work alone. Their clients suffer financial hardship, health and behavioural issues, or drug and alcohol problems. Before visits, each client is sent a written report that outlines certain conditions, including requirements for a safe physical layout.

Sam arrives at a client's house and finds an untidy front yard with odds and ends strewn across the lawn. A barking dog prowls the yard, unchained, and visitors come and go on a regular basis. Sam phones a supervisor at head office to voice her concerns. The visit is cancelled due to the unsafe conditions.

The supervisor phones the client to advise of the cancelled visit. A new appointment is made after the client's assurance that the yard will be cleaned, the dog chained and other safety issues rectified.

Call centre staff

Call centre staff are regularly exposed to verbal threats and abuse from their customers. The phones ring constantly and during peak periods there are numerous missed calls and queues of frustrated callers. Not surprisingly, staff turnover at the call centre is high, morale is low, and staff shortages exacerbate the problem of missed calls and long queues.

In consultation with workers, the following areas are identified for improvement:
- Reduce call waiting time and missed calls.
- Escalate problem calls to senior staff.
- Regulate calls taken by each worker.
- Training.

The following short-term risk controls are then implemented:
- 'Relief' workers are trained to take calls, to improve waiting times and reduce missed calls.
- New workers are encouraged to escalate problem calls to senior staff.
- Workers set their own pace, with less emphasis on the number of calls taken.
- Training in conflict resolution and listening skills.

The following long-term risk controls are also identified:
- Improve access to 'relief' workers.
- Transfer calls to other departments when queues are long.

Implementing these controls resulted in:
- a faster response to calls and less waiting time
- a decrease in missed calls and fewer disgruntled customers
- greater engagement and productivity of workers
- improved communication with customers.

Responding to work-related violence

Responses to work-related violence will vary depending on the nature and severity of the incident. Systems should be in place that document what to do at the time of, and immediately after, an incident.

At the time of an incident

During an incident, a range of actions may be taken which include (where appropriate):
- setting off the duress alarm
- calling the police
- implementing the internal emergency response
- implementing the external emergency response
- using calm verbal and non-verbal communication
- using verbal de-escalation and distraction techniques
- seeking support from other staff
- asking the aggressor to leave the premises.
- retreating to a safe location.

Immediately after an incident

Immediately after an incident, a range of actions may be taken which include (where appropriate):
- ensuring that everyone is safe
- providing first aid or urgent medical attention

- providing individual support where required, including practical and emotional support
- reporting what happened, who was affected, and who was involved
- calling the police.

You must notify SafeWork SA if the incident results in:
- a fatality
- someone requiring immediate hospital treatment
- amputation
- a serious head or eye injury
- a serious burn
- de-gloving or scalping
- a spinal injury
- loss of a bodily function
- serious lacerations.

For more information about incident notification, including site preservation, refer to the Incident Notification fact sheet (produced by Safe Work Australia) – visit **safework.sa.gov.au**.

Incident management

A response system should address immediate safety issues, medical treatment, internal reporting and notifications required by external agencies, such as the police and SafeWork SA. Incident management policies and procedures must be developed and implemented in consultation with HSRs and workers who are likely to be directly affected by work-related violence.

These policies and procedures should include:
- emergency and evacuation plans
- reporting procedures and incident investigation
- worker supervision and monitoring
- sanctions against aggressors e.g. referral for clinical review
- guidelines on communicating with other agencies e.g. police, ambulance
- testing and maintenance of communication and duress equipment
- regular emergency drills
- training, to ensure workers are familiar with incident management processes
- site preservation requirements.

Incident investigation

When investigating an incident, all contributing factors should be identified. The investigation will help determine how to prevent an incident recurring and how to respond to future incidents. Investigators should be impartial and have appropriate knowledge and experience in work health and safety issues.

Investigation principles

Investigation principles include the following:
- **Investigate as soon as possible after the incident**
  Collect evidence when it is still available, when the people involved can remember events and the order in which they happened.

- **Collect information**
  Find out:
  – what happened
  – where it happened
    e.g. the physical work location and environment
  – why it happened.
  Collect information by conducting interviews and reviewing written reports, patient histories, training records, workplace plans and before-and-after photographs.

- **Look for causes**
  Did the response systems work? Look at all aspects of the incident – the environment, equipment, people, responses.

- **Review risk control measures**
  Do the risk control measures work as intended? How could they be improved?

- **Identify new control measures**
  The main reason for conducting an investigation is to prevent future incidents. The investigation should lead to improved preventative measures and response processes.

- **Outcomes**
  The results of an investigation should be documented and communicated to all relevant parties, such as HSRs, HSCs and affected workers. The investigation report should outline what happened, what has been done, and what will be done.

Case study – responding to violence

Service station attendant

In a suburban service station, a night attendant works alone. The facility is old and poorly lit, and takings are kept in the cash register (there is no safe). One night, an armed robber assaults the attendant and steals all the cash from the till.

The incident investigation identifies a number of risk factors:
- Working alone and at night.
- Poor visibility inside and outside the service station.
- Cash handling, high cash volumes and set cash transfer times.
- Workers trapped in unsafe situations.

Short-term risk controls

After the investigation, the following changes are made to the physical environment and work practices:

- Night opening hours are reduced and a night-time security patrol is introduced.
- Wires are installed at the counter to separate customers from workers.
- The alarm system is upgraded.
- A time-locked safe is installed.
- Cash-handling procedures are implemented.

Long-term risk controls

Six months after the incident, the following further changes are made:

- A service window is installed for night transactions.
- Pay-at-the-pump facilities are used after 6pm.
- Internal and external lighting is improved.
- Security cameras are installed (and customers know they are being recorded).
- Improved barriers are installed at the counter.

Violence prevention policy

A violence prevention policy should be developed in consultation with HSRs, HSCs, workers and managers. It should be displayed in a prominent place and should include the following:

- **A purpose statement**
  - This workplace policy was developed with the intent of providing a safe and healthy workplace where workers are not subjected to aggression and/or violence.
  - The PCBU is committed to supporting workers who are exposed to, or have witnessed, aggression and violence.

- **Objectives**
  - Aggression and violence are not acceptable and will not be tolerated at this workplace.
  - Appropriate action will be taken if aggression or violence occurs.
  - Reporting incidents is very important. Incidents will be investigated to identify all causes and to work out how to prevent them from happening again.

- **Responsibilities**
  - Outline the roles and responsibilities of relevant people e.g. senior managers, workers, emergency response coordinator, security.

- **Risk management**
  - This policy is supported by the hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control of work-related violence.

- **References and related documents**
  - Reference to all relevant documents and sources used in the development of this policy.

- **Enforcement**
  - The policy is endorsed by the board, chief executive officer and HSC.

- **Approval and review date**
  - The date this policy was approved and the date it will be reviewed e.g. 12 months after approval.

Further information

Work-related violence can fall within the scope of various state and federal laws. Physical assault, robbery, sexual assault and threats to harm someone should be referred to the police.

Obligations under the work health and safety laws are outlined in the following resources, which are available at (or linked from) **safework.sa.gov.au**.

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA)

- *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (*SA)

- *Code of Practice – Work Health and Safety Consultation, Co-operation and Co-ordination*

- *Code of Practice – How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks*

- *Code of Practice – Managing the Work Environment and Facilities*

- *Incident Notification fact sheet* (Safe Work Australia)

- *Prevention and management of aggression in health services: A handbook for workplaces* (WorkSafe Victoria)

- *Guide for Handling and Transporting Cash* (Safe Work Australia)

- *Prevention and management of customer aggression: A guide for employers* (Comcare)

- Australian Standard AS/NZS 4421:2011 *Guard and patrol security services*

- Australian Standard AS 3745-2010 *Planning for emergencies in facilities*

Appendix 1 – Work-related violence risk assessment tool

HAZARD	RISK FACTORS	MEASURES TO CONTROL RISKS
Handling cash, drugs and/or valuables	Business is located in a high crime area; few workers on-site; working alone; number of ways to exit the site; restricted observation by passers-by Lack of: visibility from outside; visibility of alarms and security devices **Those risks are increased by …** ready access to ways to escape; armed offender/s; frequency of incidents; lack of security measures; minimal protection	• building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • where possible, workers are separated from the public (e.g. with protective barriers/screens) • access to the premises and vulnerable areas is appropriately controlled • no public access to the premises when people work alone or at night • workers can see who is coming into the premises and can restrict access when concerned • security measures are used e.g. CCTV, anti-jump screens, drop/timer safes • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • cash, valuables and drugs are stored securely • where possible, limit amount of cash, valuables and drugs held on the premises • workplace only uses safe glass e.g. laminated, toughened, perspex (including picture frames, mirrors etc.) • no access to dangerous implements and/or objects that could be thrown or used to injure workers • internal and external lighting assists visibility • clear signage allows the public/clients to easily find their way • identification system is in place (workers and authorised visitors are clearly identified) • service areas have good visibility • safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) • furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas • cash handling procedures (electronic funds transactions only, locked drop safes, carrying small amounts of cash, varying time that banking is done, signs state limited cash held) • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are trained in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision
Working alone/ working in isolated or remote areas/ working off-site and working in the community Note – remote or isolated work, in relation to a worker, means work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time or the nature of the work.	Working in a high crime area Lack of: information; visibility from outside; security measures **Those risks are increased by …** armed offender/s; frequency of incidents	• building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • where possible, workers are separated from the public e.g. with protective barriers/screens • no public access to the premises when people work alone or at night • internal and external lighting assists visibility • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • procedures and back-up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation • workers are monitored when working in the community or away from the workplace e.g. supervisor checks in regularly throughout the shift • workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are trained in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • understanding client condition/disability/triggers/care and behaviour management plans • workers are trained in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off-site)

HAZARD	RISK FACTORS	MEASURES TO CONTROL RISKS
		• workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision
Working in unpredictable environments	Lack of information; working in a high crime area **Those risks are increased by …** lack of: security measures; supervision; monitoring systems armed offender/s; frequency of incidents	• procedures and back-up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • regular handover and information exchange occurs (with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers) • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • workers are monitored when working in unpredictable environments e.g. supervisor checks in regularly during the shift • workers receive regular support and supervision • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are trained in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers are trained in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off-site) • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers receive communication skills training
Working at night or outside business hours	Lack of: security measures and alarms; visibility from outside **Those risks are increased by …** lack of: monitoring systems; supervision ready access to ways to escape; armed offender/s; frequency of incidents	• building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • where possible, workers are separated from the public e.g. with protective barriers/screens • no public access to the premises when people work at night • internal and external lighting assists visibility • service areas have good visibility • a safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow clear visibility of service areas • cash handling procedures (electronic funds transactions only, locked drop safes, carrying small amounts of cash, varying time that banking is done, signs state limited cash held) • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • responsible serving of alcohol policy and practices are used • operational procedures for opening and closing the business • skill level, training and experience of workers is appropriate for duties allocated to them • procedures and back-up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are trained in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision

HAZARD	RISK FACTORS	MEASURES TO CONTROL RISKS
Providing care or services to people who may be: • distressed • afraid • ill • angry • incarcerated • have unreasonable expectations of what an organisation and/ or worker can provide them	Waiting; anxiety; overcrowding; communication difficulties; certain behavioural and/or psychiatric conditions; untreated pain; lack of information; no client compatibility assessment **Those risks are increased by …** person/client is intoxicated or affected by drugs; prolonged and untreated pain, unwelcome and coercive treatment; frequency of incidents	• building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • facility has safe glass only e.g. laminated, toughened, perspex (including picture frames, mirrors etc.) • signage directs and assists clients and visitors to find their way • waiting rooms and reception areas are clean and well maintained • internal and external lighting assists visibility • service areas have good visibility for workers • safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) • process in place for client compatibility and suitability assessment • client intake assessments include screening for aggression • regular handover and information exchange with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • no access to dangerous implements and/or objects that could be thrown or used to injure workers • structured and planned activities for clients • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas • workers are trained in positive behaviour strategies and managing behaviours of concern • work practices are evaluated to see if they contribute to aggression • behaviours and what triggers them are identified – strategies to avoid/ address behaviours and triggers are implemented • behaviour and treatment programs are reviewed after incidents and/or changes in behaviour • where client is known to have history of aggression, a management plan is in place that has been developed in consultation with appropriately qualified people • policy on the ongoing treatment of clients known to be aggressive or abusive e.g. treatment contracts • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers are trained in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off-site) • ratio of workers to clients is adequate for the level of care needed and take into account the range of activities undertaken e.g. peak periods, transfers, meal times, night work, sleep-overs, emergency responses, acute care/crisis, respite • where possible workers are permanent or regular employees who are known to the clients and workplace • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure • procedures and back-up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation • workers trained on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision

HAZARD	RISK FACTORS	MEASURES TO CONTROL RISKS
Service methods cause frustration, resentment or misunderstanding	Waiting; anxiety; overcrowding; communication difficulties; certain behavioural and/or psychiatric conditions **Those risks are increased by …** person/client is intoxicated or affected by drugs; unwelcome and coercive treatment; frequency of incidents	• building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • waiting rooms and reception areas are clean and well maintained • internal and external lighting assists visibility • service areas have good visibility • signage directs and assists clients and visitors to find their way • safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • work practices are evaluated to see if they contribute to aggression • skill level, training and experience of workers is appropriate for duties allocated to them • workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers trained on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision
Enforcement activities	Working in unpredictable environments **Those risks are increased by …** lack of: supervision; monitoring systems	• communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • operational procedures for working in isolation and uncontrolled environments • workers are monitored when working in the community or away from the workplace e.g. supervisor checks in regularly throughout the shift • procedures and back-up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation • system to map and record areas/places of concern • workers receive regular support and supervision • workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers trained on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns) • workers are trained in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off-site) • workers receive communication skills training

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