

# safety Retail Toolbox Talks for matters

From your safety partners at Marshall & Sterling, Inc.

## Confronting Violence

Workplace violence encompasses everything from a robbery to bullying, from threats and non-fatal injuries to homicide. No workplace is immune to violence, but working in retail presents several unique risks, including the following:

- Handling cash
- Night-time shifts or finishing shifts after dark
- Presence of valuable merchandise
- Lack of people around
- Poor visibility
- Easy escape

While your organization has taken steps to maintain a violence-free workplace, help keep yourself and co-workers stay safe by educating yourself about risk, being proactive and following the guidelines outlined in your Workplace Violence Prevention Program.

### Identifying Your Risk

Workplace violence can be divided into four general categories:

1. Pure criminal intent (i.e., theft)
2. Client/customer incidents, which generally occur when a customer acts out violently toward an employee
3. Worker to worker incidents stemming from work-related disputes, often involving managers or supervisors

4. Domestic violence-related incidents, sometimes perpetrated through telephone calls and e-mails

Violence can happen at any time, and can include actions or words that endanger or harm you, including the following:

- Written, verbal or physical harassment
- Written, verbal or physical threats
- Assaults or other violence
- Any other behavior that causes you to feel unsafe (i.e., bullying or sexual harassment)

### Staying Safe

Nothing can guarantee that you will not become a victim of workplace violence, but you do have the right to expect a workplace that promotes safety from violence, threats and harassment. Contribute to the safety measures we have in place by taking the following steps:

- Take all threats seriously, without exception.
- In a retail setting, greet all customers, move around the store and lock the back doors.
- Be aware of and report strange behavior, i.e., individuals frequently loitering near the premises.
- Know contact information for local authorities for quick access in the event of violence.

**Contribute to the safety measures in place by knowing how to recognize and taking steps to prevent workplace violence.**

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- Be aware of and report any stalking behavior of an employee by an outsider or co-worker.
- Carpool with others on your shift so you arrive and depart together.
- Alert supervisors to any concerns about safety or security.
- Report all incidents immediately in writing.

Stay alert and aware. Make sure you are effectively trained in conflict resolution and how to handle a potentially dangerous situation. Adhere to policies and cooperate with your manager to avoid a potentially violent situation.