

## What is workplace violence?

Workplace violence is any incident in which a person is threatened, abused, or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, including all forms of harassment, bullying, intimidation, physical threats, or assaults, robbery or other intrusive behaviours.

Violence can occur in different forms and may include:

-  Overt physical actions (i.e. hitting, slapping)
-  Verbal actions (i.e. threatening)
-  Non-verbal actions (i.e. glaring in a threatening or intimidating way)

Violence in the workplace may involve Team Members, Residents, Family Members or Visitors.

## Prevention is the best intervention!



Our goal is to have a workplace that is free from injury. We achieve this goal through our robust workplace safety program where every team member plays a role in being safe!



**I PLEDGE TO  
"BE AWARE... TAKE CARE!"**

This is my commitment to safety. I promise to help prevent injuries to myself or others and I will always follow Safety Policies and Procedures. When I see a hazard or an unsafe act, I will stop and take action. I will report hazards and safety incidents - including any mistakes I might make - so that we all can learn and improve. Safety is everyone's job and it starts with ME.

Together we **CAN** be free of workplace injury or illness.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## What you can do

We recognize the potential for violence to occur in our workplace, and we know that it can have devastating effects for those impacted. We are committed to a safe and healthy environment for all those that work in, live in and visit our care homes and we need your help to do that. You must:

**Be self-aware** and understand how you effect others. We are in an environment where people may be confused and/or bothered by different faces or actions.

**Understand responsive behaviours** and how to recognize, manage and respond. Our Residents rely on us to know them and respect their needs. We can use de-escalation techniques to respectfully respond.

**Know the emergency response procedures** for violence (i.e. Code White) and be ready to assist. Attend all training and education offered to protect yourself from violence.

**Report any and all incidents of violence**, even if you are a witness to violence. Communicating incidents will identify potential risks to prevent future incidents.

*Become a safety star today!*

# Preventing violence in the Workplace

Creating joy in life and aging...  
by caring, connecting and celebrating



**ARE YOU  
A SAFETY  
STAR?**



**TRELLIS  
SENIORS**

## Protecting yourself from violence

There are a number of things you can do to protect yourself from violence in the workplace including:

- 🌿 **Be self-aware.** You are your own best defense in situations of potential risk as we are naturally equipped with intuition which is a natural danger recognition tool. Pay attention to it and to your surroundings. Recognize how you respond to threats and how to settle yourself.
- 🌿 **Focus on the Resident,** not the task or other distractions. Use a caring and compassionate approach and be mindful of their needs and triggers. Don't get caught off guard. Recognize Resident risk factors or stressors to minimize and proactively manage the risk of potentially violent situations.
- 🌿 **Follow Procedures.** Understand the Purple Dot system to designate a potentially violent Resident and be alert to the risks. For high-risk Residents, use two person care and remove/ secure all items that could potentially be used as a weapon.
- 🌿 **Take Action.** Don't wait. If you feel you may be in danger, safely remove yourself from the situation and get help (i.e. Code White). Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as appropriate to call for help and remember that the fire alarm can also assist.



## Using De-Escalation Techniques

De-escalation techniques help to lessen someone's anger or distress. You can recognize signs of potential distress in a person by being aware of their body language (i.e. minimal eye contact, wringing of hands, shaking, flushed or pale, crying, pacing, quick or shallow breathing) and knowing that it could advance to violent behaviours. The best response is to:

- 🌿 **Communicate Simply and Calmly:** Keep your language simple (i.e. "I can help you."). Keep your voice pitch and volume steady and calm. Listen without judging and acknowledge the needs and frustrations.
- 🌿 **Neutralize Your Body Language:** Keep your hands in an open and visible position so that you do not appear threatening. Avoid eye rolling or tense facial expressions that could provoke.
- 🌿 **Position Yourself Safely:** Always stand at least a leg's length away from a potentially violent individual, ideally at a 45 degree angle. This is a safety stance and puts you in the best position to respond.

The **ABCDE Method** helps remind us of the de-escalation steps that work best with cognitively impaired individuals. The steps are:

- A** – Allow the person time
- B** – Back away if what you are doing is not working
- C** – Concentrate on body language
- D** – Distract and redirect the person
- E** – Emotionally validate the person's concerns

We need to always remember that safe quality care is delivered according to the Resident's terms, not ours.

## Responding to Violence

We all work to proactively prevent violence but it can still happen and we need to be prepared. If a violent situation occurs, you should respond by:

1. **Rescue.** Secure the area by bringing yourself to safety and assess the situation to ensure others are not in danger.
2. **Assess and Act.** Determine if emergency back-up is needed, and if so, use the appropriate response systems (i.e. call for help, Code White, etc.).
3. **Contain.** If appropriate, seek to diffuse the situation using de-escalation techniques to contain the risk. Seek medical attention if needed.
4. **Report and Evaluate.** Report the incident, even if it is a 'near miss' and there is no evident injury or you were only a witness to the incident. Keep the information factual and objective.

You will also need to complete the Workplace Violence and Harassment Reporting Form (Section A) and submit it to your Manager or the General Manager. These forms can be found at the care desk.

As follow-up, management will review and evaluate the incident to determine steps for prevention including training needs and resident assessment. It is important to know that retaliation against a person reporting workplace violence will not be tolerated and is addressed in our Whistleblower Policy.



*Safety starts with me!*