



Violence/Harassment/Assault

WORK-RELATED VIOLENCE

Workplace violence most often involves aggressive behavior toward a colleague, subordinate, or supervisor. This can range from verbal abuse to physical violence. Aggression may occur as a response to many situations. Common examples are when an individual faces the loss of his/her job, is passed over for promotion, or perceives favoritism toward others in the work environment or that they are being singled out for unfair, negative treatment. Violence often arises from feelings of anger, frustration, fear, or hurt. Some violent acts are accompanied by suicidal behavior. Alcohol use can trigger or worsen a tense situation because it lowers impulse control and the ability to think about the consequences of behavior. It is important to be aware that many of the risk factors and warning signs for violence are also common in suicidal behaviors.

Signs Wingmen Should Know/Look For

- Chronic, hypersensitive complaints about persecution or perceptions of injustice.
- History of mental health problems that compromise coping or enhance the appeal of violence.
- Adverse reactions to authority and having limits set on their behavior.
- Criminal history, including history of violence, stalking, threats, or assaultive behavior.
- Frequent aggressive outbursts or excessive displays of anger.
- Ominous fascination with weapons and violent media events; making jokes or offensive comments about violent acts.

Recommended Wingman Action

- Make personnel feel they are valued and encourage an environment of mutual support.
- Ensure personnel are aware of the wide range of helping resources available.
- Create an environment that encourages communication throughout the unit.
- Do not ignore indications of potential violence.
- Report concerns to leadership.

Leadership Considerations

- Communicate a clear policy that intimidation, harassment, bullying, and violence are unacceptable.
- Communicate the expectation that inappropriate behavior will be addressed promptly by supervisors.
- Ensure personnel are educated regarding workplace violence prevention policy, risk factors that cause or contribute to assaults, early recognition of escalating behavior, ways to prevent volatile situations, standard response action plan for violent situations, and periodic practice of the action plan.
- Consider how changes in policies, procedures, and working conditions may affect people.
- Recognize that civilians can pursue assistance through the Employee Assistance Program, their union, and Civilian Personnel Office (CPO).
- Contract employees can also seek assistance through resources in the community.
- Ensure Active Duty personnel and civilian employees attend mandatory annual training on workplace violence.