

Preventing and responding to work-related violence

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What is work-related violence?

Definition

Work-related violence is any incident where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted at 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 and kicking
- throwing objects
- pushing, shoving, tripping and grabbing
- verbal threats, armed robbery and sexual assault
- attacking with any type of weapon (for example knives, guns and clubs).

Sources of work-related violence

This guide covers two types of work-related violence:

1. External violence.
2. 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 their 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. Often, service-related violence is unintentional but it does 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 to industry 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 and housekeeping staff
- police officers, prison guards, sheriffs, teachers, probation officers and debt collectors
- front-office staff, call centre staff, cashiers and security guards
- bus drivers, taxi drivers, couriers, pilots and cabin crew
- sales people, those who work alone or in remote locations and 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 and they must 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.

Detailed information about consultation is available in the Work health and safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination Code of Practice 2011 at www.worksafe.qld.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 could occur, for example 'not very likely', 'very likely'
 - how serious the harm could be, for example minor, serious or 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 on the risk management process, see the '**How to manage work health and safety risks**' **Code of Practice 2011** at www.worksafe.qld.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 and working at night
- providing services to distressed, angry or incarcerated people
- enforcement activities.

Sometimes, a worker may be deterred from reporting a violent incident because:

- it is thought to be 'part of the job' and nothing can be done about it
- the worker believes that only 'serious incidents' are to be 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:

- talk with HSRs, HSCs, workers, customers and clients
- walk through and inspect the workplace
- review workers' compensation claims
- refer to industry standards and guidelines
- examine local crime statistics.
- review the hazard and incident reports

To determine the likelihood that someone will be harmed by work-related violence, ask yourself:

- has it happened before, either in this workplace or somewhere else?
- if it has happened, how often does it happen?

To determine the possible consequences, ask yourself:

- will it cause minor or serious injury, or death?

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, for example eliminating 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 by implementing a range of control measures, for example, in a bank, use engineering controls, such as anti-jump barriers, CCTV and other security measures, 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 and the ease in which people can respond.

Multiple control measures should be used and the following are the most reliable and provide the highest protection for workers:

- Ensure the building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose.
- Use security measures such as CCTV, anti-jump screens and timer safes.
- Separate workers from the public where possible, for example with protective barriers or screens.
- Control access to the premises and vulnerable areas.
- Prevent public access to the premises when people work alone or at night.

- Ensure workers can see who is coming into the premises and can restrict access if necessary.
- Fit communication and alarm systems and ensure they are regularly maintained and tested.
- Limit the amount of cash, valuables and drugs held on the premises.
- Store cash, valuables and drugs securely.
- Develop and implement cash-handling procedures, for example, electronic funds transfer only, locked drop safes, carry small amounts of cash, vary banking times and display 'limited cash held' signs.
- Use safe glass, for example laminated, toughened or substitute glass for an alternative product like Perspex (in picture frames and mirrors also).
- Prevent access to dangerous implements or objects that could be thrown or used to injure someone.
- Use internal and external lighting to assist visibility.
- Provide a safe retreat for workers and others so they can avoid violent situations.
- Arrange furniture and partitions to allow good visibility of service areas and avoid restrictive movement.
- Use appropriate signage to direct clients and visitors.

Work systems

Work systems and procedures are administrative controls and should form part of overall workplace 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 include:

- procedures for working in isolation and in uncontrolled environments
- policies that include appropriate action to be taken to protect workers and others from violence
- responsible service of alcohol policies and practices
- procedures for opening and closing the business
- monitoring staff working in the community or away from the workplace, for example supervisors check in regularly throughout shifts
- systems to map and record areas of concern for safe access and egress
- regular handover of information—with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers
- processes to assess client needs and provide appropriately skilled workers
- identification of behaviours and their triggers and strategies to address them
- identification systems—workers and authorised visitors are clearly identified
- understanding client condition/disability/triggers/care and behaviour management plans
- the review of behaviour and treatment programs after incidents or changes in behaviour
- management plans for clients known to have a history of aggression, developed in consultation with appropriately qualified people
- policies on the ongoing treatment of clients known to be aggressive or abusive, such as treatment contracts
- evaluation of work practices to see if they may contribute to aggression.

Training

Training should form part of an overall approach (i.e. not the main approach) to control the risk of work-related violence.

Training can be provided in the following:

- Violence prevention measures (part of the induction training package before starting work).
- Workplace policy and procedures, including emergency response.
- De-escalating aggression—identifying signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal, communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully and acknowledging concerns.
- Communication skills.
- Situational risk assessment –when visiting homes or working off-site.
- Positive behaviour strategies and managing behaviours of concern.

Reviewing risk control measures

Under the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* there are certain situations where you must review your control measures, including:

- when the control measure is not effective in controlling the risk
- before a change at the workplace that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control
- if a new hazard or risk is identified
- if the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary
- if a health and safety representative requests a review.

A review of risk control measures should be undertaken after work-related violence incidents.

A review of risk control measures can include an examination of:

- the physical work environment and security measures
- work systems and procedures
- worker training and information
- workplace consultation processes

Case studies - Preventing work-related violence

Case study 1—social worker

A community services organisation employs workers who visit households to assess their client's welfare. They often work alone. 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 them of the cancelled visit and makes a new appointment after the client's assurance that the yard will be cleaned, the dog chained and other safety issues rectified.

Case study 2—call centre staff

Call centre staff are regularly exposed to verbal threats and abuse from customers. 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 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 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 a violent incident, you should:

- set off a duress alarm if available or otherwise communicate the need for help
- follow workplace procedures for responding to violence
- use calm verbal and non-verbal communication

- use verbal de-escalation and distraction techniques
- seek support from other staff
- ask the aggressor to leave the premises
- retreat to a safe location.

Immediately after an incident

Immediately after a violent incident, you should:

- ensure that everyone is safe
- provide first aid or urgent medical attention where necessary
- provide individual support where required, including practical, emotional and social support
- report what happened, who was affected, and who was involved.

You must also notify your work health and safety regulator if the incident results in:

- a fatality
- someone requiring immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
- someone requiring immediate treatment for:
 - amputation
 - a serious head or eye injury
 - a serious burn
 - de-gloving or scalping
 - a spinal injury
 - loss of a bodily function
 - serious lacerations; or
- medical treatment by a doctor within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

For more information on incident notification, including site preservation, see:

- the *Notify WHSQ about a work health and safety incident* web page at www.worksafe.qld.gov.au; and
- the *Incident Notification* fact sheet (Safe Work Australia) available at www.safeworkaustralia.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 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. 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, for example a referral for clinical review
- guidelines on communicating with other agencies such as police and ambulance
- testing and maintenance of communication and duress equipment
- regular emergency drills

- training, to ensure workers are familiar with policies and procedures
- site preservation requirements.

Incident investigation

All contributing factors should be identified when investigating a violent incident. 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

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 (the physical 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

Look at all aspects of the incident—the environment, equipment, people, responses and identify if the response system worked.

Review risk control measures

Identify if the risk control measures worked as intended and determine how they could 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 studies - responding to work-related violence

Case study 1 - 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 evening, 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 means of escape from unsafe situations restricted.

Short-term risk controls

Following 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.
- Security wire barriers are installed at the counter to separate workers from customers.
- 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, further changes are made:

- a service window is installed for night transactions
- pay-at-the-pump facilities are used after 6 pm
- internal and external lighting is improved
- security cameras are installed (and customers know they are being recorded)
- improved barriers are installed at the counter
- means of safe egress installed.

Case study 2 - parking inspectors

Local council parking inspectors often work alone and in unfamiliar work environments. They are often threatened, sometimes assaulted, when issuing parking fines. The council, in consultation with its HSRs and HSCs, completes a risk assessment which identifies the following risk factors:

- Inspectors work alone and sometimes at night.
- Work locations are unpredictable and uncontrolled.
- Threats are more common when inspectors enforce parking laws near pubs and clubs.

Short-term risk controls

After the risk assessment, the following changes to work practices are made:

- Night patrols are cancelled.
- Inspectors work in pairs during all shifts.
- Supervisors are contacted on a regular basis during all shifts.
- Inspectors are trained in recognising signs of aggression and defusing conflict.

Long-term risk controls

The council implements technological advances, such as:

- licence recognition, which allows infringement notices to be issued by post
- sensored parking bays to track parking times.

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.

Guidance and obligations under the work health and safety laws are outlined in the following publications:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* available at www.legislation.qld.gov.au
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* available at www.legislation.qld.gov.au
- 'Work health and safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination Code of Practice 2011' available at www.worksafe.qld.gov.au
- 'How to manage work health and safety risks Code of Practice 2011' available at www.worksafe.qld.gov.au
- 'Managing the work environment and facilities Code of Practice 2011' available at www.worksafe.qld.gov.au
- 'Incident notification' fact sheet (Safe Work Australia) available at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au
- 'Prevention and management of aggression in health services: A handbook for workplaces' (WorkSafe Victoria) available at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
- 'Prevention and management of aggression in health services: A toolkit for workplaces' (WorkSafe Victoria) available at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
- 'Prevention and management of customer aggression: A guide for employers' (Comcare) available at www.comcare.gov.au
- AS/ NZS 4421:2011 *Guard and patrol security services* available for purchase from www.saiglobal.com
- AS 3745-2010 *Planning for emergencies in facilities* available for purchase from www.saiglobal.com

Appendix A

Sample work-related 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:

- **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 it from happening again.
- **responsibilities**
 - Outline the roles and responsibilities of relevant people, for example senior managers, workers, emergency response coordinator and 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 all relevant documents and sources used in the development of the policy.
- **enforcement**
 - Reference who the policy is endorsed by (e.g. the board, chief executive officer and work health and safety committee).
- **approval and review date**
 - The date the policy was approved and the date it will be reviewed, for example 12 months after approval.

Appendix B - Work-related violence risk management tool

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Handling cash, drugs and/or valuables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business is located in a high crime area. • Limited workers on site. • Working alone. • Numerous ways to exit the site. • Restricted observation by passers-by. • Lack of visibility from outside. • Lack of visibility of alarms and security devices. <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ready access to escape routes • armed offender/s • frequency of incidents • lack of security measures • minimal protection for workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose. • Separate workers from the public where possible (for example protective barriers/screens). • Control access to the premises and vulnerable areas. • Prevent public access to the premises when people work alone or at night. • Ensure workers can see who is coming into the premises and can restrict access if concerned. • Implement security measures (for example CCTV/anti-jump screens and drop/timer safes). • Fit communication and alarm systems (regularly maintain and test). • Limit the amount of cash, valuables and drugs held on the premises. • Securely store cash, valuables and drugs. • Use safe glass, for example laminated, toughened Perspex (including picture frames, mirrors etc). • Prevent access to dangerous implements and/or objects that could be thrown or used to injure workers. • Use internal and external lighting to assist visibility. • Use clear signage to direct the public and clients. • Implement an identification system (workers and authorised visitors are clearly identified). • Ensure service areas have good visibility. • Provide a safe room/place for workers and others to retreat to. • Arrange furniture and partitions to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas. • Implement 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). • Policies include appropriate action to be taken to protect workers and others from violence. • Workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • Train workers in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Train workers in de-escalating aggression (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully; acknowledging concerns). • Provide communication skills training for workers • Provide regular support and supervision for workers

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
<p>Working either :alone, in isolated or remote areas, offsite, and/or in the community.</p> <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information. • Working in a high crime area. • Lack of visibility from outside. • Lack of security measures. <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • armed offender/s • frequency of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose. • Separate workers from the public (for example with protective barriers/screens). • Prevent public access to the premises when people work alone or at night. • Use internal and external lighting to assist visibility. • Fit communication and alarm systems (regularly maintain and test). • Implement operational procedures and back up when workers are alone or isolated. • Monitor workers when working in the community or away from the workplace (for example supervisors check in regularly throughout shifts). • Rotate workers into alternate duties to reduce exposure. • Induct workers on violence prevention measures before starting work. • Train workers in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Implement client condition/disability/triggers/care and behaviour management plans. • Train workers in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns). • Train workers in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off site). • Provide communication skills training for workers. • Provide regular support and supervision for workers.
Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
<p>Working in unpredictable environments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information. • Working in a high crime area. <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of security measures • lack of supervision • lack of monitoring systems • armed offender/s • frequency of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement procedures and back up for workers working alone or in isolation. • Fit communication and alarm systems (regularly maintain and test). • Regular handover and information exchange (with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers). • Policies include appropriate action to be taken to protect workers and others from violence. • Monitor workers when working in unpredictable environments (for example supervisors check in regularly during shifts). • Provide regular support and supervision for workers. • Induct workers on violence prevention measures before starting work. • Train workers in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Train workers in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off site). • Train workers in de-escalating aggression (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns). • Provide communication skills training for workers.

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Working at night or outside business hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of security measures and alarms • Visibility from outside. <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ready access to escape routes • lack of supervision • lack of monitoring systems. • armed offender/s • frequency of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose. • Separate workers from the public (for example with protective barriers and screens). • Prevent public access to the premises when people work at night. • Use internal and external lighting to assist visibility. • Ensure service areas have good visibility. • Provide a safe room/place for workers and others to retreat to. • Fit communication and alarm systems (regularly maintain and test). • Arrange furniture and partitions to prevent people being trapped and allow clear visibility of service areas. • Implement cash handling procedures (for example, electronic funds transactions only, locked drop safes, carrying small amounts of cash, varying time that banking is done; signs state limited cash held). • Policies include appropriate action to be taken to protect workers and others from violence. • Use responsible serving of alcohol policy and practices. • Implement operational procedures for opening and closing the business. • Ensure the skill level, training and experience of workers is appropriate for duties allocated to them. • Ensure back up is in place for workers working alone or in isolation. • Induct workers on violence prevention measures, before starting work. • Train workers workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Train workers in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns). • Provide workers communication skills training. • Provide workers regular support and supervision.

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
<p>Providing care or services to people who may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distressed • afraid • ill • angry • incarcerated • have unreasonable expectations of what an organisation and/or worker can provide them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting. • Anxiety. • Overcrowding. • Communication difficulties. • Certain behavioural and/or psychiatric conditions. • Untreated pain. • Lack of information. • No client compatibility assessment. <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person/client is intoxicated or affected by drugs • prolonged and untreated pain • unwelcome and coercive treatment • frequency of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose, • Use safe glass, for example laminated, toughened, Perspex (including picture frames, mirrors etc). • Use signage to direct and assist clients and help the public find their way. • Ensure waiting rooms and reception areas are clean and well maintained. • Use internal and external lighting to assist visibility. • Ensure service areas have good visibility for workers. • Provide a safe room/place to retreat for workers and others safety. • Ensure a process is in place for client compatibility and suitability assessment. • Implement client intake assessments that include screening for aggression. • Regular handover and information exchange for workers, other agencies, carers and service providers. • Policies to include appropriate action to be taken to protect workers and others from violence. • Prevent access to dangerous implements and/or objects that could be thrown or used to injure workers. • Structure and plan activities for clients. • Ensure communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintain and test). • Arrange furniture and partitions to prevent people being trapped and to allow good visibility of service areas. • Train workers in positive behaviour strategies and managing behaviours of concern. • Evaluate work practices to see if they contribute to aggression. • Identify behaviours and what triggers them and strategies to avoid/address them. • Review behaviour and treatment programs after incidents and/or changes in behaviour. • Develop a management plan where client is known to have history of aggression, in consultation with appropriately qualified people. • Implement a policy on the ongoing treatment of clients known to be aggressive or abusive, such as treatment contracts. • Train workers in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns). • Train workers in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off site). • Ensure the ratio of workers to clients is adequate for the level of care needed and take into account the range of activities undertaken (for example peak periods, transfers, meal times, night work, sleepovers, emergency responses, acute care/crisis, respite). • Where possible, ensure workers are permanent or regular employees who are known to the clients and workplace. • Induct workers on violence prevention measures before starting work. • Rotate workers into alternate duties to reduce exposure. • Ensure procedures and back up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation. • Train workers on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Provide workers communication skills training. • Provide workers regular support and supervision.

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Service methods cause frustration, resentment, or misunderstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting. • Anxiety. • Overcrowding. • Communication difficulties. • Certain behavioural and/or psychiatric conditions. <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person/client is intoxicated or affected by drugs • unwelcome and coercive treatment • frequency of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose. • Ensure waiting rooms and reception areas are clean and well maintained. • Use internal and external lighting to assist visibility. • Ensure service areas have good visibility. • Use signage to direct and assist clients and help the public find their way. • Provide a safe room/place for workers and others to retreat to. • Fit communication and alarm systems (regularly maintain and test). • Arrange furniture and partitions to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas. • Policies include appropriate action to be taken to protect workers and others from violence. • Evaluate work practices to see if they contribute to aggression. • Ensure skill level, training and experience of workers is appropriate for duties allocated to them. • Rotate workers into alternate duties to reduce exposure. • Induct workers on violence prevention measures, before starting work. • Train workers in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Train workers in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns). • Provide workers communication skills training. • Provide workers regular support and supervision.

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Enforcement activities	<p>Working in unpredictable environments.</p> <p>Risks are increased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of supervision • lack of monitoring systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit communication and alarm systems (regularly maintain and test). • Implement operational procedures for working in isolation and uncontrolled environments. • Monitor workers when working in the community or away from the workplace (for example supervisors check in regularly throughout shifts). • Ensure procedures and back up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation. • Implement a system to map and record areas/places of concern. • Provide workers regular support and supervision. • Rotate workers into alternate duties to reduce exposure. • Induct workers on violence prevention measures before starting work. • Train workers on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response). • Train workers in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression, verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, encouraging reasoning, listening carefully, acknowledging concerns). • Train workers in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off site). • Provide workers communication skills training.