

PREVENTING VIOLENCE, ROBBERY, AND THEFT

A GUIDE FOR RETAIL OWNERS,
MANAGERS, AND WORKERS



WORK SAFE BC

WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
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WorkSafeBC (the Workers' Compensation Board) is an independent provincial statutory agency governed by a Board of Directors. It is funded by insurance premiums paid by registered employers and by investment returns. In administering the *Workers Compensation Act*, WorkSafeBC remains separate and distinct from government; however, it is accountable to the public through government in its role of protecting and maintaining the overall well-being of the workers' compensation system.

WorkSafeBC was born out of a compromise between B.C.'s workers and employers in 1917 where workers gave up the right to sue their employers or fellow workers for injuries on the job in return for a no-fault insurance program fully paid for by employers. WorkSafeBC is committed to a safe and healthy workplace, and to providing return-to-work rehabilitation and legislated compensation benefits to workers injured as a result of their employment.

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The WorkSafeBC Prevention Information Line can answer your questions about workplace health and safety, worker and employer responsibilities, and reporting a workplace accident or incident. The Prevention Information Line accepts anonymous calls.

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To report after-hours and weekend accidents and emergencies, call 604 273-7711 in the Lower Mainland, or call 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP) toll-free.

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Managers, and Workers**



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WorkSafeBC publications

Many publications are available at WorkSafeBC.com. The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and associated policies and guidelines, as well as excerpts and summaries of the *Workers Compensation Act*, are also available on the website.

Some publications are also available for purchase in print:

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Introduction

Did you know that workplace violence is one of the top ten costs when it comes to workers' compensation claims in the retail industry in British Columbia. Surprised? So are most people.

Workplace violence includes incidents involving the use of force, as well as threatening statements and behaviours that may lead to physical altercations. Being able to deal effectively with all types of violent incidents is critical for a retail business and its employees.

Did you know?

- Violent incidents in the B.C. retail industry result in close to a million dollars in compensation payments annually.
- Retail companies lose millions of dollars each year as a result of lost merchandise, stolen money, and property damage.
- Prevention measures used to protect employees against workplace violence will also reduce stores losses.
- Employers are required by law to train employees to deal with the risk of workplace violence.
- It is illegal for employers to pass the costs of store losses on to their employees. (See Appendix J, page 35.)

What is violence?

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation defines workplace violence as "the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury."

Violence statistics

The B.C. Crime Prevention Association surveyed 1,200 retail employees in B.C., and found that 21% of them had been subjected to violence or "aggressive acts" related to work.

From 2007 to 2011, acts of violence or force in the B.C. retail industry ranked ninth among causes of work-related injury in terms of claim costs paid. Over that period:

- The total cost of claims came to over \$7.5 million
- There was an average of 85 violence-related claims each year
- The average cost paid per claim was the highest of all accident types

Considering the nature of violence, the actual costs to business and the personal toll on front-line employees are likely much higher.

Part 1: Overview

Key risks

In many retail businesses, front-line employees are at risk from violent incidents on a daily basis. There are several reasons for this. In most operations, the public has free and easy access to the store and employees frequently need to deal with people they don't know. In addition, retail businesses typically keep cash on hand, display tempting merchandise, remain open for extended hours, and employ large numbers of young workers.

Key risks

The following are key risks for many retail businesses:

- Robbery and assault
- Shoplifting
- Abusive and difficult customers
- Unwelcome members of the public

Most employees want to do the best they can for their employers. When a potentially violent incident occurs, in the heat of the moment an employee may try to reduce the loss for the business and put themselves at risk. It is critical that employees understand that their safety is the first priority. There is no expectation for employees to be heroes. Money and merchandise can always be replaced; people can't.



Reducing the risk

Given the daily risks that many businesses face, retailers need specific plans for their stores to help protect employees and minimize the potential for violence. Retailers can reduce the potential for workplace violence through a combination of physical and procedural control measures, which include the following:

- Careful store design
- Use of security devices—general and personal
- Employee education and training
- Employee scheduling and procedures for working alone

The most effective combination of control measures (or controls, for short) will vary depending upon the type of retail store, location, and individual business practices.

Physical controls

Store design and security devices are sometimes referred to as physical controls. Physical controls may include the following:

- Clear sightlines both inside and outside the store (for example, by using low shelving or mirrors, or by positioning the sales counter near a window so employees can see out and the public can see in)
- Barriers such as wider counters or Plexiglas partitions (often seen in gas stations) that separate the employees from the customers
- Good lighting
- Security cameras

Procedural controls

Procedural controls include training, safe work procedures, and scheduling. These all have a significant impact on how vulnerable employees are to potential violence. Retail businesses should do the following:

- Provide employees with specific training on workplace violence.
- Provide specific written procedures for working alone.
- Provide specific written procedures for higher-risk situations such as opening, closing, and cashing out.
- Evaluate employee scheduling. Consider how many employees are on shift and who they are.

For more information

Employers can find more information on physical and procedural controls in Part 2 of this booklet, on pages 4–10. Employers and employees can find tips on how to deal with possible scenarios in Part 3, on pages 11–16.

Written procedures do not need to be complicated; they should focus on minimizing the risk for employees. Consider consulting your employees—front-line workers often have good ideas about potential problems and how to solve them.

Part 2: Preventing violence (for employers)

The best way to deal with workplace violence is to prevent it from happening at all. As a retail employer, you can do this by developing a violence prevention plan. Your plan should identify potential risks in your business and describe the controls you will use to deal with those risks. Your controls will likely be a combination of careful store design, security devices to deter potentially violent persons, as well as training and safe work procedures for employees.

Your violence prevention plan should be specific to your worksite and type of business. Start by asking these basic questions:

- How well prepared is your business currently?
- What controls do you already have in place for violence prevention?
- What likely scenarios are you trying to protect against?

This process of gathering and evaluating information about the specific risks to your employees is a workplace violence risk assessment.

Assessing the risk

Whenever there is direct interaction between employees and the public, there is a potential for violence to occur. If experience in a specific workplace or in similar workplaces indicates that a potential for violence exists (for example, in the retail industry) the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation requires that a risk assessment be conducted.

When conducting a risk assessment, you will need to gather information about actual and potential violent incidents, and analyze your current violence prevention measures, including physical and procedural controls. Follow these basic guidelines:

- Use your knowledge and experience of your business and work location to identify potential problems. Consider all aspects of your business.
- Consider previous incidents of violence in your workplace. How many incidents have there been and what happened?
- Ask for input from employees about current problems, concerns, and possible solutions.
- Evaluate all the information and prioritize the areas that need improvement.

Your assessment should result in a list of improvements to minimize the risks to you and your employees.

The Regulation

Sections 4.27–4.31 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation deal with workplace violence requirements for B.C. businesses (see Appendix I of this booklet).

Inspect your workplace

Some basic violence prevention strategies can go a long way towards making your store welcoming to customers but unattractive to thieves and robbers. When inspecting your workplace, consider the following physical controls:

- Store layout
- Design and position of sales counters
- Types and heights of shelving
- How and where you display valuable merchandise
- Use of mirrors to see partly hidden areas of the store
- Use of door alarms
- Use of panic alarms or personal alarms

Involve your employees

No one knows your business better than you and your employees, so make a point of asking for their input about potential risks for violence. For example, when and where do employees feel they could be unsafe? Do they feel confident that they know how to handle a violent situation? Are they aware of individuals or situations that have been problems in the past?

Ask as many of your employees as possible to complete the Safety and Security Feedback Report (Appendix B). The report is designed to get employees and supervisors thinking about specific workplace violence issues, including where they feel vulnerable and where they think improvements could be made.

Group discussions with your employees may also be effective for getting their input; and a group setting may spark a greater exchange of concerns and ideas. You can use the Safety and Security Feedback Report to help guide discussions. Record all the information discussed. The idea is to get as much information as possible about workplace violence concerns and possible controls for your business.

If your company has a safety committee, involve the committee in the process of assessing risks and developing controls.

“Hardening the target”

Evaluate the use of violence prevention controls in your business — inspect your workplace using the Safety and Security Checklist in Appendix F. Contact your local community police officer for advice on robbery and theft prevention.



An overhead mirror can let employees see all the aisles in the store.

Employee input

Employees should complete the Safety and Security Feedback Report on pages 22–23 and give it to their employers or supervisors — they need to know what employees think about safety and security.

Set priorities and develop a written plan

Prioritize the potential risks you have identified so that you know which ones to address first. Read over the returned copies of the Safety and Security Feedback Report and compare employee comments and suggestions with your completed Safety and Security Checklist. Brainstorm with your employees, or a representative team, about how you can deal with each potential risk. Prepare a written plan, including a timeline for implementing controls.

Share the written plan with your employees

If you want employees to take violence prevention seriously, you need to show them that you are serious too. A simple one-page summary report explaining your violence prevention plan and timeline can help achieve this. The Safety and Security Checklist is organized into categories such as “Visibility and lighting” and “Handling money and deposits.” Consider using these categories to help organize your report.

Post the report in the staff room, where employees can read it. Hold a staff meeting to go over the plan and to discuss other possible strategies.

Implement the plan

Violence prevention can easily pay for itself. It probably won’t cost much, if anything, to implement most of the solutions in your plan. In fact, many of the changes that you make to improve safety will also make your business more attractive to customers and improve sales and employee morale. Also, many of the controls that help prevent violence will also help prevent robbery and theft.

Physical controls (store design and security devices)

Consider including the following store design features and security devices in your violence prevention plan:

- **Barriers** such as Plexiglas (as in gas stations) and wide counters help keep employees out of reach from customers.
- **Low shelves** ensure a good view within the store, making it more difficult for thieves to hide.
- **A safe with a time lock** is a good place to store cash and other valuables.
- **Product placement** can discourage shoplifting. Place expensive items behind the counter or in locked display.



A safe with a time lock is useful for storing cash and other valuables.

- **The cash register layout** should be near a window with clear views outside so the clerk is easily visible to the public (no posters on the window). The employee should be on a raised floor to allow clear views of the entire store, and should have more than one exit to avoid being blocked in easily.
- **A secure refuge area** such as a lockable office with a fish-eye lens in the door and a phone will allow employees to safely monitor the store.
- **Mirrors and clear sight lines** allow employees to see who is in the aisles or secluded parts of the store.
- **Visible security cameras** deter individuals and record all activities in the store.
- **Communication devices for employees to summon help in an emergency** include panic buttons, personal alarms carried by employees at high risk, and cell phones.
- **Door alarms** alert employees when someone has entered the store.
- **Good lighting** is useful both inside and outside the store.
- **Keeping landscaping low** ensures good visibility, especially near entrances and exits, and beside walkways to parking areas.
- **Visible security workers** can be hired in cooperation with neighbouring businesses.
- **Signage advertising controls** such as “Cash in time-lock safe” and “Security cameras in use” deter would-be thieves.



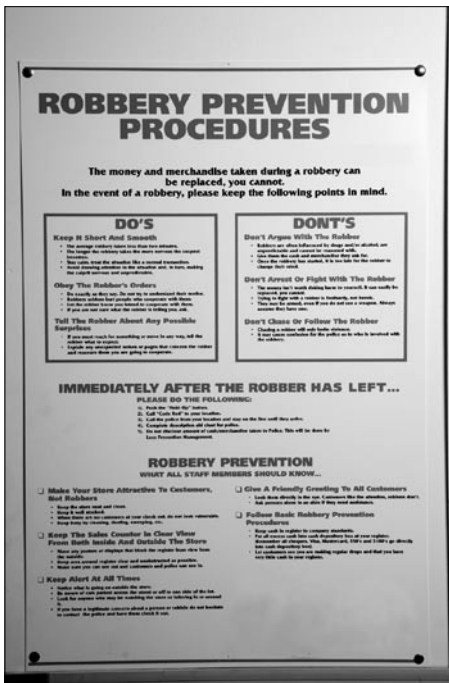
Employees can use a panic button behind the counter to summon help in an emergency.

⋮



An overhead security camera records what's going on in the store and helps deter shoplifters and robbers.

⋮



Written safe work procedures tell employees what to do when an incident such as a robbery occurs.

Procedural controls (training and safe work procedures)

Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace and ensuring that employees are adequately trained *before* they start a job. All employees need hands-on training in the tasks they will perform and ongoing supervision to ensure that the violence prevention program is successful.

Certain activities (for example, opening and closing the store, handling money, and working alone) carry a greater risk of violence than other activities, and employees may need to follow a specific safe work procedure to eliminate or reduce the risk. Written safe work procedures specific to your store will help with employee training.

Employees require specific training in recognizing and handling potentially violent incidents. This includes information on customer behaviours to watch out for and simple actions that may prevent a situation from escalating. For instance, robbers do not want to be identified, so encouraging employees to make eye contact and greet everyone who enters the store may decrease the likelihood of robbers following through with their plans.

The following sections describe common retail scenarios, and include tips and guidelines that you can use to develop written safe work procedures.

Opening and closing the store

Retail employees are most likely to experience violent incidents at opening and closing times. Although employees may be in a hurry to get started or wrap up the workday, they should be especially vigilant and follow opening and closing procedures. If an employee doesn't know the procedures, he or she should ask the supervisor or employer for training. Employees should also know where the written procedures are so they can refer to them. Encourage employees to offer advice on improving the procedures.

It also helps for employees to work in pairs at opening and closing, especially when doing the rounds at the end of a shift. Cash handling may be part of the opening and closing routines. Employees should ensure that there are no customers in the store if this is the case, and that all entrances and exits are secure and locked.

Handling money

All retail businesses should have safe work procedures for handling money in the store or when making bank deposits. Ensure that employees follow these guidelines when handling cash in the store:

- Make sure cash handling areas are located away from entrances and exits.
- Make sure sales counters are located so they are clearly visible from inside and outside the store.
- Keep as little cash in the cash register as possible.
- Place large bills in a drop box, safe, or strongroom that is out of sight.
- Fit counter safes with time-delay locks.

Ensure that employees follow these guidelines when making bank deposits:

- Avoid making bank deposits at night.
- Vary the time and route for making deposits.
- Don't carry money in bags that make it obvious you're carrying cash or that are marked with the company logo.
- Make deposits with a co-worker, if possible. The co-worker should face away from the depository to keep an eye on other people in the area.

Working alone

Working alone presents additional risks. It also presents legal requirements, including the need for a specific written work procedure that must be developed in consultation with your employees. The written work procedure should include the following:

- Specific time intervals during the shift (depending on the risk) when someone will check the employee's well-being
- A specific check at the end of the shift
- The actions that will be taken if the employee cannot be contacted or does not phone in at the appropriate time

For a sample person-check procedure, see Appendix E, page 27.

There are many ways to set up a check system for employees who work alone. For example, 24-hour phone service providers are available for checks. The service provider will expect calls from your employees during their shifts. If an employee does not call, and does not answer a direct call, the service provider will respond immediately. Other systems involve remotely monitored security timers that employees must activate every few hours. If there is no activation, the security company will initiate a call, drive-by, or other response.



Employees can place large bills in a drop box to avoid keeping large sums of money in the cash register.

All employees who work alone need specific training in procedures for working alone and any check systems that are in place. Procedures must be reviewed annually or whenever there is a change in your business arrangements or practices that increases the risk or affects the current procedure.

If working alone is part of your business, your employees should follow these guidelines:

- Keep busy with tasks away from the sales counter when there are no customers in the store.
- Offer a friendly greeting to people who enter the store. Make direct and friendly eye contact but don't stare and be confrontational. Prolonged eye contact, especially if there is a group, may be seen as a challenge.
- Keep an eye on anyone who is loitering. Ask if they need assistance.
- Ensure that emergency phone numbers are handy—next to or on the phone.
- Don't leave back doors open and unattended.
- Keep the store neat and clean.
- Don't empty garbage at night. Garbage bins are often located in secluded areas.
- Stay alert and call the police if you see any suspicious activity or people around the store.

Networking

Networking with other businesses in your immediate area will help you combine your knowledge and resources, and share information on best practices. Networking provides a means of support and helps improve the immediate neighbourhood, making it safer for everyone. You and your neighbours may wish to share costs for initiatives such as:

- Enhanced outdoor lighting
- Motion detectors
- Visible security staff
- Violence prevention training

Neighbouring businesses can use informal or advertised watch systems to keep an eye on each other during the business day. Contact your community business association and start a discussion about violence prevention. You can also contact your community police office for ideas on how to improve your immediate business area and build a safer working community.

Part 3: Possible scenarios in retail (tips for employers and employees)

If you are working in a retail business, either as an employer or an employee, you may find yourself face to face with violence (for example, during a robbery), or in a situation that could become violent (for example, when dealing with a difficult or abusive customer). This part provides tips that will help front-line workers protect themselves and prevent potentially violent situations from escalating. Employers can also use these guidelines to develop safe work procedures.

Shoplifting (theft)

Shoplifting is the theft of goods that are on display in a store. It is easier, and safer, to prevent shoplifting than it is to deal with a shoplifter.

Watch out for people who...

- Seem nervous or avoid eye contact
- Wander around the store without buying anything
- Leave the store and come back soon after
- Stay in a part of the store where it is difficult to see them
- Keep looking around or watching you

To discourage potential shoplifters...

- Greet and acknowledge anyone who enters the store.
- Be friendly and polite to all customers. Ask whether they need help.
- If someone looks suspicious, make friendly eye contact with him or her.
- Keep the store clean and orderly.
- Know where shoplifting is most likely to occur.
- Make your store a less desirable target. Review the ideas in Part 2.

If you suspect that someone is shoplifting...

- *Play it safe.* Don't be a hero; your life is more important than money or merchandise.
- Don't chase the suspect. This can quickly lead to violence. In fact, some employers have a policy of disciplining or even dismissing employees who chase a suspected thief.

What are theft and robbery?

Theft refers to someone stealing something in secret. *Robbery* usually refers to someone stealing something using force or the threat of violence.

- Don't accuse the person of stealing.
- Don't try to physically stop the suspect.
- Don't lock the door to keep the suspect from leaving. A person who feels trapped is more likely to panic and become violent.
- Stay at least an arm's length away from the suspect.
- Give the suspect a chance to pay or put back the item. Be sure you know what was taken and where the suspect hid it, and then politely ask, "Are you ready to pay?" or "Would you like a bag for [the item]?"
- If you feel frightened or uneasy, don't continue to confront the suspect. Get help when it's safe to do so. Alert your supervisor or any other employees who can help you.
- Call the police if you sense a threat of violence or if highly valuable items are being stolen.

After the shoplifter has left...

Fill out the Violent Incident Report (Appendix D) and give it to your supervisor or employer. This will also provide valuable information for the police. Record the date and time of the incident, and write down as much information about the shoplifter as possible, including:

- Height and weight
- Hair style and colour
- Skin colour
- Other notable features, such as scars or tattoos
- Mannerisms
- Clothing and footwear
- Vehicle make, colour, year, and licence plate number, as well as direction of travel

Make a point of trying to describe the suspect's footwear. Many thieves and robbers will change their clothing afterwards, but not their shoes.

Robbery

Robberies typically present the greatest risk of violence to retail workers and customers. Making your store a more difficult target (see Part 2) will help protect you and your co-workers from possible violent situations and provide a safer environment for your customers.

To prevent robbery...

- Dress neatly and keep the store neat and clean. A tidy, orderly store is inviting to customers but not to robbers.
- Keep the store well lit. Report any burned-out bulbs to your manager or employer.
- Be friendly. Make eye contact and offer customers a friendly greeting as they enter the store.

- Stay alert. Watch for people showing the same behaviours as potential shoplifters (see page 11).
- If someone suspicious is standing in line, ask the customer ahead of the suspicious person, “Are you together?” The customer will usually turn around and look at the other person.
- If you see something suspicious, call the police. Never try to handle it yourself.
- Encourage the police to stop by periodically.
- Handle cash carefully and keep the amount of cash in registers to a minimum. If a customer tries to pay with a large bill, politely ask for a smaller one. Explain that you keep very little cash on hand.

If someone tries to rob your store...

- *Play it safe.* Don’t be a hero. Cooperate; give up the money and don’t resist.
- Even if you cannot see a weapon, assume that there is one.
- Stay calm and cautiously observe as much as possible about the robber. Don’t stare as this may aggravate the robber.
- Don’t lock the door to keep the robber from leaving. A person who feels trapped is more likely to panic and become violent.
- If you do not understand what the robber is telling you to do, ask for clarification.
- Avoid surprises. Keep your hands in sight and don’t make any sudden moves.
- Inform the robber if you have to reach for something, if there is another employee in the store (for example, in the back room or cooler), or if something will make an unexpected noise.
- Keep it brief. The longer a robbery takes, the more nervous the robber becomes.
- Keep it smooth. Handle the entire situation as if it were a normal transaction.
- Activate the alarm only after the robber has left.

Crime prevention works

Criminals are always looking for ways to beat crime prevention systems, but there’s only so far that they’re willing to go. You can lower your chances of being robbed or being involved in a violent incident by remembering one simple rule: the greater the risk of getting caught, the lower the likelihood that someone will commit the offence.

After the robber has left...

- Don’t chase or follow the robber.
- Lock the store.
- Call the police and follow their instructions; then call your supervisor or employer to report the robbery.
- Ask any witnesses to stay until the police arrive. Try to make them as comfortable as possible while they wait.
- Protect the crime scene. Do not allow anyone to touch anything that might be considered evidence, and do not resume business until the police are finished.
- Do not discuss details of the robbery with anyone until after the police have taken statements from everyone.

- Use the Violent Incident Report (Appendix D) to record information and share it with the police; then give it to your supervisor or employer. Record the time and date of the incident, and write down as much information about the robber as possible, including:
 - Height and weight
 - Hair style and colour
 - Skin colour
 - Other notable features, such as scars or tattoos
 - Mannerisms
 - Clothing and footwear
 - Vehicle make, colour, year, and licence plate number, as well as direction of travel

Difficult or irate customers

In a retail business, you will eventually have to deal with difficult or irate customers. Such customers may become aggressive, leaving you feeling threatened and vulnerable.

Under the *Trespass Act*, you can simply ask a difficult customer to leave the premises. If the customer refuses, you can call 9-1-1 and say, “I have a hostile customer who refuses to leave.” However, don’t ask someone to leave if you feel that it might make him or her more aggressive.

Defusing a situation

- Ask questions to help you understand what the customer’s concerns are.
- If you are an employee and you are unable to address the customer’s complaint adequately, encourage the customer to speak with your manager or someone else who has authority to make decisions or changes.
- If a customer is angry about being asked for ID for cigarettes, point to the ID-requirement posters and stickers, and explain that you are only obeying the law.
- Focus on being respectful and courteous. Try to remain calm, and try to calm the customer.
- Avoid focusing on who is right or wrong. Focus instead on determining what will satisfy the customer and on finding ways to help the customer save face.
- Stick to facts, not opinions or judgments. Ignore insults. Keep bringing the discussion back to the real issue.
- Listen carefully, and try to put yourself in the customer’s shoes.

Know when to walk away

If the customer becomes agitated and it seems likely that the situation will escalate:

- Don’t offer solutions and don’t argue.
- Get help immediately.
- Ask a supervisor for assistance or give the customer the name and phone number of someone to contact.

- If the customer is disruptive and noisy, and if it is safe to do so, move to a quieter location, possibly with the help of a co-worker.
- If you cannot calm the customer, ask for help.

Abusive customers

Abusive conduct does not necessarily include physical violence, but physical violence often starts with abusive conduct. Abusive conduct includes:

- Demeaning, degrading, intimidating, offensive, or otherwise abusive expressions
- Unwelcome sexual attention
- Bullying
- Stalking

No form of abuse is acceptable. If you are faced with abusive conduct, follow these guidelines:

- Tell the customer to stop. Do this right away, before the unwanted behaviour becomes a pattern.
- Tell the customer why the behaviour is unacceptable. If the customer persists, ask him or her to leave.
- Report the incident to your employer or the person who normally deals with this type of complaint.
- If you believe you are being followed or stalked, call the police.
- If the threat or abuse is from someone directly connected to your personal life, do not be afraid to call the police, especially if the situation is escalating.

Unwelcome members of the public

Retail workers face many difficult situations, especially if the store is open for longer hours. Employers should plan for and train their employees on how to handle situations such as:

- People loitering outside the store or gathering inside the store
- Gangs or groups using the storefront as a meeting place
- Homeless people at the store entrance asking for spare change or using the doorway as a shelter for the night
- Drug addicts using the storefront area or washrooms

In situations such as these, well-meaning employees may talk to the people involved to try and solve the problem. Doing so, however, may actually increase the risk of a violent incident. *Employers and managers should make it clear to employees that they must not attempt to deal with these situations alone.* Instead, employees should report their concerns to a supervisor or ask the police to come to the store.

Dealing with trespassers

- If you think someone might be hiding in a back room or washroom, don't call out. Go to a safe place and phone for help.
- If you find someone in an unauthorized area, don't block the exit. A person who feels trapped is more likely to panic and become violent.
- If you are responding to a break-in, do not enter the building unless you know it is safe. Call the police and wait for them to arrive first.
- Remember that you have the legal right to ask people to leave the premises.

Employers and managers should also consider taking steps to lessen the likelihood of these situations:

- Hire a private security firm. Some business associations have programs to help stores with their security needs. Neighbouring businesses can work together to pay for security guards or patrol cars.
- Post signs prohibiting loitering and stating that washrooms will be closed during the night shift.
- Limit the number of people in the store.
- Improve lighting in and around the store.
- Consider removing amenities that could encourage groups to gather, such as automatic teller machines (ATMs) and pay phones.

Suspicious persons

Sometimes when somebody is in the store, it just doesn't feel right. You may notice something odd about a person's appearance, body language, behaviour, or mannerisms, almost subconsciously, which may make you feel concerned. This person could be in the store to shoplift, rob the store, or worse.

When a suspicious person is in the store, assess the situation carefully. Follow these guidelines:

- Listen to your instincts. Remember that your safety is more important than the goods in the store.
- Consider contacting the police or your security service. Describe the situation, the suspicious person, and how long they have been in the store.
- If someone has been in the store for a long time and they seem to be looking for something, ask loudly whether they need help. Keep your distance—stay at least an arm's length away.
- Consider whether you need to move to the store's secure area, where you can safely monitor the store (for example, to a lockable office with a fish-eye lens installed in the door and a phone).
- When the suspicious person has left, write a description in the log so that other employees can watch out for this person. This will also help you recognize the person if he or she returns.

Trust your instincts.

If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

Employers can make their stores less of a target by following these guidelines:

- Ensure that the store has good lighting and good visibility.
- Keep valuable goods behind the counter or in locked displays.
- Post signs indicating that there is little or no cash in the store.
- Install clearly visible cameras.
- Make eye contact with and greet everyone who enters the store.

For more ideas on making your store less of a target, see Part 2.

Part 4: What to do after a violent incident

Even after an employer takes steps to prevent violence in a retail business, violent incidents may still occur. If this happens, it's important to act quickly to minimize the effects on employees. Employers should provide support to victims, report and investigate the incident, and revise the violence prevention plan to prevent a similar incident in the future.

Provide first aid and other medical attention if necessary

If an employee is seriously hurt during an incident, the employer must do the following:

- Provide first aid.
- Arrange for transport to a medical facility.
- Notify WorkSafeBC.

If it is a less serious injury, provide appropriate first aid and refer to a doctor if necessary. If there has been possible contact with blood or other body fluids, make sure the employee gets professional medical assistance as soon as possible.

Make sure employees know where first aid supplies are kept and how to get help if they are hurt but don't need an ambulance.

Take employees seriously

Never dismiss or downplay complaints or reports of violence. Employees should never be told or feel that they have to deal with the problem by themselves.



All businesses must have an adequate first aid kit available. For more information on first aid requirements, use the online First Aid Assessment Tool at www2.worksafebc.com/calculator/firstaid/.

Arrange a critical incident intervention if necessary

WorkSafeBC can coordinate critical incident interventions to help people deal with traumatic events at work. This help may also be available through your local police department. Two basic types of interventions are defusing sessions and debriefing sessions.

Calling for a critical incident intervention

If you have any questions about critical incident response or wish to arrange an intervention, call 1 888 922-3700, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m., seven days a week.

A *defusing session* is a short (30–45 minutes), confidential, non-judgmental session in which employees affected by the incident meet with a trained leader (called a defuser). Defusing sessions are usually held within 6 to 8 hours of the incident.

A *debriefing session* is a confidential, non-judgmental discussion about the continuing effects of the incident. It is intended to address the well-being of employees and alleviate distress. It is usually held within 1 to 3 days of the incident. A trained professional should lead the session.

The Critical Response Liaison at WorkSafeBC can help determine whether an employee needs trauma counselling. If necessary, offer the employee trauma counselling through an established Employee Assistance Program, a doctor's referral, or the Critical Response Liaison. Encourage employees to talk about their responses to and feelings about the incident, and let them know that you are available to listen. If employees internalize, bury, or “wall off” their reactions to the event, it can be extremely harmful in the long run.

Watch for signs and symptoms

A traumatic incident such as armed robbery can be emotionally and psychologically damaging. Employees who have gone through a traumatic incident may:

- Feel anxious, moody, or irritable
- Feel numb or dazed
- Have trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Be afraid to go near the scene of the incident
- Not want to be alone
- Not want to be with other people
- Have flashbacks, nightmares, or disturbing memories of the incident
- Vomit more than a couple of hours after the incident
- Experience uncontrolled, spontaneous crying
- Experience changes in appetite and sleeping patterns

Employers should be sensitive to these warning signs and symptoms. Violent incidents can seriously affect the well-being of employees, and may put people at a greater risk of workplace accidents. You may notice an increase in absenteeism. Timely, positive follow-up shows employees that they are supported in the workplace and that steps are being taken to protect them. If an employee shows signs or symptoms after being involved in a violent incident, or the signs or symptoms get worse, further professional help may be necessary.

Report and investigate the incident

Report incidents such as assaults or robberies to the police right away. You should also report such incidents to WorkSafeBC if they involve employees and treatment is needed. You also need to complete Form 52E40—Incident Investigation Report (see Appendix G) to help prevent the incident from happening again.

Goals of investigation

Incident investigations help determine the causes of an incident so you can take steps to ensure that it does not happen again. As much as possible, an investigation must:

- Determine the causes of the incident
- Identify any conditions, acts, or procedures that contributed to the incident
- Find ways to prevent similar incidents

The incident investigation should answer the following questions:

- Who was involved?
- Where and when did the incident happen?
- What happened? Include as much detail as possible.
- Why did the incident happen?
- How will the incident be dealt with?

Interview witnesses and people involved in the incident even if they weren't present when it happened. For example, it may be appropriate to interview a supervisor who gave instructions at the start of a shift or a trainer who previously instructed the employees involved.

Incident investigation documents

Keep copies of all documents and reports related to the incident. You can use this information to help improve your violence prevention strategy. It will also be useful if you and your employees need to file a claim. It is a good idea for all the employees involved in the incident to document it from their perspectives. Use the Violent Incident Report in Appendix D to collect information from employees.

Follow these guidelines to help prevent similar types of incidents from recurring:

- Inform employees who were not involved in the incident and welcome their suggestions for preventing a recurrence.
- Determine if there is anything you can do to protect your employees and business from this kind of incident. For example, can you improve lighting, security, or the layout of the store?
- Update your plan for preventing and dealing with workplace violence, and implement any necessary changes. For example, if employees need special training to deal with potentially threatening situations, include it in your plan.
- Assign someone to make the necessary changes, and ensure that the changes are made.

Appendices

This part includes the appendices listed in the following table. The table also lists the parts or pages in this booklet that relate to the topics covered in these appendices.

Appendix	Relates to information in...
Appendix A: Some do's and don'ts for preventing retail violence	Parts 2–3
Appendix B: Safety and security feedback report	Page 5
Appendix C: Suspect and vehicle identification sheet	Pages 13 and 19
Appendix D: Violent incident report	Pages 12 and 19
Appendix E: Sample procedure for regular person checks	Pages 9 and 10
Appendix F: Safety and security checklist	Page 5
Appendix G: WorkSafeBC Form 52E40 – Incident Investigation Report	Page 19
Appendix H: Occupational Health and Safety Regulation excerpt – Working Alone or in Isolation	Part 2
Appendix I: Occupational Health and Safety Regulation excerpt – Violence in the Workplace	Pages 9–10
Appendix J: Requirements under the <i>Employment Standards Act</i>	—

Appendix A: Some do's and don'ts for preventing retail violence

Do

- Be polite and friendly to all customers.
- Make eye contact and greet customers as they enter the store.
- Look for signs that customers are upset or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Learn to recognize customers who are likely to cause trouble.
- Stay calm. Listen to customers and respond calmly.
- Try to steer customer anger away from you. For example, if a customer is angry because you won't sell him or her cigarettes, explain that you are just following the law.
- Encourage customers who are angry or upset to talk to the manager. If the manager is not available, give the customer a phone number to call.
- Make sure important signs stay posted. For example, the front door might have signs that say: "Store has limited cash after dark" and "Time-lock safe—Clerk cannot open."
- Keep emergency numbers on hand. Stick them on each phone.

Don't

- Trade insults with customers or react to their anger.
- Take customer complaints personally.
- Talk down to customers.
- Try to physically stop or hold someone.
- Put up displays, signs, or posters that block the view of the cash register or exit doors from inside or outside the store. (Robbers hate to perform for an audience.)

Remember that you can't control other people. The best thing you can do is control your own feelings, words, and actions.

Appendix B: Safety and security feedback report

General information

Have you ever been a victim of violence in this workplace? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what was the nature of the incident (for example, verbal threats, hitting, or offensive correspondence)?

Who was the offender (for example, a customer, co-worker, contractor, or a name if known)?

Do you feel safe from violence at work? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why?

Is help available if there is a violent incident? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Likelihood of violence

Do you think violence is more likely on certain days (for example, Saturdays or when there is a community event)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when and why?

Likelihood of violence cont.

Do you think violence is more likely at certain times of day (for example, at opening or late at night)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when and why?

Do you think violence is more likely to occur in certain places (for example, the parking lot, sales counter, or back door)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, where and why?

Violence prevention

What do you think could be done to minimize the risk of violence?

Are there any situations on the job in which you feel particularly vulnerable? ☐ Yes ☐ No

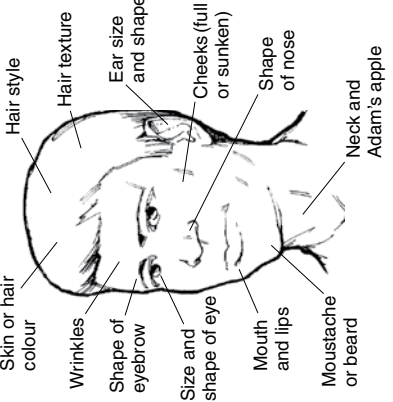
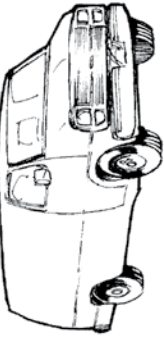
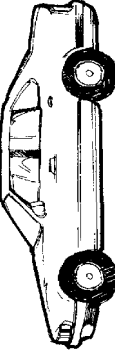
If yes, what are they?

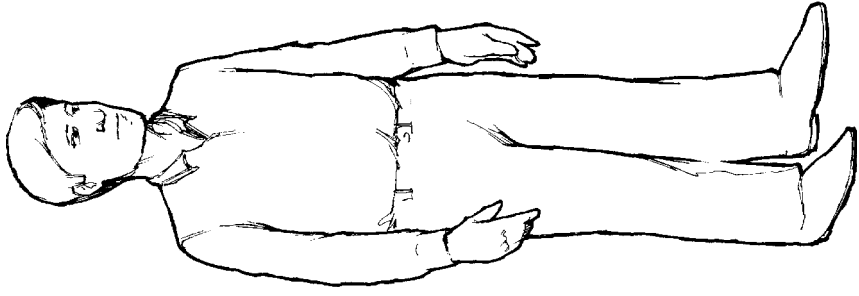
Have you been given previous training in how to deal with workplace violence? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what kind of training did you receive?

Please present this completed report to your employer or supervisor.

Appendix C: Suspect and vehicle identification sheet

Facial appearance		Write below specific facial details that you definitely remember.	
		What did the suspect say?	
		Describe any tool or weapon seen.	
Vehicle			
			
Colour	Make	Model	Licence number
Body style		Damage or rust	
Antenna	Bumper sticker	Wheel covers	
Direction of travel			

SEX <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	RACE
General appearance				HAT (colour and type)
				COAT
HAIR (colour and style)				SHIRT/BLOUSE
EYES (glasses)				PANTS/SKIRT
COMPLEXION				SHOES
JEWELLERY				TIE
SCARS/MARKS				
TATTOOS				

Appendix D: Violent incident report

General information

Your name:

Today's date:

Workplace branch or location:

Witness information (names and contact numbers):

The incident

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Where did the incident happen (for example, the sales counter, stockroom, or hallway)?

What type of incident was it (for example, verbal abuse, physical threat, pushing, slapping, or robbery)?

Describe what happened. Include factors that led up to the incident.

Did you receive first aid or other medical attention? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has this incident been reported to the police or security? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

If available: Police file # _____

The incident cont.

How has this incident affected you (for example, missed work, emotional trauma, or physical injury)?

The offender

Offender's name (if known):

Offender's relationship to you (for example, a customer, co-worker, spouse, ex-girlfriend, or ex-boyfriend):

Describe the offender:

☐ Male ☐ Female Age: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____ Complexion: _____

Any other information (for example, accent, hair colour, skin colour, tattoos, clothing, or footwear):

Has the offender been involved in any previous violent incidents that you know of? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Describe any other relevant information, including suggestions for preventing a similar incident:

Please present this completed report to your employer or supervisor.

For confidential, free help in dealing with the after-effects of this incident, we encourage you to use the Critical Incident Response program. WorkSafeBC coordinates this program for work-related traumatic events.

You can call a Critical Response Liaison 9:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m., seven days a week, at 1 888 922-3700, toll-free in B.C.

Appendix E: Sample procedure for regular person checks

This section describes procedures for checking on the well-being of an employee working alone.

You will be contacted by: _____

They will contact you: ☐ in person ☐ by telephone ☐ other method _____

They will contact you: ☐ every 30 minutes ☐ every hour ☐ every 2 hours ☐ at end of shift

You will attempt to call the contact person within five minutes if you were not available at the predetermined person-check time. If your contact person cannot reach you at one of these predetermined times, he or she will make another attempt within five minutes. If your contact person still cannot reach you after the second attempt, he or she will do the following:

1. Call the neighbouring store (if there is one) and have someone check on you.
2. Call the owner or manager of your store, and send someone to your work location if there are no neighbours.
3. If necessary, call 9-1-1 and request help at your location.

Emergency information

In case of an emergency (for example, fire, earthquake, flood, or a bomb threat) call the following person:

Contact name: _____

Contact phone number: _____

Record of checks

Date	Time	Initials	Comments or issues

Appendix F: Safety and security checklist

To be completed by the person affected by the incident.

Potential risk factors	Yes	No	N/A
<i>Visibility and lighting</i>			
Can employees see in and out of the store or do posters, signs, and brushes block their view?			
Are employees visible to potential witnesses outside?			
Do mirrors help employees see the whole store?			
Does lighting ensure that would-be thieves or robbers will be recognizable?			
<i>General store impression</i>			
Does the worksite look cared for? Is there graffiti or vandalism?			
Are fences and other security measures well maintained?			
Are employees dressed to suit the general appearance of the store?			
<i>Building layout and design</i>			
Is it easy to distinguish public areas from private areas such as offices?			
Is access to employee-only areas controlled with locks?			
Is the cash-handling area separate from the general workplace?			
Do counters have an elevated place for cash registers?			
Are anti-jump barriers fitted in front of cash-handling devices?			
Is alternative access to the building blocked (aside from fire exits)?			
Is public access to washrooms controlled?			
Are there bushes, or unlit or overgrown areas, where someone could hide?			
Are any areas not visible to employees?			
Are unoccupied rooms locked?			
<i>Signage and emergency information</i>			
Are emergency numbers posted in a prominent place or on phones?			
Are robbery prevention signs prominently displayed? (For example: "Area monitored by video camera," "Store has less than \$40 after dark," and "Time-Lock Safe — Clerk Cannot Open.")			
Is there a coloured height chart next to the entrance?			
<i>Tools and equipment</i>			
Are knives and other sharp objects kept out of sight of customers?			
Can anyone grab and use tools or other items as weapons against employees?			
Are tools and equipment locked away when not in use?			
<i>Security guards and equipment</i>			
Are there door alarms to alert employees that someone is entering the store?			
Are security guards or buddy systems available at your location?			
Is a closed-circuit television or surveillance camera installed?			
Is a silent, centrally monitored holdup alarm installed?			

Potential risk factors	Yes	No	N/A
<i>Customer service</i>			
Do employees acknowledge customers with a friendly greeting, smile, and make eye contact?			
If you have multiple cash registers, are those nearest the entry closed first?			
<i>Employees working alone</i>			
Does someone contact employees regularly to ensure that they are okay?			
Is there a plan if the employee does not respond to a contact such as a phone check?			
Are back doors ever open or unlocked when an employee is alone?			
Do employees take garbage out alone at night? Is the garbage bin in a well-lit place?			
<i>Handling money and deposits</i>			
Are cash-handling areas positioned away from entries and exits?			
Is it standard practice to keep as little cash in the till as possible?			
Are large bills put into a drop box, safe, or strongroom that is out of sight?			
If you have counter safes, are they fitted with time-delay locks?			
Do employees make deposits at night or alone?			
When employees make deposits together, do they face in opposite directions to keep an eye on the surroundings?			
Does the time and routine for making deposits vary from day to day to make it less predictable?			
Do employees transport cash in a bag that has the company logo or otherwise makes it obvious that they are carrying cash?			
<i>Files and records</i>			
Are confidential files and records kept in a locked room?			
Are filing cabinets containing confidential records locked?			
<i>Opening and closing</i>			
Do employees work in pairs at opening and closing, especially when doing the rounds at the end of a shift?			
Do your written procedures for opening and closing emphasize personal safety? For example, "Don't count the cash from the till at the sales counter."			
<i>Travelling to and from work</i>			
Do employees have the option of asking for an escort to walk to their cars or the bus stop?			
Can employees park nearby and within sight, especially at night?			
Is evening or night parking available for employees in nearby spaces normally reserved for customers?			
<i>Regular checks</i>			
Do you conduct risk assessments for violence annually or whenever there are significant changes in your workplace?			
Do you conduct an assessment whenever there is a violent incident?			

Note: Security must never conflict with fire and other safety requirements. Never impede the ability of employees and customers to leave the building.

Appendix G: WorkSafeBC Form 52E40—Incident Investigation Report



INCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT

Worker and Employer Services Division

This form is provided to employers for the purpose of documenting the employer's investigation into a workplace incident. Please attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Employer name	Employer number
Employer head office address	

Incident occurred ref: s. 3.4(a) Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHS Regulation)

Address where incident occurred (including nearest city)	
Date <small>yyyy-mm-dd</small>	Time a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> p.m. <input type="checkbox"/>

Injured person(s) ref: s. 3.4(b) OHS Regulation

Last name	First name	Job title	Age	Length of experience with this employer	Length of experience at this task/job
1)					
2)					

Nature of injury/injuries

1)
2)

Witnesses ref: s. 174(4) WCA and s. 3.4(c) OHS Regulation

Last name	First name	Address	Telephone
1)			()
2)			()
3)			()

Incident description ref: s. 3.4(d)–(e) OHS Regulation

Briefly describe what happened, including the sequence of events preceding the incident.
--



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WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF B.C.

Statement of causes *ref: s. 174(2)(a)–(b) WCA and s. 3.4(f) OHS Regulation*

List any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that in any manner contributed to the incident.

Recommendations *ref: s. 174(2)(c) WCA and s. 3.4(g) OHS Regulation*

Identify any corrective actions that have been taken and any recommended actions to prevent similar incidents.

Recommended corrective action	Action by whom	Action by date
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		

Persons conducting investigation *ref: s. 3.4(h) OHS Regulation*

Name	Signature	Type of representative			Date
		Employer <input type="checkbox"/>	Worker <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Employer <input type="checkbox"/>	Worker <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Employer <input type="checkbox"/>	Worker <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	

For additional information on WorkSafeBC (Workers' Compensation Board of B.C.) and on the requirements for incident investigations, please refer to WorkSafeBC's web site: WorkSafeBC.com

Mailing address WorkSafeBC
PO Box 5350 Stn Terminal
Vancouver BC V6B 5L5

Fax number: 604 276-3247

Telephone information

Call centre: 604 276-3100 or toll free within B.C. 1 888 621-SAFE (7233)

After hours health and safety emergency: 604 273-7711 or toll free 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP)



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Appendix H: Occupational Health and Safety Regulation excerpt—Working Alone or in Isolation

4.21 Procedures for checking well-being of worker

- (1) The employer must develop and implement a written procedure for checking the well-being of a worker assigned to work alone or in isolation.
- (2) The procedure for checking a worker's well-being must include the time interval between checks and the procedure to follow in case the worker cannot be contacted, including provisions for emergency rescue.
- (3) A person must be designated to establish contact with the worker at predetermined intervals and the results must be recorded by the person.
- (4) In addition to checks at regular intervals, a check at the end of the work shift must be done.
- (5) The procedure for checking a worker's well-being, including time intervals between the checks, must be developed in consultation with the joint committee or the worker health and safety representative, as applicable.
- (6) Time intervals for checking a worker's well-being must be developed in consultation with the worker assigned to work alone or in isolation.

Note: High risk activities require shorter time intervals between checks. The preferred method for checking is visual or two-way voice contact, but where such a system is not practicable, a one-way system which allows the worker to call or signal for help and which will send a call for help if the worker does not reset the device after a predetermined interval is acceptable.

Late night retail premises

The Regulation includes specific requirements for retail premises that operate during late night hours. See section 4.22.1 and its associated guidelines for the most current requirements.

Late night retail premises means a retail location that is open to the public for late night hours, including the following:

- A gas station or other retail fueling outlet
- A convenience store or any other retail store where goods are sold directly to consumers

Appendix I: Occupational Health and Safety Regulation excerpt—Violence in the Workplace

4.27 Definition

In sections 4.28 to 4.31

“violence” means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury.

4.28 Risk assessment

(1) A risk assessment must be performed in any workplace in which a risk of injury to workers from violence arising out of their employment may be present.

(2) The risk assessment must include the consideration of

- (a) previous experience in that workplace,
- (b) occupational experience in similar workplaces, and
- (c) the location and circumstances in which work will take place.

4.29 Procedures and policies

If a risk of injury to workers from violence is identified by an assessment performed under section 4.28 the employer must

- (a) establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to workers from violence, and
- (b) if elimination of the risk to workers is not possible, establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to workers.

4.30 Instruction of workers

(1) An employer must inform workers who may be exposed to the risk of violence of the nature and extent of the risk.

(2) The duty to inform workers in subsection (1) includes a duty to provide information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

(3) The employer must instruct workers who may be exposed to the risk of violence in

- (a) the means for recognition of the potential for violence,
- (b) the procedures, policies and work environment arrangements which have been developed to minimize or effectively control the risk to workers from violence,
- (c) the appropriate response to incidents of violence, including how to obtain assistance, and
- (d) procedures for reporting, investigating and documenting incidents of violence.

4.31 Advice to consult physician

(1) Repealed. [B.C. Reg. 312/2003, effective October 29, 2003.]

(2) Repealed. [B.C. Reg. 312/2003, effective October 29, 2003.]

(3) The employer must ensure that a worker reporting an injury or adverse symptom as a result of an incident of violence is advised to consult a physician of the worker's choice for treatment or referral.

Note: The requirements for risk assessment, procedures and policies, the duty to respond to incidents and to instruct workers are based on the recognition of violence in the workplace as an occupational hazard. This hazard is to be addressed by the occupational health and safety program following the same procedures required by this Occupational Health & Safety Regulation to address other workplace hazards.

Appendix J: Requirements under the *Employment Standards Act*

The following information is excerpted from the fact sheet *Deductions from Wages*, published by the Ministry of Labour, Employment Standards Branch (www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb/facshts/deductions.htm).

Deductions from Wages

Deductions

An employer may not, directly or indirectly, withhold, deduct or require payment of all or part of an employee's wages for any purpose except as permitted or required by the *Employment Standards Act*, or by another act of either British Columbia or Canada.

Unauthorized deductions

Employers cannot require that an employee pay for any portion of an employer's business cost.

This includes expenses arising from theft, damage, breakage, poor quality of work, damage to employer property, or failure to pay by a customer. Some instances where these issues arise include "gas-and-dash", "dine-and-dash", shoplifting, or accidents involving employer vehicles or equipment.

Any agreement by an employee to contribute toward an employer's cost of doing business is a contravention of the Act and is not enforceable.

For more information

Tel: 612-4100 in Prince George
1 800 663-3316, toll-free in British Columbia
Fax: 250 612-4121
Web: labour.gov.bc.ca

Other health and safety resources

Visit WorkSafeBC.com for searchable versions of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (including key excerpts from the *Workers Compensation Act*) and associated guidelines. The website also includes the following publications:

- *Take Care: How to Develop and Implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Program*
- *Coping with Critical Incident Stress at Work*
- *Health and Safety Guide for New Retail Workers*
- *Small Business Primer: A Guide to WorkSafeBC*
- *Preventing Violence in Health Care: Five Steps to an Effective Program*
- *Working Alone: A Handbook for Small Business*
- *Back to Work, Back to Health: Return to Work for the Retail Industry*

Contact information

WorkSafeBC

Web: WorkSafeBC.com

Prevention Information Line

Phone: 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland

Toll-free: 1 888 621-7233 (621-SAFE)

After Hours Health and Safety Emergency Line

Phone: 604 273-7711 in the Lower Mainland

Toll-free: 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP)

Retail Council of Canada

Web: retailcouncil.org

209 – 1730 West 2nd Avenue

Vancouver, BC V6J 1H6

Phone: 604 683-7706 or toll-free 1 888 246-7705

1255 Bay Street, Suite 800

Toronto, ON M5R 2A9

Phone: 416 922-6678 or toll-free 1 888 373-8245

Fax: 416 922-8011 or toll-free 1 877 790-4271

WorkSafeBC offices

Visit our website at WorkSafeBC.com.

Abbotsford

2774 Trethewey Street V2T 3R1
Phone: 604 276-3100
Toll-free: 1 800 292-2219
Fax: 604 556-2077

Burnaby

450 – 6450 Roberts Street V5G 4E1
Phone: 604 276-3100
Toll-free: 1 888 621-7233
Fax: 604 232-5950

Coquitlam

104 – 3020 Lincoln Avenue V3B 6B4
Phone: 604 276-3100
Toll-free: 1 888 967-5377
Fax: 604 232-1946

Courtenay

801 30th Street V9N 8G6
Phone: 250 334-8765
Toll-free: 1 800 663-7921
Fax: 250 334-8757

Kamloops

321 Battle Street V2C 6P1
Phone: 250 371-6003
Toll-free: 1 800 663-3935
Fax: 250 371-6031

Kelowna

110 – 2045 Enterprise Way V1Y 9T5
Phone: 250 717-4313
Toll-free: 1 888 922-4466
Fax: 250 717-4380

Nanaimo

4980 Wills Road V9T 6C6
Phone: 250 751-8040
Toll-free: 1 800 663-7382
Fax: 250 751-8046

Nelson

524 Kootenay Street V1L 6B4
Phone: 250 352-2824
Toll-free: 1 800 663-4962
Fax: 250 352-1816

North Vancouver

400 – 224 Esplanade Ave. W. V7M 1A4
Phone: 604 276-3100
Toll-free: 1 888 875-6999
Fax: 604 232-1558

Prince George

1066 Vancouver Street V2L 5M4
Phone: 250 561-3700
Toll-free: 1 800 663-6623
Fax: 250 561-3710

Surrey

100 – 5500 152 Street V3S 5J9
Phone: 604 276-3100
Toll-free: 1 888 621-7233
Fax: 604 232-7077

Terrace

4450 Lakelse Avenue V8G 1P2
Phone: 250 615-6605
Toll-free: 1 800 663-3871
Fax: 250 615-6633

Victoria

4514 Chatterton Way V8X 5H2
Phone: 250 881-3418
Toll-free: 1 800 663-7593
Fax: 250 881-3482

Head Office/Richmond

Prevention Information Line:
Phone: 604 276-3100
Toll-free: 1 888 621-7233 (621-SAFE)

Administration:
6951 Westminster Highway
Phone: 604 273-2266

Mailing Address:
PO Box 5350 Stn Terminal
Vancouver, BC V6B 5L5

After Hours Health & Safety Emergency:
Phone: 604 273-7711
Toll-free: 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP)

