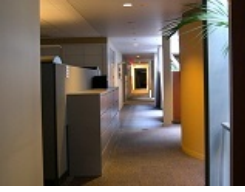


## RECOGNIZING AND PREVENTING VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE



It seems that every time you browse the newspaper or search the Internet looking for news, there's a new story involving violence in the workplace. Employers are persistently taking steps to prevent workplace violence. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has identified four distinct types of violence that may occur in the workplace. Type I is violence with criminal intent. In this case, the instigator is not directly related to the company or its employee. The violence is often the result of criminal activity such as robbery, shoplifting, trespassing or terrorism. Approximately 85 percent of homicides in the workplace are the consequence of this type of violence. Type II is customer/client, in which the instigator is associated with the business as a procurer of the business' service(s). This could be anyone from customers, clients, patients, students, and inmates, or other groups that a company may serve. NIOSH estimates that the majority of Type II violence is in the field of healthcare in places such as nursing homes or psychiatric facilities, with caregivers usually the victims. Other groups of people who may have experienced such violence are police officers, prison staff, flight attendants and teachers. Type II accounts for approximately three percent of workplace homicides. The final two categories include Type III, worker-on-worker violence, and Type IV, personal relationship. Worker-on-worker entails any employee or former employee enacting violence upon a current or previous employee(s) in the workplace. With personal relationship, the instigator may not have an affiliation with the business but has an intimate association with the victim at the workplace. These are most often victims of domestic abuse. Of all workplace homicides, Type III and Type IV make up, respectively, five percent and seven percent. The NIOSH has established strategies which may be implemented in the prevention of workplace violence. With regard to all four types of such violence, the following is recommended: the participation of management and among all of the workers in realizing prevention programs, specific policies befitting an individual business on workplace violence, training, acknowledging any "cultural barriers" and evaluating awareness and prevention of workplace violence. Prevention strategies tailored for Type I violence include "interventions" that have been successfully incorporated (e.g., convenience stores) for environmental (surveillance, cash control, etc.), behavioral (proper training), and administrative (safety regulations for employees). Type II strategies include suitable staffing and workers with adequate skills, as well as training and setting standards and requirements for workers to increase safety in the workplace. For Type III, NIOSH recommends an evaluation process for potential employees and sufficient training for workers on policies and reporting suspect behavior. Likewise, employees should take note of obvious changes in behavior of co-workers. Lastly, Type IV can be prevented with such tactics as training for personal and intimate relationships at work and strong support for probable victims (e.g., ensure confidentiality and safety).