

What is Workplace Violence And How Do You Prevent It?

Workplace violence is defined as any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the workplace. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults, and homicide, one of the leading causes of job-related deaths. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide.

According to the Justice Department over 1.5 million “violent victimizations” happen each year. These result in the loss of billions of dollars to American business because of lost work time and wages, reduced productivity, workers’ comp, and legal and security expenses.

The best protection employers can offer is to establish a zero-tolerance policy toward workplace violence against or by their employees. The employer should establish a workplace violence prevention program or incorporate the information into an existing accident prevention program, employee handbook or manual of standard operating procedures. It is critical to ensure that all employees know the policy and understand that all claims of workplace violence will be investigated and remedied promptly. In addition, employers can offer additional protection such as the following:

- Provide safety education for employees so they know what conduct is not acceptable, what to do if they witness or are subjected to workplace violence, and how to protect themselves.
- Secure the workplace. Where appropriate to the business, install video surveillance, extra lighting, and alarm systems and minimize access by outsiders through identification badges, electronic keys, and guards.

- Provide drop safes to limit the amount of cash on hand. Keep a minimal amount of cash in registers during evening and late night hours.
- Offer employees personal safety training programs which will teach them to recognize, avoid or diffuse potentially violent situations
- Instruct employees to alert supervisors to any concerns about safety or security and report all incidents immediately in writing.

If your company should have an incident of workplace violence the employer should do the following:

- Discuss the circumstance of the incident with staff members. Encourage employees to share information about ways to avoid similar situations in the future.
- Provide prompt medical evaluation and treatment after the incident.
- Inform victims of their legal right to prosecute perpetrators.
- Report violent incidents to the local police promptly.
- Offer stress debriefing sessions and post-traumatic counseling services to help workers recover from a violent incident.
- Investigate all violent incidents threats, monitor trends in violent incidents by type or circumstance, and institute corrective actions.

(Source: Osha)

Urgent Care at HealthFirst

The HealthFirst Medical is now providing Urgent Care services to adults and ages 12-17 with parental consent. We will not provide pediatric services. Our Workers Comp business will always be our number one priority, but we hope by having Urgent Care services we will benefit your employees who may need to see a doctor after work and are unable to see their primary care provider. Some companies do not offer medical benefits and we are offering affordable medical care for non-life threatening illnesses and injuries.

Effective April 1, 2009, HealthFirst Medical can also see urgent care patients who are insured with United Healthcare/Pacificare. We are still in the process of getting on the panels for Anthem-Blue Cross and Cigna Healthcare. We have flyers highlighting our Urgent Care that services available to companies to distribute to their employees. If you would like flyers, please contact the HealthFirst marketing department at 562-926-3440 x313.

In House Modified Duty Program

HealthFirst Medical continues to provide our companies with our "One of a Kind" in house modified duty program. This program has been in existence for many years now at HealthFirst and has proved to be a valuable added service. By using this program, companies avoid lost time injuries which keeps their workers' comp costs down. If the doctor needs to place an injured worker on modified duty and the employers cannot accommodate the patient, the best solution is to send the patient to our program. We offer both a day and night program. The patients are in a classroom environment and watch instructional and safety videos, read articles on health and wellness and answer questions. They also have two exercise sessions per day. When the patient is released to full duty, they leave the program with the knowledge to prevent injuries from happening in the future.

Two Clinics Using One 24 Hour Service

HealthFirst Medical has been providing Occupational Medical Services to Santa Fe Springs and the surrounding cities for the past 22 years. In order to ensure our survival and growth during the current recession, we have consolidated our 24 hour and weekend care into one clinic. Being that both clinics are in the same city and just a few miles apart, we do not expect this to significantly impact our clients.

We wanted to remind all our North Clinic companies that the Telegraph Road Clinic hours are now Monday–Friday from 7 am to 7 pm and closed on weekends. All after hour and weekend care will be seen at the South Clinic on Imperial Hwy.

We have new posters and authorization slips with our current hours of operations. If you have not received this information, please call our marketing department at **562-926-3440 x313** and we will send the information to you.

Health Tip of the Month

Most Americans should consume less sodium. Too much sodium is bad for your health and can increase your blood pressure and risk for a heart attack or stroke.

Current dietary guidelines recommend that adults in general should consume no more than 2,300 mg of sodium per day. However, you should consume no more than 1,500 mg per day if you are 40 years of age, an African American, or you have high blood pressure.

Most of the sodium we eat comes from packaged, processed, store-bought and restaurant foods (77%). To cut down on sodium it is important to eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and read the nutrition label on the food you purchase. Also ask for foods with no or low salt at restaurants.