## The Importance of Threat Management Team Training, *Page 2*



**When Blind Spots Turn Deadly: How Workplace Violence Prevention Misses the Murder-Suicide Threat**

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**Recent Federal OSHA Workplace Violence Case Provides a Road Map on General Duty Clause in Workplace**

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**PREVENT ONE**

Now that spring is here it is time for some 'spring cleaning' on your workplace violence prevention program. Yes, that means take it off the shelf and dust it off. Carefully review it to see what content needs to be updated, removed or added. Are you compliant with the new laws that may have been implemented in your jurisdiction? Have your program reviewed by your legal department or attorney and your workplace violence or threat management consultant. Review your incident reports, close-call situations, safety reports, notes from your Threat Management Team meetings and crime reports for your locations. Get input from the Threat Management Team on areas they believe should be included in the program. Update your training. Once your review is completed review the plan with your Management Team. Communicate the plan to supervisors and employees to make sure they are 'up to speed' on the plan. This should happen whether you make any changes to the plan or not.

Please note that the above refers to a workplace violence prevention program which will have many components. If you only have a workplace violence prevention policy this is a good time to expand it into a program.

A comprehensive workplace violence prevention program should include the following key elements:

1. Clear Policy Statement: Outline the organization's stance against workplace violence.

2. Definition of Workplace Violence: Provide clear examples of behaviors considered violent, including verbal, physical, bullying and psychological threats.

3. Roles and Responsibilities: Specify the duties of employees, managers, human resources and security in preventing and responding to violence.

4. Risk Assessment: Identify potential risk factors and vulnerable areas within the workplace. Implement a scheduled on-going social media screening process.

5. Reporting and Response Procedures: Establish a process for reporting incidents, including anonymous options, and outline the steps for handling and investigating reports. Should include a strategy for continuously improving employee reporting.

6. Training and Awareness: Implement regular training for employees on recognizing warning signs, de-escalation techniques, and the importance of reporting concerns.

7. Support Services: Offer access to counseling and resources for affected employees through Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) or similar services.

8. Emergency Preparedness: Develop protocols for responding to violent incidents, including evacuation plans, communication strategies, and collaboration with law enforcement.

Thanks for joining us this month. Stay safe and remember, 'Fate favors the prepared mind.'

*Barry*

## The Importance of Threat Management Team Training

Threat Management Teams (TMTs) are an extremely effective at preventing workplace violence. TMTs, which include experts from HR, security, and legal departments, assess threats and develop intervention strategies. Comprehensive training, such as that offered by the Center for Personal Protection & Safety (CPPS), is essential for managing violent behavior, conducting threat assessments, and handling incidents like intimate partner violence or active assailant situations. Properly trained TMTs are crucial for any workplace violence prevention program.

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## California Law Allowing Employers to Get Workplace Violence TROs Covering Harassment Takes Effect January 1, 2025

California's new law, effective January 1, 2025, allows employers to obtain temporary restraining orders (TROs) for workplace harassment before it escalates to violence or credible threats. Senate Bill 428 broadens the scope of protection, defining harassment as conduct that causes significant emotional distress, even if it doesn't involve violence or threats. Employers can now seek TROs to address such harassment, offering an earlier intervention tool. This law aims to provide more proactive protection for employees while maintaining constitutional rights and labor protections. Employers should prepare by updating policies and training staff for the expanded protections.

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## New York Public Employers Face New Workplace Violence Prevention Duties

A proposed amendment to New York's Labor Law Section 27-b would require public employers with 20 or more full-time employees to address "abusive conduct and bullying" in workplace violence prevention programs. The bill mandates broader risk evaluations, enhanced reporting systems, and expanded training on identifying, preventing, and reporting workplace bullying. However, it lacks clear definitions for "abusive conduct" and "bullying," which could complicate compliance. While the bill is still under consideration, public employers should begin incorporating these issues into their workplace evaluations in anticipation of future requirements.

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## When Blind Spots Turn Deadly: How Workplace Violence Prevention Misses the Murder-Suicide Threat

There are several risks of murder-suicide related to domestic violence that extend into the workplace, a tragic and often overlooked issue. Two cases illustrate how even organizations with Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) programs can miss critical warning signs, leading to devastating consequences. Employees must be trained to recognize the workplace impact of domestic violence, feel safe reporting concerns, and understand how to use reporting systems effectively. Organizations need a proactive approach to assess both suicidal and homicidal risks to protect employees and prevent violence, ensuring awareness and action are prioritized.

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# DECISIONPOINT

By Luther Wright, Jr.

## The Question

Does termination for failing to follow a weapons' reporting policy constitute a legitimate non-discriminatory reason for termination that can withstand claimed discrimination?

## The Situation

Michael Allen ("Allen") was employed by FedEx Ground Package System, Inc.("FedEx") as a Pickup and Delivery Manager at the South Austin Station in Austin, Texas (the "Station"). Allen transferred to this position in 2020 but had worked for FedEx in other locations and roles since 2016. Allen was hired by, and reported directly to, Steven Shelton, the Senior Manager of the Station. On Sunday, May 16, 2021, Andy Munoz ("Munoz"), another employee at the Station, showed Allen a gun he had in his backpack. Allen told Munoz to remove the gun from the building, but did not otherwise follow FedEx's published weapons policy (the "Policy").

The Policy required Allen to take specific actions if an employee was found in possession of a weapon on FedEx premises, including immediately notifying FedEx security personnel or Station management (Shelton) if security personnel was not available. Additionally, any employees that have potentially violated the weapons policy must immediately be placed on paid suspension, with all proven weapon violations resulting in termination. Allen did not immediately report the incident to Shelton or FedEx security as required. Allen claimed he was unaware of how to handle the incident and thought all he needed to do was tell Munoz's supervisor about the incident.

Allen's employment with FedEx was terminated on June 1, 2021 for violation of the weapons policy after a proper investigation into his actions. Allen believed the termination was actually due to his age based on prior complaints he had made about alleged ageist remarks prior to his termination. He filed suit against FedEx alleging age discrimination and claiming that he did not actually violate the Policy because he did not possess a weapon. FedEx moved for summary judgment. The trial judge granted FedEx's motion, in part, because Allen failed to show FedEx's proffered legitimate non-discriminatory reason for termination (violation of the Policy) was untrue or not the actual reason for termination. Allen timely appealed.

## Addressing Workplace Violence, Trespassing, and Harassment in Maryland: What Businesses Need to Know

There are several critical steps Maryland businesses should take to address workplace violence, trespassing, & harassment, including formally barring individuals from business premises, documenting notices, & understanding Maryland's harassment laws. Businesses should issue warnings before pursuing legal actions, such as reporting trespassing or seeking Peace Orders. Consulting an attorney is crucial to ensure compliance with laws & protect employees, customers, and operations from legal liability & escalation.

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## Chicago's 'Stop the Bleed' Kits Could Help Shooting Victims. Why Don't More People Know About Them?

Chicago's "Stop the Bleed" program, launched to help bystanders respond to gunshot wounds, provides kits with essential trauma supplies. Though the initiative has been growing, some violence prevention leaders feel the program misses a key opportunity: placing kits at community organizations where they could be more widely used. Additionally, training community members, particularly youth, to use the kits is seen as crucial for both saving lives and deterring violence in neighborhoods impacted by gun violence.

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## Governor Hochul Signs Amendment Extending Key Effective Date for the New York Retail Worker Safety Act

Governor Kathy Hochul signed an amendment to the New York Retail Worker Safety Act, extending the effective date for key provisions, including workplace violence prevention policies, from March 4 to June 2, 2025. The amendment also modifies training requirements for smaller employers and introduces silent response buttons for larger retailers starting in 2027. Additionally, state model templates for training will be provided in English and the 12 most common non-English languages in New York.

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## Implement Duress Systems to Mitigate Workplace Violence

It is important to implement duress systems to mitigate workplace violence. These systems, such as panic buttons, wearable devices, and mobile apps, provide discreet ways for employees to signal distress and receive help. Training employees on using these systems effectively, as well as selecting systems that are independent, HIPAA-compliant, and scalable, is critical, as is addressing challenges such as budget constraints and resistance to new technology, offering solutions for businesses to enhance safety proactively.

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## Preventing Workplace Violence Not One-Size-Fits-All Exercise: Risk Management Experts

Risk management experts stress that preventing workplace violence requires more than compliance—it demands customized, actionable plans. With California's new law, businesses must go beyond standard templates to create specific, functional policies. Experts highlight the need for tailored risk prevention strategies, integrating technology, training, and real-time response systems. The key is early detection and proactive measures, such as security audits and AI-driven tools, to prevent incidents and enhance workplace safety, ultimately saving lives.

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## Workplace Violence: Compliance, Prevention & Response

A comprehensive approach to workplace violence prevention that focuses on compliance, prevention, and response is critical. While workplace violence cannot always be prevented, employers can mitigate risks through strategies such as adhering to OSHA guidelines, implementing safety protocols, and preparing for various types of violence. There are several potential consequences of unaddressed violence, including legal liabilities and employee retention issues, urging businesses to prioritize safety measures and response plans.

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## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE INCIDENTS

February 7, 2025 | Georgia Police Officer Shot, Killed While Responding to Shopping Center | Roswell, GA

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE



### 5 Tips to Practice Emotional Regulation in the Classroom

This free guide for educators offers research-backed insights on the significance of emotional regulation, challenges faced in trauma-informed teaching, mindfulness practices, and helpful strategies for managing your own emotions.

**Download Now**

### Averted School Shooting in Florida

A 17-year-old Florida student planned a mass shooting at Seminole High School but was arrested after a tip-off. The teen, from Elevation High School, posted a video online showing firearms and detailing his plot. Police discovered realistic Airsoft guns and tactical gear in his possession. The teen faces charges for making a terrorist threat. This foiled attack adds to at least seven prevented school shootings nationwide. Experts stress the importance of public tips in preventing such events. Proposed solutions include a reporting system, crisis intervention programs, and federal 'red flag' laws to limit access to firearms for those deemed a threat.

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### Six Shooting Scenarios: Schools Need More Than One 'Active Shooter' Plan

There is a significant gap in school safety plans: the lack of procedures for handling student suicides. An 8th-grade student at Lindley Middle School in Georgia died by suicide, triggering a "code red" lockdown that caused unnecessary trauma for students. Some would argue that school lockdowns, often associated with active shooter scenarios, are ineffective and inappropriate for suicides, which do not pose an immediate threat to others. There are active calls for better planning and response strategies to avoid exacerbating emotional distress during such tragic events.

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## SCHOOL VIOLENCE INCIDENTS

January 22, 2025 | Teen Fatally Shoots Female Student, Wounds Another at Nashville High School, Police Say | Nashville, TN

January 23, 2025 | Stabbing at Meade High School Leaves 17-Year-Old Hospitalized and School on Lockdown for the Day | Fort Meade, MD

February 3, 2025 | 83-Year-Old Man Thought he was 'Being Chased' When he Opened Fire at Band Event | Pasadena, CA

March 11, 2025 | A 14-Year-Old Girl is Fatally Stabbed at School. The Suspect? Another 14-Year-Old Girl | Killeen, TX

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

### America Latina Asociación of Threat Assessment Professionals (ALATAP)

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the official LinkedIn page for the America Latina Asociación of Threat Assessment Professionals (ALATAP)!

**About us:**

ALATAP is a non-profit association dedicated to preventing and mitigating targeted violence throughout Latin America by applying best practices in behavioral threat assessment and management. Our mission is to foster professional development, education, and research in this critical field while providing a platform for ethical guidelines and continuing education.

**What's Next?**

- We are finalizing the creation of our website, set to launch in early 2025!

- Stay tuned for exciting updates about membership opportunities and benefits coming soon.

**A Professionally Diverse Board of Experts:**

Our leadership team comprises behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) professionals from diverse sectors, all united by a commitment to advancing the field and strengthening safety across communities in Latin America.

**Meet the Board of Directors:**

- Glenn Sandford, CTM (President)

- Dr. Reid Meloy (Vice President)

- Leonardo Ogihara, CTM (Secretary)

- Dr. Adriana Flores (Board Member)

- Dr. Maria T. Flores (Board Member)

- Alex Jones, CTM (Board Member)

- Dr. Bruno Dias, CTM (Board Member)

Together, we're building a safer future.
Thank you for joining us on this journey!

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## AWARE Recognising & Managing Aggression Program

The AWARE Recognising and Managing Aggression program recently hit two major milestones.

Firstly, we trained our 6,000th person, and delivered our 550th course. From its inception in 2016, AWARE has evolved to include many tailored variants to meet the unique needs of various wards, departments, and cohorts.

Despite habitual naysayers, lockdowns in a Melbourne stylee, interference, and the crab mentality of others, the course continues to grow.

The prevalence of healthcare aggression and violence isn't going away, and while training is essential, it's not a panacea. Much bigger initiatives, societal changes, and legislative reforms amongst other things are needed to tackle these challenges at their root. That said, from a training perspective, we will continue, and yes, in the words of Chief Brody "We're going to need a bigger boat"

# HEALTHCARE



### A Public Health Approach to Gun Violence: A Strategy for Saving Lives

Gun violence should be defined as a public health crisis through data collection and research, implementing harm reduction strategies (like safe storage laws and violence interruption programs), and addressing root causes such as mental health and economic disparities. Leveraging technology, such as smart gun tech and predictive analytics, is also recommended, as is building a bipartisan, evidence-based strategy.

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### How the Hidden Epidemic of Violence Against Nurses Affects Health Care

Research shows that 8 in 10 nurses experience violence at work. This violence ranges from verbal threats to physical assaults and affects both the health and well-being of healthcare workers. Despite the high rates, incidents are often underreported due to fear, confusion over reporting policies, and lack of support from management. This violence contributes to burnout, job dissatisfaction, and staff turnover, further impacting patient care. Better tracking, a supportive reporting culture, and efforts from both healthcare workers and patients to create safer environments good strategies for addressing violence at work.

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### ICE at Healthcare Facilities: What Should You Do?

While U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) generally avoids enforcement actions at "sensitive locations" like healthcare settings, it can still intervene under exigent circumstances. Healthcare facilities should have a clear plan, including designated liaisons and protocols for limiting cooperation without a judicial warrant. Facilities should not disclose patient immigration status without a warrant and should ensure patient privacy is maintained. Staff should be trained to handle ICE encounters professionally and avoid disruptions to care. Legal counsel should be contacted promptly if ICE arrives.

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### The $1 Billion Mistake: Why California's New Weapons Detection Mandate is a Fear-Based, Uneducated Policy That Won't Protect Healthcare Workers

Some have argued that California's new mandate for weapons detection systems in healthcare facilities is an ineffective, costly solution. At an estimated $1 billion, the funds could be better spent on proven violence prevention strategies like increased staffing, behavioral health teams, and de-escalation training. Weapons detection doesn't address the most common form of healthcare violence—physical assaults—and won't prevent determined attackers. Corporate lobbying, not patient safety, drives the mandate and an investment in crisis response teams, access control, and staff training, have been proven to be more effective at reducing violence in healthcare settings.

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### Hospital Shooting Highlights the Dangers and Violence Nurses Often Face at Work

A recent incident at a hospital has shed light on the frequent dangers and violence that nurses encounter in their workplace. This event has intensified discussions about the need for enhanced safety measures and support systems for nursing professionals. The incident serves as a stark reminder of the challenges faced by healthcare workers and underscores the importance of addressing workplace violence in the healthcare sector.

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### Most Nurses Experience Workplace Violence. Here are the Hidden Costs

Nurses frequently face workplace violence, leading to physical injuries and emotional distress. This violence not only affects their well-being but also imposes hidden costs on healthcare systems, including increased turnover and absenteeism. Addressing these issues requires systemic changes to improve workplace safety and support for nursing professionals.

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### Oregon Lawmakers Push Bill to Curb Violence Against Nurses

Oregon lawmakers are pushing Senate Bill 537 to address the rising violence against healthcare workers. The bill aims to implement preventive measures, support victims, and increase transparency and accountability within healthcare settings. Workplace violence in hospitals has surged by 181% between 2007 and 2022, with 92% of nurses reporting violence. The bill proposes solutions like de-escalation training, safety assessments, and improved reporting, while also ensuring access to trauma support. This legislation highlights the urgent need for action to protect both healthcare workers and patients, and to address the negative impact on staffing and patient care.

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**Pass This Edition On To A Colleague**

## Strategies for Mitigating Workplace Violence in Healthcare

Healthcare institutions are implementing various strategies to mitigate workplace violence, including staff training, security measures, and technology. Comprehensive training in verbal de-escalation, situational awareness, and crisis intervention is essential for all healthcare workers. Institutions are also establishing violence reduction committees to monitor incidents and improve safety protocols. Advanced security technologies, such as AI-powered surveillance, visitor management systems, and weapons detection, are increasingly being adopted. These efforts aim to reduce violence, support victims, and create a safer environment for both healthcare workers and patients, while ensuring the effectiveness of policies through continuous evaluation and staff engagement.

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## The Shadow of Violence Haunts Healthcare

Healthcare workers are increasingly facing violent assaults, with external threats like gang violence and armed intruders escalating. This surge is compounded by understaffed security teams and inadequate safety measures. The consequences include higher turnover, rising insurance costs, and compromised patient care. Experts stress the importance of staff training, particularly in de-escalation, and investing in stronger security systems. A multifaceted approach, including better collaboration between healthcare and security staff, is essential to mitigate violence and ensure worker and patient safety.

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## Violence in the Outpatient Setting: Tips for Keeping Healthcare Workers Safe

Healthcare workers face growing incidents of workplace violence, especially in outpatient settings, with physical, verbal, and mental abuse as common occurrences. This violence negatively impacts staff well-being, patient care, and organizational outcomes. To address this, strategies like staff training in de-escalation, implementing zero-tolerance policies, improving environmental design, and using surveillance systems are crucial. Additionally, emergency alert plans, situational awareness, and regular drills can enhance safety, while fostering a culture of trust helps ensure that workers feel supported and are encouraged to report violence.

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### HEALTHCARE INCIDENTS

February 23, 2025 | Hospital Shooting Highlights the Dangers and Violence Nurses Often Face at Work | Silver Springs, MD

March 20, 2025 | Michigan Hospital Employee Shoots Co-Worker Outside Building in 'Targeted Attack': Police | Troy, MI

# FEATURED RESOURCES

## The Trace Expands Gun Violence Data Hub with New Data Library

The Trace has expanded its Gun Violence Data Hub with a new data library aimed at enhancing coverage of gun violence. This resource provides accessible, cleaned datasets for journalists, researchers, and the public, including files on gun deaths, firearm sales, and ghost guns. The library is designed to aid local newsrooms in reporting, offering detailed context, methodology, and related stories. The initiative is launched amid increasing threats to data transparency, making it a crucial tool for preserving and sharing reliable gun violence data. It includes support resources and a help desk for data inquiries.

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# DRUG SCREENING

### What Are Safety-Sensitive Positions?

DOT safety-sensitive roles include positions in transportation and aviation, which are subject to strict drug and alcohol testing. Non-DOT safety-sensitive positions are defined based on the potential risk an employee's actions pose to safety, especially when under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The classification varies by state law but generally includes jobs where impaired performance could lead to harm, injury, or death. Employers are encouraged to define such positions carefully, especially in drug-free workplace policies.

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## A THC breathalyzer? CU research could lead to reliable cannabis breath test

Researchers at the University of Colorado Boulder and the National Institute of Standards and Technology are collaborating to develop a reliable THC breathalyzer. Their study aims to create standardized protocols for measuring cannabis impairment at the roadside. The research involves mapping the peaks and declines of a cannabis high in real-time using a mobile pharmacology lab called the Cannavan. The ultimate goal is to support fair law enforcement and enhance road safety by providing a tool to detect recent cannabis use.

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## Feds make changes to federal workplace drug testing programs

Fentanyl will soon be one of the substances truckers will be tested for during DOT drug screenings.

On Jan. 16, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services published an issuance of authorized drug testing panels to the Federal Register. The guidance adds fentanyl to the panels of Schedule I and II drugs and biomarkers authorized for testing in federal workplace drug testing programs.

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## Navigating Drug Testing Laws In Each State

Across the United States, drug usage has become more commonly legalized, especially following the more recent legalization of marijuana. Because these laws are placed under state jurisdiction, the most commonly used drugs also vary by state from opiates to alcohol to hallucinogens to pain relievers. Subsequently, drug testing laws by state also vary, with only five states boasting strong legislation that legalizes drug testing in the workplace. Despite there being over 500 new bills introduced in 2024 related to drug testing, there are still 11 states that do not have any state law regarding the matter. As drug use continues to become more normalized, it is important to consider drug testing in the workplace as a necessity to keep workers and those that they serve, safe.

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### Tactical Healthcare: Preparing for the New Realities of Workplace Violence Prevention

By: Mel Cortez | Cortex Gold Tactical Healthcare Advisory Group

### The Landscape is Changing—Are You Ready?

Recent legal decisions in the Southeastern U.S. have signaled a new era of accountability in workplace violence prevention. As organizations and insurance companies face heightened scrutiny, it's clear that healthcare systems must take proactive measures to protect staff. The days of reactive, checkbox-style training are over—true prevention requires a **comprehensive system** designed to support staff, mitigate risk, and uphold professional standards.

### The Role of Tactical Healthcare in Prevention

Tactical healthcare isn't about security officers in hospitals—it's about **training every staff member to recognize and respond to potential threats** while maintaining professionalism under pressure. Effective workplace violence prevention is a **system, not just a training program**. It requires clear policies, leadership commitment, and continuous reinforcement of best practices.

A well-structured system includes:

- **Situational Awareness Training:** Teaching staff how to recognize early warning signs of aggression and de-escalate situations before they escalate.
- **Professionalism & Neutrality:** Encouraging staff to stay out of politically and socially sensitive conversations that could fuel workplace tensions.
- **Crisis Response & Communication Protocols:** Ensuring that when an incident occurs, staff know exactly what to do and how to seek support.
- **Leadership & Accountability:** Training security teams and department heads to take a proactive role in maintaining a safe workplace environment.

### Professionalism: A Core Pillar of Workplace Violence Prevention

One often-overlooked but **critical component of violence prevention is professionalism training**. Employees should feel confident in navigating workplace interactions without engaging in personal, political, or controversial discussions. The reality is that emotions run high in healthcare, and staff are often exposed to **difficult patient interactions, personal biases, and external pressures** that can escalate conflicts.

### How can we help healthcare staff stay neutral and professional?

1. **Set Clear Boundaries:** Reinforce that the workplace is not a space for personal opinions or debates.
2. **Encourage Active Listening & De-Escalation:** Equip staff with communication techniques that diffuse, rather than escalate, tension.
3. **Provide Leadership Support:** Ensure managers and security teams actively reinforce professionalism expectations.
4. **Develop a Systematic Approach:** Incorporate professionalism training into all workplace violence prevention efforts—this isn't an optional module; it's foundational.

### The System That Works

Many healthcare organizations still operate with outdated or reactive training models, assuming that compliance with minimum training standards is enough. **It's not**. A **true workplace violence prevention system** integrates policies, professional behavior expectations, and scenario-based training that reflects the realities of today's workforce.

The legal and financial consequences of failing to implement **real** prevention measures are growing. With insurers now holding organizations accountable for staff safety, it's no longer just an ethical obligation—it's a **business imperative**. The **healthcare system must evolve** to meet these challenges head-on.

### Final Thoughts: The Time to Act is Now

Healthcare professionals are on the front lines of workplace violence. They deserve **more than just a PowerPoint training**—they need a structured, tactical, and actionable **system** to protect themselves and their patients. By investing in professionalism training and creating a culture of preparedness, healthcare organizations can **reduce liability, improve staff morale, and ultimately, save lives**.

If your organization is ready to move beyond outdated training programs and implement a **true workplace violence prevention system**, let's talk.

Your people deserve the best—let's build something that truly works.

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### About the Author

Mel Cortez graduated from Towson University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She has held positions in Home health and Long-Term Care as well as Critical Care. After 2 pivotal years caring for patients in the Covid 19 Pandemic, she then chose to launch the Cortex Brand to reduce the rising violence at the bedside through tactical, practical innovations in the realms of product, training and research. She is a content expert in regards to Workplace Violence Reduction and the implementation of systems-wide training programs that are both cost-effective and delivered efficiently at operational tempo. Contact me at melcortez@cortexgold.com to learn how we can help.

**Workplace Violence Assessments: Dealing with Mental Health Issues**
Dr. Michael H. Corcoran, CEO, WorkThreat LLC

Recently, I've encountered an increase in cases where suicidal ideation is viewed as a potential workplace violence issue, particularly in larger organizations. Often, the concern arises when a Person of Interest (POI) makes alarming statements to a supervisor, such as, "You know, right now, I feel like driving my truck parked out on the lot right into this building to get your attention." Other times, the intent is unclear, like when a POI remarks, "I am frustrated with Matt (a supervisor). He never listens to me. Maybe if I kill myself, he'd think about how he treats people."

In the first example, the individual poses a potential workplace violence threat simply by suggesting a destructive act that endangers both property and people. However, it raises the question of whether this person also contemplates harming others as collateral damage. Regardless of whether this POI follows through on their threat, the situation creates sufficient doubt to warrant a threat assessment.

The second example introduces additional considerations. Is this person of interest (POI) at risk of self-harm? Mental health experts universally agree that suicidal ideation falls within this domain. However, should a threat assessment professional also be skilled in suicide prevention? In this case, the POI appears to believe that their death could prompt a change in the actions of others, particularly the supervisor. Is this assumption logical? As a threat assessment expert, is it a sufficiently strong enough rationale for you to conduct an assessment? Would this lead you to triage the situation to determine if the POI is suicidal, or would you recommend that the company call paramedics, who are generally considered the appropriate first responders for such situations?

While many will agree that suicidal ideation primarily should be treated as a mental health issue rather than solely a workplace violence concern, there are instances where the two intersect. A comprehensive approach that includes mental health support and workplace safety is beneficial. This comprehensive approach ensures that all aspects of the situation are considered, providing a thorough assessment that can stand up to scrutiny.

Addressing suicidal ideation signals within the workplace is important. Tackling the underlying mental health issues and providing support and resources to assist the individual is a key responsibility. However, many corporations are hesitant to involve emergency services for various reasons.

This reluctance creates challenges. If a company fails to acknowledge that suicidal ideation is a mental health issue, will they be comfortable allowing you to intervene?

Establishing some ground rules with clients may be beneficial, as this can contribute to a healthier work environment and be part of an effective workplace violence prevention plan. These rules could include:

  - Connecting employees with mental health professionals.
  - Offering access to employee assistance programs.
  - Fostering a supportive and empathetic workplace culture.

But let's get back to the main issue. Can you, or should you, be involved in trying to conduct an accurate threat assessment when the POI has a mental health issue (and are you comfortable with making that determination of his condition)? Can you bring in a suicidal expert to work with you? Should you leave the case alone and explain to the client that the primary concern must first be addressing the mental health issue (realizing that the behavior may continue, and many docs and/or mental health professionals do not know how to provide an accurate threat assessment - as I often get calls from docs asking me what should they be looking for on their clinical results).

On the other hand, I have been verbally challenged and chastised by licensed clinical psychologists for doing TA's since I am not a licensed clinical psychologist. Such statements as "You don't know what you are doing," "You are operating illegally," If you don't drop this case, I will notify the Board of Behavioral Sciences of your illegal activities, "and "I've already told this client that you are unqualified and that I can take over the case," and on and on. Does this mean all you law enforcement folks out there better stop doing what you're doing? After I told him of my Secret Service experience, this one person immediately chimed in, saying, "I used to teach the agents for the Secret Service." Wow, I'm glad I never had him as an instructor!

**Read More**

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**About the Author**

Dr. Michael H. Corcoran was in the law enforcement field for over 34 years beginning in 1968 and the threat assessment field since1970 when he entered the United States Secret Service.  Completing his doctorate in 1979 in Behavioral Science, he spent most of his Secret Service career specializing in identifying and handling potentially violent subjects as well as training and designing programs to identify, handle and prevent violence. He started "The WorkThreat Group" in 1988 and offers this same assistance to governmental agencies, law enforcement, Fortune 500 companies, school districts and healthcare providers around the world. Please submit any questions or comments to: Corcoran@WorkThreat.com

### Policies Alone Don't Stop Violence:
### Why Workplace Safety Needs More Than a Checklist

Korey Staley, The Center for Personal Protection and Safety (CPPS)

Every organization has a workplace violence policy, usually a neatly worded document buried somewhere in the employee handbook. It outlines a zero-tolerance stance, reporting procedures, and vague promises of a "safe work environment." Sounds great in theory. But when real threats emerge, these policies often crumble under the weight of reality. Having reviewed and written countless workplace violence policies and protocols, I've identified some of the most common flaws that undermine their effectiveness.

The truth is, often corporate workplace violence policies are designed to check a legal box, not actually prevent violence. They are reactive, filled with corporate jargon, and rarely equip employees or managers with the tools to handle a real crisis. And when the inevitable happens, the company's response is often too little, too late.

If businesses truly want to protect their employees, they need to rethink the way they approach workplace violence prevention. That means not only having comprehensive policies but also embracing real-world, proactive strategies.

### The Illusion of Safety: Why Policies Alone Aren't Enough

A written policy does not stop a violent employee. It doesn't de-escalate a confrontation. It also doesn't protect workers from a disgruntled ex-employee walking in with bad intentions. Yet, many companies treat their violence prevention strategy as if having a policy is the same as having a plan.

Many policies are designed to protect the company, not the employees. They exist for legal compliance, reducing liability, and covering HR's bases. While these are valid concerns, they do little to actually prevent violence from occurring.

Here's where standard policies miss the mark:

- **They are reactive, not proactive –** Companies wait for an incident to happen before addressing threats.

- **They focus on legal language, not action –** Most employees don't even read them, let alone understand how to use them in a crisis.

- **They don't empower employees to act –** Fear of retaliation, uncertainty about what qualifies as a threat, and ineffective reporting channels keep employees silent.

### Where Standard Policies Fail

HR policies often fall short because they focus on theoretical risk management rather than practical threat mitigation. Here's how:

### 1. Overly Vague Language

Most policies use legal terminology that's ambiguous and open to interpretation. Statements like, "Any threats of violence will be taken seriously" mean nothing if there's no clear definition of what a "threat" actually looks like. Does an angry outburst count? A joke about bringing a gun to work? If employees don't know what to look for, they won't report it.

### 2. No Real Threat Assessment Process

Many organizations treat all workplace conflicts the same, failing to distinguish between normal workplace disputes and genuine threats. Without a behavioral threat assessment and management process in place, companies struggle to differentiate between an employee having a bad day and one on the verge of violence.

**Read More**

### About the Author

Korey Staley – Author Korey Staley is an instructor for The Center for Personal Protection and Safety (CPPS), where he specializes in violence prevention, threat mitigation, de-escalation techniques, and active shooter response. Korey has over 20 years of military experience and has also contracted with the Department of Defense (DOD) on captivity survival. This encompassed a range of situations from foreign government detention to hostage.

# Healthy Minds at Work: 'Suicide Prevention in the Workplace'



Imagine working in a highly productive environment in which you feel safe, respected and valued; the work is challenging; the demands of the job are reasonable; you have work-life balance; and your employer supports your involvement in your work and interpersonal growth and development. This is what is known as a mentally healthy workplace.1 (source: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety).

The purpose of this column is help you increase your understanding, knowledge and recognition of mental health issues at work, to help you develop effective approaches to promoting mental health at work and to share resources and tools to help get you there.

**The Hidden Link: Mental Health and Workplace Violence**
By Joseph 'Paul' Manley, Founder and Principal of Risk Mitigation Technologies, LLC.

Every day, countless employees face the devastating reality of workplace violence—a reality intertwined with the often-overlooked issue of mental health. The connection between mental health challenges and workplace behavior is more than a side note; it is a critical factor in creating environments that are both safe and supportive. Without addressing this link, workplaces risk perpetuating a cycle of harm and instability.

Workplace violence, as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), spans behaviors from threats and harassment to physical attacks. The numbers tell a sobering story: in just one year, 57,610 cases of workplace violence were reported, resulting in lost workdays and job disruptions. Shockingly, women endure the most of these incidents, representing 72.5% of cases. For nurses, the statistics are even more startling, over 81% report experiencing violence at work. These figures underscore the urgent need to tackle this issue head-on.

**What is the Connection Between Mental Health and Workplace Violence?**

The link between mental health and workplace violence is as complex as it is a critical reality that too often goes unaddressed. Challenges like depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress (PTS), and substance abuse do not just impact individuals; they ripple across teams, affecting the dynamics of entire workplaces. Imagine the toll on morale, safety, and productivity when these challenges are ignored. Research shows that untreated mental health issues can increase stress, irritability, and emotional instability—all factors that can heighten the risk of workplace aggression. It is a sobering truth worth reflecting on: could this happen in your organization?

A study from the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology reveals that untreated conditions like depression and anxiety are often linked to aggressive behaviors, particularly in environments where employees feel unsupported or overwhelmed. Picture a high-pressure workplace with limited resources—frustration brews, emotions run high, and the line between conflict and violence can blur. Without preemptive intervention, these scenarios become all too common.

It is essential to break down harmful misconceptions. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) emphasizes a fact that is often overlooked: individuals with mental health challenges are far more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. The risk emerges when these individuals face isolation, lack of support, or insurmountable stress. By addressing mental health challenges with empathy and resources, workplaces can create environments where both individuals and teams can thrive safely and productively.

**Why is Addressing Mental Health Critical for Preventing Workplace Violence?**

Mental health issues do not just impact individuals, they shape the culture and safety of entire workplaces. Think about this: one in four people will experience a mental health disorder at some point in their life, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). This means that mental health challenges are no exceptions; they are a universal reality. For today's leaders, recognizing and responding to these needs is not just an option; it is a necessity.

Untreated mental health struggles create ripple effects far beyond the individual. Productivity plummets, job satisfaction erodes, and workplace conflicts escalate, sometimes to the point of violence. Stress is a silent trigger, and it does not take much for a high-pressure environment to become a breeding ground for aggression. The National Safety Council reports that over half of American workers deal with job-related stress that undermines their mental health. Ignoring these challenges is like sitting on a ticking time bomb.

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# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## CANADA

### Calm Over Chaos: Preventing Workplace Violence Effectively

Effective workplace violence prevention focuses on early intervention and self-regulation. Experts emphasize the importance of training employees in de-escalation techniques, recognizing agitation signs, and fostering a calm presence. Employers should assess workplace risks and implement tailored training programs. Creating a culture of support and open reporting is crucial, as is addressing internal factors like long waits or unclear processes. Proactive risk management, involving expert resources and employee feedback, ensures a safer, healthier work environment.

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## POLAND
### Poland Ministry of Labour had Prepared a Draft to Provide Greater Protection Against Bullying

The Polish Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Policy has drafted new legislation to better protect against workplace bullying. The draft simplifies the definition of bullying, focusing on persistent harassment, regardless of intent or outcomes. It also mandates anti-bullying policies in workplaces, requires employers to take preventive measures, and offers compensation for victims. This draft aims to update outdated laws, support victims, and improve legal clarity for both employees and employers, promoting a culture of respect and safety.

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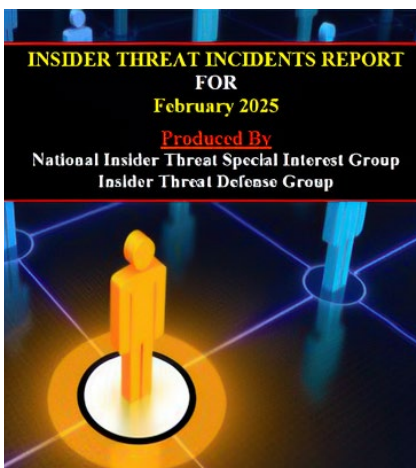
**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

## TAIWAN
**CuboAI Under Labor Inspection After CTO Murder**

CuboAI, a smart baby monitor company, is under labor inspection following a fatal incident involving its CEO, Thomas Tseng, and CTO, Liang. Tseng allegedly killed Liang after a dispute at the company's office, and Tseng later attempted suicide. The Taipei Labor Inspection Office found CuboAI had failed to implement necessary workplace violence prevention measures, breaching the Occupational Safety and Health Act. The company faces fines if improvements aren't made, while the Department of Labor urges better employee safety practices.

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Threat Assessment Professionals

# INSIDER THREAT REPORT



**INSIDER THREAT INCIDENTS REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2025**

**Produced By: National Insider Threat Special Interest Group**

**Insider Threat Defense Group**

Security polices, procedures and controls form the foundations for an effective and comprehensive Insider Risk Management Program. Security policies, procedures and controls are critical for protecting an organization's assets. They define the rules and provide guidance to the workforce on how the organization will achieve it security objectives.

Security policies and procedures should be communicated to the workforce and referenced in: New Hire /Post Hire Security Briefings, Standard Operating Procedures, Employee Handbooks, Cyber Security Policy or Computer/Network & Internet Acceptable Use Agreements, Security Reminder emails, Cyber Security Awareness Training, etc.

Security policies and procedures do not provide much value, if they sit on a website and are not disseminated to employees on a frequent basis. Have all employees signed a comprehensive Computer, Network & Internet Usage Acceptable Use Policy? Is this policy updated and re-signed by employees if there are new security requirements that employees must comply with?

A 2024 report by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners states that more than half of frauds occurred due to lack of internal controls or an override of existing internal controls.

https://legacy.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2024/

Has your organization thoroughly evaluated its security policies, procedures and controls (Non-Technical, Technical) to ensure incidents don't happen?

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**Recent Federal OSHA Workplace Violence Case Provides a Road Map on General Duty Clause in Workplace Violence Cases**

A recent OSHA case highlighted the complexities of applying the General Duty Clause to workplace violence. The case involved a security company, PSC, whose officer was killed by a shooter at a mall. OSHA had cited PSC for failing to protect employees from this recognized hazard. However, the court ruled in favor of PSC, stating the specific risk was unforeseeable. This case underscores challenges in defining workplace violence hazards and the need for clear standards.

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**States Ramp Up Workplace Violence Prevention Efforts with New Legislation in 2025**

In 2025, several U.S. states are introducing or expanding workplace violence prevention laws, particularly for healthcare settings. Bills like Alaska's SB 49 and Massachusetts's HD 1856 require employers to assess risks, create prevention plans, and provide training. These legislative efforts aim to address rising concerns over workplace violence, with some bills proposing protective orders and reporting systems to enhance safety and compliance for employers, especially in high-risk industries.

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**Virginia General Assembly Passes Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements**

Virginia's General Assembly passed HB 1919, mandating that employers with 100 or more employees create a tailored workplace violence policy by January 2027. The law requires a reporting mechanism for violence, risk assessments, immediate incident responses, and post-incident investigations. It also prohibits retaliation against employees who report violence. Non-compliant employers could face civil penalties. Additionally, a separate bill, HB 1620, proposes a workgroup to evaluate workplace violence prevalence and create educational resources for employers and employees.

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## DECISIONPOINT

**The Decision**

The appellate court expressly found that violation of the Policy constituted a legitimate nondiscriminatory reason for termination for purposes of employment law. With the appellate court having made this finding, Allen was tasked with showing that the reason for his termination was either untrue or unworthy of credence. The court found that the undisputed evidence demonstrated that Allen had clearly violated the Policy by not reporting the weapons possession as required. The court specifically noted that the Policy prescribes particular steps for management to take upon discovery of a weapon and Allen admittedly failed to take those steps. As a result, Allen's age claim was dismissed.

**Key Learning and Considerations**

This case provides several significant anti-violence policy reminders. First, employers should remember that they can implement policies that require management level employees to take precise steps to prevent weapon possession in their workplaces. In other words, management level employees can be held to a specific higher standard of conduct. Second, this opinion demonstrates that termination based on failure to follow anti-violence policies constitutes a "legitimate nondiscriminatory reason" for discipline, even in the face of alleged discrimination. Thus, employers should not be hesitant to take appropriate action based on violence even when an employee has complained of discrimination in the workplace. Finally, this court's ruling conclusively demonstrates that management level employees can be held accountable for their failure to follow company policies when policy violations are handled swiftly and appropriately.

**ALLEN v. FEDEX GROUND PACKAGE SYSTEM, INCORPORATED** Case No. 24-50344.
United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (February 24, 2025).

Case analysis by Luther Wright, Jr. and Ela Wickremasinghe | Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak I Stewart, P.C. | Telephone: 615-6872213 | Fax: 615-254-1908 | Luther.wright@ogletreedeakins.com | www.ogletreedeakins.com

**Shell Shocked**
By Gail Pursell Elliott

A medium-sized printing and publishing operation, headquartered in a small town in the Midwest, was one of the major employers in the area. When they had to start layoffs, everyone was nervous, not only because this was happening but also in which the way it was done.  Every day the employees went to work not knowing if their jobs would end that day. The rationale was not explained, as in the last in, first out process. It seemed random, leaving people not knowing what to expect. There was no calling into the office either. There was simply a tap on the shoulder while working, gathering personal belongings, and being walked out. That was it. No sorry, no thanks for your work, nothing. Tapped staff were quiet and appeared almost shell-shocked.

When people are mobbed out of a workplace, they sometimes exhibit the dissociation of shell shock. Friends and family are often frustrated because it seems that the target doesn't do more to fight or even appear angry. It's almost like being in suspended animation. Since they cannot understand why this is happening, especially when pushed out of an organization they trusted, there is no appropriate response. In a situation in which the mobbing extends into the community, the target may shut down emotionally, or worse

Shell shock is a term coined during the first world war to describe what we now refer to as PTSD, however, it is not the same although some of the symptoms are similar. Shell shock according to research is the result of repressed trauma, separating out the trauma mentally to block it.

One individual was outed from his position after eighteen years with the company as a result of a reorganization. Privately he expressed that this was happening because regardless of his track record and expertise, he was getting too old and expensive. Not being the only one in his situation, the company had an outboarding set up to assist employees with resumes, job opportunities, and other services, treating them with dignity and respect. This person secured an excellent position with a consulting company, where his expertise was recognized and utilized well. Unfortunately, several years later, the person was caught in a departmental layoff.  In the months before, he had been mobbed by a colleague. The colleague was walked out, their tactics recognized by the company. During the time of the layoff, he was given two weeks' notice, with help offered by human resources and listings of other positions in the company, to no avail. He seemed to suffer from shell shock, unable to act on his own behalf, despite offers of assistance and exceptional references. He interviewed poorly, began drinking to excess, and never re-entered the workforce.

It must be remembered that mobbing destroys the person's self-esteem and shatters the ego. When coupled with a layoff situation, even though the mobber is dealt with, the results might be too much even for a capable professional. In this case, the company attempted to do something to help but did not provide an offboarding program as the first company had done. Whether that would have been sufficient to help the individual rebuild his self-esteem and confidence is unknown. Acknowledgement that he was without fault might have helped. Validation in a more direct way might have helped. The timing of the layoff was instrumental to the outcome for this person. If that had not happened, he might have been able to heal in the company where his value was recognized and his contributions not blocked by the mobber.

Many professionals identify strongly with their work. It is part of their identity. Some use it to define themselves. As one mobbing target said, "It was my whole life these people were able to throw out." Regardless of the scenario, treating people with dignity and respect and letting them know what to expect is important. Not subjecting them to inconsistencies and unclear expectations so that they can plan their next move, even in the case of downsizing or reorganization is essential.

## About the Author

Gail Pursell Elliott, is known as the Dignity and Respect Lady and has been writing and presenting about Mobbing and Bullying since 1998. She is an expert in the field and has appeared on television, radio, and talk shows. She is the author of several books and has been writing the Bully at Work column for Workplace Violence Today since its inception.

To contact Gail, visit her website at https://innovations-training.com

**Biography – Gail Pursell Elliott**

After twenty years' experience working in Health Care, Recruitment, Education, and Human Services, Gail Pursell Elliott established Innovations Training With a Can-Do Attitude in 1998. She says that over the years she saw people treating each other more like objects and opportunities rather than as human beings with wants, hopes, needs, dreams, desires, people who love them and people they love, and decided to do something about it. Her first book, Mobbing: Emotional Abuse in the American Workplace, coauthored with Noa Davenport and Ruth Schwartz, was published in 1999. Her book School Mobbing and Emotional Abuse was published by Taylor and Francis in 2003.

She has travelled nationally, presenting at conferences, schools, and workplaces about Mobbing, Dignity and Respect, Communication, and soft skills Human Resources topics. The underlying message is to promote insight and awareness, reminding people how to treat each other with dignity and respect without exception. To supplement the message of her programs, in 2000, she began writing weekly articles entitled Food for Thought that were sent out from her website and wound up being circulated and shared among others around the world. Some of these have been uploaded to her Food for Thought blog area at foodforthought.wordpress.com. She has self-published several collections of her articles.

Gail has appeared on radio and television as an expert on Mobbing and Bullying. Several of these have been uploaded to her youtube channel: youtube.com/dignityrespectlady/videos. She was a guest on Barry Nixon's Workplace Violence Today talk show several times. When Barry started this ezine, he invited Gail to write the Bully at Work column. She has written it since then. Many of these columns are uploaded to her blog mobbing101.wordpress.com.

Gail likes to coin a phrase from one of Katherine Hepburn's movies, Desk Set, in which the character says, "I associate many things with many things." Mobbing appears in the movie as an undercurrent, which is a comedy. She sees connections as she says simply by paying attention and encourages others to do the same. Even before her college days at Penn State University, the topic of "man's inhumanity to man" was a keen motivator for her writing and perspective, which then was in the form of poetry. At Penn State she wrote poetry as independent study with a mentor, poet Jack McManis. Her first poems were published in the early 1970's. She continues to write poetry which she says was her first love.

Since beginning her work in 1998, Gail has seen many professionals utilizing the terms dignity and respect, has seen bullying become an issue to be addressed in myriad situations, from schools and workplaces to communities and government entities. Books and programs have been developed. She is grateful to have been part of the ground floor movement to address these important issues and happy to see them continue to grow.

Although a native of Pennsylvania, Gail currently resides in Iowa. She has two adult children and six grandchildren. She jokes, "I was born in the city of brotherly love and wound up in the heartland. Go figure."

# BACKGROUND SCREENING

### Adapting Background Checks for a Remote and Hybrid Workforce – the New Standard

In the evolving landscape of work, background checks are adapting to remote and hybrid models. According to Mathew Armstrong, CEO of Giant Screening, there is a need for enhanced digital verification processes & secure data handling. As traditional in-person checks become less feasible, leveraging technology ensures thorough & efficient screenings. The shift aims to maintain high standards of employee trust & safety while accommodating the flexibility of modern work environments.

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### Kansas City Makes It Illegal to Discriminate Against People for Having Criminal Records

The Kansas City Council has passed an ordinance prohibiting discrimination against individuals with criminal records. This new legislation adds formerly incarcerated people to the city's list of protected classes, ensuring they cannot be denied employment, housing, or business opportunities based on their criminal backgrounds.

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### DHS Releases 'Comprehensive' Report on Use of Face Biometric Systems

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has published a detailed report on the deployment of facial biometric systems. This comprehensive review outlines the current applications, benefits, & challenges associated with the technology, emphasizing its role in enhancing security & operational efficiency. It also addresses privacy concerns & the need for strict regulatory measures to ensure ethical use. The report is intended to guide policymakers, stakeholders, & the public in understanding the implications of facial recognition technology in various sectors.

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### Is Your House in Order? A Guide to Immigration Worksite Enforcement

Employers are navigating immigration worksite enforcement, focusing on compliance with I-9 requirements & handling inspections, audits, & ICE raids. It is critical to understand the importance of internal audits, documentation accuracy, & employee screening to avoid legal issues. Employers are encouraged to create an enforcement response plan, including designated teams and legal protocols, & train staff on their rights & obligations. Proactive compliance reduces the risk of penalties & reputational damage.

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### Upcoming Requirements for Fingerprint Background Checks for Healthcare Practitioners in Florida

Starting July 1, 2025, healthcare practitioners in Florida will be mandated to undergo fingerprint background checks. This new requirement aims to enhance patient safety & ensure the integrity of healthcare professionals. Practitioners will need to submit fingerprints for state & federal screening to identify any disqualifying criminal history. The implementation of these checks underscores the state's commitment to maintaining high standards in the healthcare industry & protecting public health.
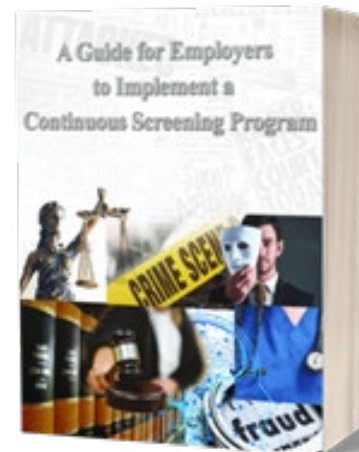
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**In Search of Excellence in Background Screening: Best Practices Insights from Accredited Background**

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## A Guide for Employers to Implement a Continuous Screening Program



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1. What is Continuous Screening and how it differs from Continuous Monitoring?

2. How to use Continuous Screening as a Risk Mitigation tool.

3. Key Legal and Compliance issues

4. How to effectively address employee rights and privacy.

5. Important implementation considerations organizations must consider.

6. Key Background Screening Policy issues.

7. What to do when derogatory information is discovered?

**Download the Guide**

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- **Suicide at Work Resource Center**
- **WorkplaceViolence911.com**
- **WorkThreat Group**



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