

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Cafe and restaurant industry

Personal security: violence at work

Occupational violence is any incident where a worker is physically attacked or threatened in their workplace or while they are working. Workplace harassment is not the same as occupational violence. There is a separate information sheet on harassment. Sources of violence in the cafe and restaurant industry include dissatisfied customers and criminal activity (eg robbery).

Possible solutions

Change the work environment

- Install security lighting or video surveillance.
- Improve workers' ability to see potential offenders.
- Reduce background noise.
- Put locks on doors and windows.

Change work systems

- Improve cash handling processes, including rostering enough staff to handle cash. This includes not having young people alone at night to close up the facility.
- Provide information, training and supervision to help workers deal with security issues.
- Roster enough staff to keep delays to a minimum, reducing customer aggression (this may also help to improve customer satisfaction).

Give workers training and clear instructions

- Provide training about how to deal with aggressive or violent customers and get workers to report incidents of violence.

Provide support services

- If workers are involved in a robbery or violent incident, arrange access to counselling.

Manage cash more safely

- Make cash less visible and/or less accessible and open the cash drawer only when in use. Use an audible device to indicate opening of the cash drawer.
- Store cash in a safe and count cash in a secure room.
- Encourage cashless purchasing (eg credit cards, EFTPOS).
- Use a bank that is close to the workplace and go to the bank at different times or make frequent random deposits. Avoid using public transport when carrying money. When you go to the bank, let someone know when you are expected to get back.
- Use signs such as "No cash kept on premises".
- Make sure that the point of sale worker is visible from the outside of the café or restaurant. Locate the point of sale so that it is not near entrances and exits. This will help to limit the chance of a quick escape for a potential robber.

Plan for security

- Develop procedures and train workers in security procedures for:
 - opening and closing the café or restaurant
 - working alone or at night
 - what to do if there is an incident.

For more information on workplace health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit www.worksafe.qld.gov.au

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