



CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT

You have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for your staff and customers. Your safety, and the safety of others, comes first. A calm and coordinated approach through sound risk-management strategies and good communication, can prevent difficult situations and mitigate the risk of violence.

Possible Causes of Violence and Aggression

Violence can occur when:

- Staff confront people caught stealing.
- Troublemakers create conflict because they're bored, showing off, or diverting your attention while someone else is stealing.
- Customers have disputes or complaints about goods and services, including requests for refunds, anger over long waits in queues, and so on.
- Staff try to deal with those who are mentally ill or affected by alcohol or drugs.

Remember that violence and aggression is not always from outside – aggressive actions, such as bullying, can also occur between staff.

Preventing Violence From Occurring

- Have opening and closing procedures in place, especially for staff working alone.
- Introduce security measures such as duress alarms, safety screens, access controls and stickers on phones with emergency contact details. Ensure that staff know how to use these and how to raise the alarm.
- Improve visibility and surveillance to increase the chance of detection and capture.
- Arrange floor fit out to provide natural barriers – but check that staff still have “escape” corridors.
- Play soft and soothing music.
- Adopt a zero tolerance policy for workplace violence.
- Develop an emergency and crisis response plan, and use it to train staff, including practising emergency escape routes. Evaluate and review the plan regularly.

- Train staff in good customer service, including strategies for dealing with difficult customers and avoiding behaviour that could trigger a violent reaction.
- Put in place effective post-incident support for staff, for example counselling.

Dealing With Violent Occurrences

If someone behaves in a threatening way:

- Back away.
- Tell staff to get behind the counter or keep their distance.
- Ask staff to raise the alarm.
- Remain calm and non-confrontational.
- Remember as much about the offender as possible so that you can give this information to the police.
- Complete the “Business Beat Reporting Form” and report the incident to Police.

This factsheet contains general guidelines for increasing security of your business and/or workplace. No responsibility is accepted for any damage, injury or loss resulting from application of these guidelines.



If you are inside a shopping centre/shopping centre security

Most shopping centres have security services to assist you.

Centre Security Can:

- Assist and support you with security-related situations which occur within your store.
- Take reasonable steps to physically protect you, ensuring your safety if there is reason to believe you may be in harm's way.
- Assist in dealing with offenders if you seek Police intervention.
- Assist you while you check bags for any persons you may suspect.
- Use available CCTV to gather evidence of crimes committed against you or your business and supply this to the Police.
- Assist with escorting disruptive customers out of the store after your staff have requested them to leave.
- Use reasonable and necessary force to remove persons from your premises in accordance with the Centre's Security Policies.

Centre Security Can't:

- Assume responsibility for or take control of a situation which has occurred within your store.
- Make any significant decisions affecting the outcome of a situation which has occurred within your store.
- Detain a person for a crime which they have not witnessed.
- Physically arrest or detain anybody who does not pose an immediate danger to any person.
- 'Chase' an offender unless there is reason to believe that the person poses a threat to the safety of others.
- Be left in sole charge of an arrested offender who has committed a crime against you or your business.
- Provide you CCTV footage or other sensitive information. This is only supplied to the Police.
- Stay inside and 'look after' your store while your staff are absent.
- Do anything beyond the legal powers of an ordinary citizen.
- Check bags of any person suspected of concealing items.