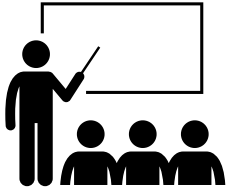


DE-ESCALATION TOOLS & TACTICS

The EPN is here to support your Workplace Violence Preparedness needs! De-escalation is a supportive strategy that is effective in preventing potential violence in the workplace. Tap into this tool with these tips:

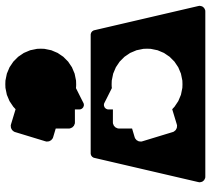


Train. Completion of comprehensive training will often prevent workplace violence incidents before they start. If you are an employer, provide/if you are an employee complete training in:

- Customer Care
- Bedside Manor
- Peer to Peer communication
- Communicating with people in crisis

Call 911 and/or your jurisdiction's non-emergency number, depending on the situation.

- Do this before an interaction turns violent.
- A call to law enforcement may cause the aggressive party to leave.



Validate. Remember, you cannot de-escalate until you validate. Use validation as a de-escalation tool through phrases such as:

- *"I'm so sorry you are going through that."*
- *"Let me see what I can do to help you."*

When you are **Face to Face** remember these De-escalation **Do's** and **Don'ts**:

- **Do have a "partner":** Have a coworker close by who can witness the interaction, call for help if needed, and switch with you as the primary contact person with an aggressive individual.
- **Do walk away:** if the situation continues to escalate and you have used all your tools, walk away. Remove yourself from the situation if you see it becoming violent.

REMINDERS:

- De-escalation STARTS before the interaction even BEGINS!
- REMEMBER - Our goal is to prevent violence and NOT to win the argument.
- If you see something, say something.
- Workplace safety is EVERYONE'S business!

- **Don't "trap" them:** Leave people a way out. When cornered, instinct takes over, and a person could become more aggressive.
- **Don't argue:** The goal is to diffuse the situation and resolve the problem. You are not trying to win the argument.
- **Don't involve more parties than necessary:** Involving others can create confusion and cause a person to feel overwhelmed or attacked. By asking others to politely "stay out of it," you may help the aggressive person to feel you are "on their side."
- **Don't show anger:** Remember, this is not just your tone of voice. Our body language conveys as much or more than what we say.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE DEFINITIONS:



Workplace Violence: The American Nurses Association defines Workplace Violence as *physically and psychologically damaging actions that occur in the workplace or while on duty.*

Assault is defined under Maryland State Law as *the attempted touching of a person without their consent, including under those circumstances where the person feels fearful that a touching will occur.*

Battery is *the actual, offensive touching of another person without his or her consent.*

Criminal Intent is defined as *a subjective state of mind (mens rea) that must accompany the acts of certain crimes to constitute a violation. To form Intent, a person must have mental capacity. Individuals in a mental health crisis or those living with dementia may not be capable of forming Intent.*

Situational Awareness: The American Psychological Association defines Situational Awareness as *conscious knowledge of the immediate environment and the events that are occurring in it.*

The following websites were referenced when forming the working definitions featured in this document.

- www.apa.org
- www.findlaw.com/state/maryland-law
- www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/advocacy/state/workplace-violence

WORKPLACE SAFETY & SITUATIONAL AWARENESS TIPS:



VEHICLE

- *Lock the doors:* as soon as you get in and as soon as you get out.
- *Keep items of value out of sight:* Put them in the trunk or use a cargo cover (SUV).
- *Be careful when using parking garages:* Park in populated, well-lit areas and be aware of your surroundings.
- Know the areas you serve! Be aware of the closest police stations, fire stations, and well-populated "safe" places.
- *Are you being followed?* Know where your closest safe places are and have a plan.
- *Plan the safest route to your destination.* Vary your routes and schedule when possible.

- *Use your camera!* Take a photo or video if you see something suspicious.
- *Use your GPS or a Check-in App* to share your location with a trusted party, such as a loved one or friend.



TECH



MOBILE

- Don't wear headphones, and stay off your phone. Better to stay focused and aware.
- Don't overburden yourself by carrying many bags. Keep at least one arm free.
- Have keys in your hand. Be ready to get in the car or the house.
- Check with your local law enforcement if you need an escort. They may be a service they can provide.
- If not, consider sending two people when in a questionable area or any place deemed high risk.

Remember: *Be aware of your surroundings, use common sense & good judgment, trust your instincts and have a plan!*