



Safety Note

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



Safety Note #108

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE RESPONSE



ANR is committed to establishing and maintaining workplaces that are free from violence. Safety Notes #106 and #107 provide information about workplace violence awareness and prevention, respectively. This Safety Note provides additional information about how to respond to incidents of workplace violence through the use of techniques to de-escalate incidents and prevent property damage or employee injuries.

Responding to Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior includes yelling, wild gestures, using profanity, and verbally abusing others.

1. Alert supervisor or manager to address the disruptive behavior situation.
2. Attempt to re-establish control and de-escalate the situation.
3. Speak calmly and ask questions about the cause of the disruptive behavior.
4. Inform person about the potential consequences of their behavior.
5. Repeat and synthesize what is being stated.
6. Emphasize points of agreement between the disagreeing party or parties.
7. Identify actions that can resolve the problem.
8. Follow through to assure resolution actions are implemented.
9. Document all aspects of the incident, including implementation of resolution actions.
10. As warranted, initiate disciplinary action(s).

Responding to Threatening Behavior

Threatening behavior encompasses veiled, conditional, or direct verbal and written threats to people or property or assertive physical gestures or actions, excluding physical contact or injury, towards others.

1. Promptly notify supervisor or manager to address the threatening behavior.
2. Follow above-listed steps #2 through 9.
3. If steps #2 through #9 above do not de-escalate the threatening behavior, then:
 - a. Request the person to desist with their behavior.
 - b. Warn the person that their behavior may result in disciplinary action or prosecution.
 - c. If the behavior persists, direct the person to leave the workplace.

Responding to Violent Behavior

Violent behavior involves a physical assault on a person or an action that damages or intends to damage property.

1. Immediately notify supervisor or manager to address the violent behavior.
2. Direct other employees to safety as fast as possible.
3. Contact the local law enforcement agency by calling 911.
4. Do not attempt to physically control the situation.

ANR Contacts for Disruptive, Threatening, or Violent Behavior

If an incident of disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior occurs, the incident shall be reported to the following ANR resources:

1. Research and Extension Centers shall contact Karen Hamner at (530) 752-3931.
2. Cooperative Extension Offices or Statewide Programs shall contact their respective Regional Office.

Videos, entitled "Violence in the Workplace" and "Workplace Violence for Management," are also available for loan from the ANR Environmental Health & Safety Library at (530) 752-3933.