

## **Violence Risk Assessment: Q&A**

The [WorkSafeBC Health Care High Risk Strategy](#) focuses on identified high-risk work activities within health care and community social services worksites. Primarily, this concerns areas and occupations where direct resident or client care is provided and the interaction between workers and the people they care for, can be observed. WorkSafeBC is increasing its focus on violence prevention by conducting a review of violence risk assessment compliance and best practice.

### **What is a violence risk assessment?**

A violence risk assessment is a process used to determine the risk of violence present in a workplace and provides information on what actions should be taken to eliminate or minimize the level of risk for workers.

### **How is a violence risk assessment different from a violence prevention program?**

A violence risk assessment is a component of the [violence prevention program](#). The violence prevention program includes a written policy, regular risk assessments, prevention procedures, training requirements, a process for reporting and investigating violent incidents, incident follow-up, and program review. The results of a risk assessment should determine the nature and extent of the violence prevention program that is required.

### **Why does a violence risk assessment need to be done?**

A violence risk assessment is part of an organization's violence prevention program, which WorkSafeBC regulations require in any workplace where there is a risk of injury to workers from violence as a result of their employment.

### **Who is responsible for completing a violence risk assessment?**

The violence risk assessment should be completed by a manager or representative with the help of both union and non-union members of the joint occupational health and safety committee. If there is no such committee on site, the health and safety representative should provide that support instead. Subject matter experts, protection or security representatives, or the director of care and facility managers may also be involved when appropriate.

### **I am not a manager; do I have a role in the completion of a violence risk assessment?**

Yes, all workers have a role in the completion of a violence risk assessment by identifying and communicating risks to their supervisor or a member of the violence risk assessment team or joint occupational health and safety committee (or the worker health and safety representative where applicable).

### **Does my organization need to complete a violence risk assessment?**

A violence risk assessment should be completed in any workplace where workers are at risk of injury from violence arising out of their employment.

**When should a violence risk assessment be completed?**

A violence risk assessment should be completed when:

- an organization begins operations
- a violence risk assessment has not previously been completed
- there is a significant change in the nature of the work performed (e.g. new work tasks, changes to client/resident population or profile)
- there is a significant change to the location of the workplace or department
- when a [Risk Assessment Audit Tool](#) is completed and indicates a full violence risk assessment must be performed
- three years has passed since the last violence risk assessment was completed.

**If a violence risk assessment has already been completed at my organization, do we need to do another one?**

Possibly. A violence risk assessment should be redone when:

- there is a significant change in the nature of the work (e.g. new work tasks, changes to client/resident population or profile)
- there is a significant change to the location of the workplace or department
- when a [Risk Assessment Audit Tool](#) is completed and indicates a full violence review assessment must be performed
- three years has passed since the last violence risk assessment was completed.

**How do you complete a violence risk assessment?**

The SafeCare BC [Violence Risk Assessment Process](#) outlines six steps for completing a violence risk assessment.

**What must be done after the violence risk assessment has been completed?**

- 1) Action items and timelines should be established.
- 2) Updates should be provided to the joint occupational health and safety committee.
- 3) If risks have been identified, steps must be taken to minimize and, when possible, eliminate them.
- 4) Preventative procedures should be written and posted to inform workers.
- 5) When training for workers is necessary, it should be provided.
- 6) Monitor and update the violence risk assessment as required.

**What additional resources are available?**

Those who are responsible for leading the violence risk assessment process should have a good understanding of all relevant [OHS regulations](#) and [policies](#). In-class courses, webinars, and podcasts are available through [SafeCare BC](#) and these [Education and Training Providers](#).