



# TSM Information Sheet

[PP 12/23/2018 - 01/05/2019]

## Workplace Violence Review

### Warning Signs of Workplace Violence – 5 Signs

What leads up to workplace violence almost always starts small. While it is possible for an employee to be “fine” one day and then come in the next with a firearm, such an incident is extremely rare. Escalation to violence is typically a process. So usually there are warning signs of workplace violence (and often many of them) before an individual actually commits a violent act.

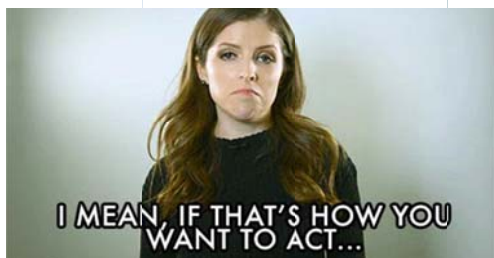
Here are 5 suggested warning signs to keep in mind when concerned about a coworkers behavior.

#### A Negative Change in Behavior:

- The earliest indicator of a potentially violent individual is a significant, negative change in their usual behavior.



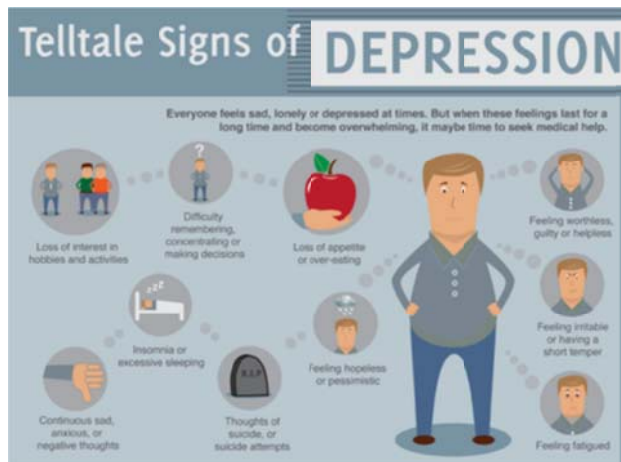
#### Increased Level of Passive Aggressive Actions:



Most people will begin aggression on a very small scale. Complaining to fellow co-workers, starting rumors about those in positions of authority, or even posting a stream of negativity aimed at their workplace on internet sites are such examples. These are some of the earliest warning signs of aggression escalating into an actual act of violence.

#### Sense of Hopelessness:

Another red flag is when employees or clients become vocal about their sense of hopelessness or powerlessness. When they move past blame into a sense of doomed circumstances; that “this will never get any better” or that “they just can’t take it anymore.”





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### Unreasonable Demands:

It is uncommon for an individual to become violent without feeling justified in their actions. What instigates a violent action is when someone feels they are in a circumstance where they have to use violence in order to achieve their goal. One way to do this is to make outrageous or unreasonable demands.



### Verbal/Physical Threats:

It is far more common than people think for an individual to give off warning signs of workplace violence before they commit a violent act. This is usually through verbal threats. If an employee plans to harm a fellow co-worker or an employer, for example, they might drop one or multiple hints.



Verbal threats are known to be a very powerful psychological tool for reaching a point of violence. They serve two main purposes:

- 1) The individual is bringing their mental plan into the physical world. Verbalizing that they will be violent is a bridge to actually committing the act; a form of “psyching themselves up.”



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2) The individual is subconsciously looking for help. They want to be stopped before they actually commit a violent action, so they warn others in hopes that someone will recognize the danger and stop them.

### Warning Signs of Workplace Violence – Final Thoughts:

**In the end, it is always better to err on the side of caution with any of these warning signs of workplace violence. It can feel awkward or invasive to go to Human Resources with seemingly minor concerns about a coworker or employee, but far too often these “minor” incidents are actually just predecessors to actual violence.**

### *WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY & GUIDELINES (PARAPHRASED)*

(City of Los Angeles Policy - <http://per.lacity.org/eeo/violence.htm>)

#### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION GUIDELINES

The effective prevention of violence requires the consistent commitment of all employees, supervisors and managers.

- Employees should be encouraged to immediately communicate to supervision any work related, or non-work related situation that has the potential to create violence in the workplace.
- Supervisors and managers must take all reports of potential violence seriously, investigate promptly and take appropriate actions to minimize and eliminate the potential for violence in the workplace.

#### COORDINATION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Each City department should identify a Workplace Violence Prevention Coordinator. The position will be responsible for the development, implementation, evaluation and modification of the department's workplace violence prevention program. The Workplace Violence Prevention Coordinator should be the department's personnel officer or a senior manager with the authority to implement policies on a department-wide basis.

BCA WVPC – Maricel Quirante 213-847-2489

[maricel.quirante@lacity.org](mailto:maricel.quirante@lacity.org)