



Security Spotlight

An Informational Guide for Securitas Clients

Personal protection tips

Employees who work alone or during nonstandard hours may benefit from the following safety procedures:

- If you plan to work late or report early, try to arrange your schedule to coincide with another employee's.
- Be extra cautious when using restrooms or stairwells that are in isolated locations, poorly lighted, or open to the public.
- If you are working late, ask the security officer for an escort to the parking lot.



Safety in the face of aggression

Stories about employees confronted with violence at work are often in the news, and those who work alone may be at greater risk. What can a person do to increase their chance of staying safe if confronted or threatened?

Upon encountering a disruptive person, first determine the severity of the situation. Most often a situation builds up through various levels of aggression before reaching a danger point. The three basic levels of aggression are:

- Anxiety or frustration
- Verbal aggression
- Physical conflict

Anxiety and frustration

Individuals who are anxious or frustrated are focused on their own problem and reduce their attention to you. Anxious people may:

- Not make eye contact
- Keep their head down
- Pace, fidget or drum their fingers

When dealing with anxious or frustrated individuals:

- Maintain a calm, respectful and reassuring tone of voice
- Be courteous and remain in control
- Use active listening techniques
- Use professional body language
- Make direct eye contact



Personal protection tips (continued)

- Make sure you know your office's emergency evacuation plan.
- Know where there is a "safe room" where you can go during an in-office emergency.
- Find out if your office can start using a sign in/sign out book during off hours.
- Keep emergency numbers for security, police, and fire assistance posted near every phone.
- If you notice any suspicious persons or vehicles, call security or the police.
- Vigilance, common sense precautions, and concern for coworkers are some of the keys to preventing crime in the workplace.



- Maintain a respectful distance—about four to six feet—between you and the individual

Verbal aggression

Individuals who resist attempts to calm them down may become verbally aggressive. Verbal aggression may be accompanied by such signs as:

- Reddening of the face
- Breathing becomes quicker and deeper
- Pumping hand, pounding fists, or pointing fingers
- Invading your personal space
- Staring
- Yelling and swearing

If you believe the person, although verbally aggressive, is not a threat to you or others:

- Maintain your professionalism
- Do not try to "out shout" the aggressor
- Do not interrupt—sometimes the best response is to let the person "vent"—and when he or she takes a breath, you can use active listening to establish control of the conversation
- Set reasonable and enforceable limits
- Seek assistance

Physical conflict

If the aggressive person still does not respond to attempts to defuse the situation, consider assuming a more defensive stance to protect yourself from a possible physical confrontation.

- Maintain a proper distance of four to six feet from the individual.
- Stand at a 45-degree angle to (or directly to the side of) the person, not face to face.
- Bring your hands up chest high, and gesture with open palms.

Never intervene if weapons are present. If an individual has a weapon, move yourself, and any others who are present, from harm's way. If escape routes are blocked but the aggressor cannot see you:

- Take cover. Get behind or under something solid.
- Call for help if you can do so safely.
- Keep the aggressor in your sight.
- Watch for an opportunity to escape to a safe area.

Remember to remain calm and nonhostile. The actions that you take in these situations can either intensify the situation or help to peacefully resolve it.

