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UTILITY & TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION
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PLAYINGITSAFE

SAFETY SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

PREVENTING VIOLENCE ON THE JOB

Helpful tips for reducing your risk of injury at work

Home health care workers provide care to patients in the patients' homes, without the protections of a hospital setting. Because of this, home health care workers can be vulnerable as they face an unprotected and unpredictable environment each time they enter a patient's community or home.

Verbal abuse from the patient, family members or people in the community is a form of workplace violence.

During home visits, use basic safety precautions:

1. Be alert.
2. Evaluate each situation for possible violence.
3. Watch for signals of impending violent assault.

The following are tips for managing a potentially violent situation:

Vehicle Safety

- Keep your vehicle well-maintained and in good working order.
- Keep your windows rolled up and doors locked.
- Park the vehicle in a well-lit area, away from large trees or shrubs.
- Keep health care equipment, supplies and personal belongings locked out of sight.

On Location

- Consider working with an escort in high-crime areas and schedule visits during daylight hours.
- Ensure you have accurate directions to the house or apartment.
- Always let your employer know your location and when to expect you to report back.
- Check the surrounding location and activity before you exit your car.
- Stay in your car and contact your manager if you notice anything that might threaten your security.

During the Home Visit

- Notify your employer if you observe an unsecured weapon.
- Maintain behavior that helps to defuse anger by presenting a calm, caring attitude.
- Avoid behaviors that may be interpreted as aggressive.
- If possible, keep an open pathway for a quick exit.
- Always trust your judgment.
- Avoid situations that don't feel right.
- If you are being verbally abused, ask the abuser to stop. If the abuser does not stop, then leave.
- If you cannot gain control of the situation, shorten the visit and remove yourself from the situation.
- If you need help, use your cellphone to call your employer or 911, depending on the severity of the situation.
- If you observe a crime, contact the police.

ALWAYS BE ALERT AND AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS WHEN CONDUCTING HOME VISITS.

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