

The top of the page features a green-tinted background with a silhouette of a person, likely a caregiver, interacting with a child. The NIOSH logo is prominently displayed in the upper left corner, with the words "FAST FACTS" below it.

# **NIOSH** **FAST FACTS**

## **Home Healthcare Workers**

### **How to Prevent Violence on the Job**

Home healthcare workers can be vulnerable as they face an unprotected and unpredictable environment each time they enter a client's community and home. The spectrum of violence ranges from verbal abuse, to stalking or threats of assault, to homicide.

Verbal abuse from the client, family members, or people in the community is a form of workplace violence. Verbal abuse may be subtle, such as asking for help beyond the scope of the job (such as with cleaning), or it may be obvious, such as complaining about job performance or worker appearance—or even threatening to cause harm.

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#### **EMPLOYERS SHOULD**

- Establish a zero-tolerance policy for all incidents of violence.
- Train workers on recognizing and preventing workplace violence.
- Investigate all reports of violence.
- Work with police to identify dangerous neighborhoods where special precautions need to be taken and provide that information to employees.

#### **EMPLOYEES SHOULD**

- Participate in violence-prevention training.
- Report to your employer all incidents of violence, no matter how minor.

#### **MANAGING VIOLENT SITUATIONS**

- Consider working with an escort in high-crime areas, and if possible, schedule visits during daylight hours.
- Be sure of the location and have accurate directions to the house or apartment.
- Always let your employer know your location and when to expect you to report back.
- When driving alone, have the windows rolled up and doors locked.
- Park the vehicle in a well-lit area, away from large trees or shrubs where a person could hide.
- Keep healthcare equipment, supplies, and personal belongings locked out of sight in the trunk of the vehicle.
- Before getting out of the car, check the surrounding location and activity. If you feel uneasy, do not get out of the car.