

*"A couple had to give up running a sub-post office, after one of them was seriously injured during a violent robbery of the premises."*

Violence at work is an increasing concern, especially in the service industries. Violence leads to physical and/or mental injuries, and even loss of life in exceptional cases.

Violence can be physical or verbal, and includes:

- bullying
- harassment
- actual bodily harm.

Employees at risk include those working in the service industries and dealing with members of the public, and those who handle cash, work unsociable hours or work alone.

You have a legal duty to protect employees at work, including protecting them from threats of violence. As with other work-related hazards, you must carry out a full and specific risk assessment.

## Tips

Carry out a 'violence at work' risk assessment to:

- identify those at risk
- list all significant risks of violence
- develop suitable control measures, including: systems and procedures; training; work planning; non-threatening work environment; use of CCTV and surveillance; alarm systems and panic buttons
- make sure all incidents are reported – as required under RIDDOR, and to the police
- consider providing counselling and aftercare to minimise post-traumatic stress disorder.

## Useful links

Suzy Lamplugh Trust  
[www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

Health and Safety Executive – Work-related violence  
[www.hse.gov.uk/violence/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/index.htm)