

March is Workplace Violence Prevention Month

March is Workplace Violence Prevention & Safety Month. Throughout the following weeks, we will provide you with proactive tips and strategies for workplace safety. Too often, individuals overlook the importance of workplace crime prevention, focusing primarily on their home, neighborhood, or personal safety. Because the majority of people spend a good portion of their day at work, it is just as crucial to use crime prevention techniques in the workplace as it is at home, while travelling, and within the community. In fact, according to the FBI, over 80% of active shooter incidents between 2000 and 2013 in the U.S. occurred in the workplace. Of the workplace shootings, the majority occurred in businesses, followed by schools, government sites, and healthcare facilities. Though regardless of the type of company, prevention skills can make the workplace safer for everyone involved.

Week 4: Protecting your information

Not only is the physical aspect of a workplace is vulnerable to crime, but also some of a company's most valuable property: information. Telephone directories, training materials, budgets, product research, and employee and customer information are just a few aspects of confidential information that could be at risk for theft—an easy way to take advantage of a business. When internal information leaks outside, everybody is affected. Profits drop, reputations are damaged, employees can lose their jobs, and morale plummets. Consider the following to ensure that insider information is kept inside:

- Think before discussing details of your job in public places
- Know who is on the other end of the line (telephone, email, fax) before disclosing any sensitive information
- Keep confidential files and papers locked in a drawer or filed cabinet
- Use a paper shredder to ensure that confidential information is not thrown into the trash
- Protect identification badges, office keys, and codes as you would your own credit cards. Immediately report them missing if one is lost

Technology also can create complicated security issues within a business. Being able to communicate with others efficiently also means that your computer and information stored there can be vulnerable to crime. If your company uses an outside Internet provider, familiarize yourself with their privacy policy and email service to understand the type of protection they offer and any backup policies they have. Consider the following:

- Never share sensitive information with unknown individuals
- Verify that you have an encrypted connection when providing credit card or financial information online
- Use a password that cannot be easily guessed, and change it often

At BulletBlocker, in addition to our workplace safety solutions, we also offer many practical products and clothing items for individuals commuting to work, or travelling for business purposes. Our classic [Two-Piece Suit](#) is a great option for individuals seeking a discreet yet stylish and professional form of protection. It is constructed of 100% Super Wool Gabardine with ultra-classic lines. The suit jacket discretely conceals the lightweight and removable NIJ IIIA bulletproof liner, and conveniently comes in a choice of six different colors and 3 lengths.

As Workplace Safety and Crime Prevention Month comes to an end, consider taking steps to make your workplace more secure. Ensure that all employees are up-to-date with training, and implement a comprehensive emergency plan. It is better to prepare and not need it than to be unprepared in the event of an emergency.

Week 3: In the Event of an Emergency

According to the Federal Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry, human error is the single largest cause of workplace emergencies. This can result from poor training, misconduct, carelessness, or fatigue. To combat this, it is imperative to ensure that all employees receive proper training on how to respond in the event of an emergency. Emergencies can happen at any time—fire, water main break, disturbance, communications failure, or criminal activity. In an emergency, it is critical that all employees know where to go and what to do; being prepared can limit injuries and damages, and help employees return to work as usual. When emergencies happen, it is important that all employees avoid panic by staying calm, using common sense, and getting help when necessary. Never delay reporting an emergency to the designated person in charge within the business, regardless of its perceived implication.

A good emergency response plan helps companies not only protect its employees, but also the community and environment. As you create a plan, consider the following:

- Plan for the worst-case scenario. What would happen if you cannot exit the building by the staircase or main exit? Are there alternative escape routes?
- Make unique accommodations for employees who are disabled or may require additional assistance.
- What would happen if the electricity was off for more than 24 hours? Is there a back-up alternative for critical affairs?

Our [BulletBlocker Backpack Panel Inserts](#) are a great addition to any workplace setting. Conveniently available in multiple sizes and shapes, these panels allow you to easily and discretely make your pre-owned bag or backpack bulletproof. The panels fit into backpacks, briefcases, and more—a great option for employees and commuters who desire an extra layer of protection while at work or on the go. The semi-flexible, 20-ounce NIJ IIIA panel is made with the latest DuPont Kevlar technologies, which means that it is safe, durable, and lightweight. These qualities allow it to be swapped effortlessly into different bags without ever compromising comfort or concealability. Additionally, the panel is airport-friendly, making it a great option for those who travel for business.

Week 2: Workplace Plan

Last week, we talked about general strategies for workplace safety. This week, we will discuss the importance of making and implementing an emergency workplace plan. As disasters and emergencies can happen anywhere at any time, it is important to be prepared in all aspects of life. As the workplace is generally a place where individuals spend a good portion of their week, it is important to implement emergency preparedness strategies to ensure the best outcome for all individuals involved.

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) published a [basic checklist](#) with workplace safety and prevention strategies. First and foremost, it is important to know the exit routes in your building. If possible, know at least two exit routes from each room. Be prepared to escape in the dark by knowing how many desks/cubicles/barriers are between your workstation and two of the nearest exits. It is also important to know the location of fire extinguishers and medical kits. Make sure there is a designated meeting location and that every employee knows where it is. The NCPC also recommended keeping a personal emergency supply kit in a desk drawer. Consider a flashlight, walking shoes, a water bottle, and nonperishable food. Every company, regardless of size, should have an effective and well-practiced emergency plan in place. Many workplaces have started to implement comprehensive safety prevention and protocol within their companies. Employers can conduct safety and security audits, practice active shooter emergency drills, implement workplace violence emergency protocols, and train employees on how to respond to incidents of violence. It is important to make special emergency plans for employees who are disabled or may require additional assistance during an emergency.

We offer a variety of workplace safety solutions at BulletBlocker. Our [Defender Notebook Folio](#) is a popular choice, which is a zippered portfolio ideal for any workplace professional that desires an extra layer of bulletproof protection. Using the latest DuPont Kevlar technologies, the zippered folio provides the same NIJ IIIA protection found in all our products, adding less than a pound in weight for ballistics. The anti-ballistic panel is sewn discreetly into the genuine leather folio so you never have to worry about compromising comfort or concealability. The lightweight bulletproof notebook is ideal for anyone who wishes to effortlessly enhance their safety each day at school or work.

Week 1

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) provided a [basic list](#) of things that employees can do to stay safe while at work. Keeping all valuables locked and stored away to prevent theft, always checking the identity of strangers in the workplace, and reporting any suspicious activity to management are just a few ways to prevent crime. Also, keeping adequate emergency supply kits on hand with water, nonperishable food, and a first-aid kit is essential. It is important to assess the company's vulnerability to all kinds of crime, ranging from burglary to fraud. The manager or owner of a company has additional responsibilities, as they must be on the lookout for theft, fraud, and other criminal activity. Additionally, employers must ensure their employees are safe—not only from unauthorized customers but also from each other. This means employers should be cautious when hiring, verifying references, and running background checks on employees when necessary.

While prevention measures can ensure that employees will be well-prepared, they cannot physically protect them in the event of an emergency. In addition to our collection of briefcases and backpacks, we offer a variety of workplace safety solutions to keep you prepared and protected with an extra peace of mind. Our NIJ IIIA [Safety Seat](#) is one of the top-rated workplace safety products at BulletBlocker. It is a discrete, anti-ballistic shield disguised as a seat cushion. It is ideal for teachers, doctors, lawyers, or other individuals who desire their own personal safety barrier readily available in case of an emergency. Made with the latest DuPont Kevlar technologies, the panel is lightweight, covert, and reliable. The open cell foam cushion promotes comfort, and the non-slip straps that keep the seat in place double as handles if the anti-ballistic safety shield is needed. As violence in healthcare facilities continues to rise, it is necessary to stay protected. We offer a [Medical Lab Coat](#), ideal for men and women in the medical, pharmaceutical, or consultation field who desire a layer of lightweight and discrete anti-ballistic protection. The coat is armored with a concealed NIJ IIIA bullet-resistant liner for optimal safety while on-the-job. The coat's durable fabric has antimicrobial agents embedded to prevent microbial growth and provides an exterior fluid barrier. As we go throughout the month, consider what steps you can take to improve your workplace safety. The best way to prepare for any workplace emergency is to be informed, up to date on training, and equipped with adequate supplies and resources in your workplace. Following basic crime prevention principles, and working alongside local law enforcement to protect your business are effective ways to be actively involved in preventing crime.