



An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Work Related Violence and Aggression. Employer Supports



Paraig Earley, Inspector.
HSA Webinar November 2025

What is Work-Related Violence and Aggression

- Work-related violence and aggression can be defined as any incident where staff are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, wellbeing or health

Verbal Threat	Threatening Gesture	Taunting
Derogatory Personal Remark	Spitting	Hitting
Throwing an Object	Banging on Glass	Shouting At
Name Calling	Swearing At	Punching
Kicking	Email	Phone Call

One hazard, many different experiences

Sales
assistant

Hotel
Receptionist

Security
personnel

Construction
worker

Testing and
examination

Garda

Nurse

Teacher

Carer

EMT

Fire Fighter

Bus Driver

Health and
Safety
Inspector

Bar staff

Council
employee

Traffic
Warden

Customer
Service

ESENER



European Agency
for Safety and Health
at Work

(ESENER 2024) puts having to deal with difficult customers, pupils or patients as third most frequent risk factor in work.

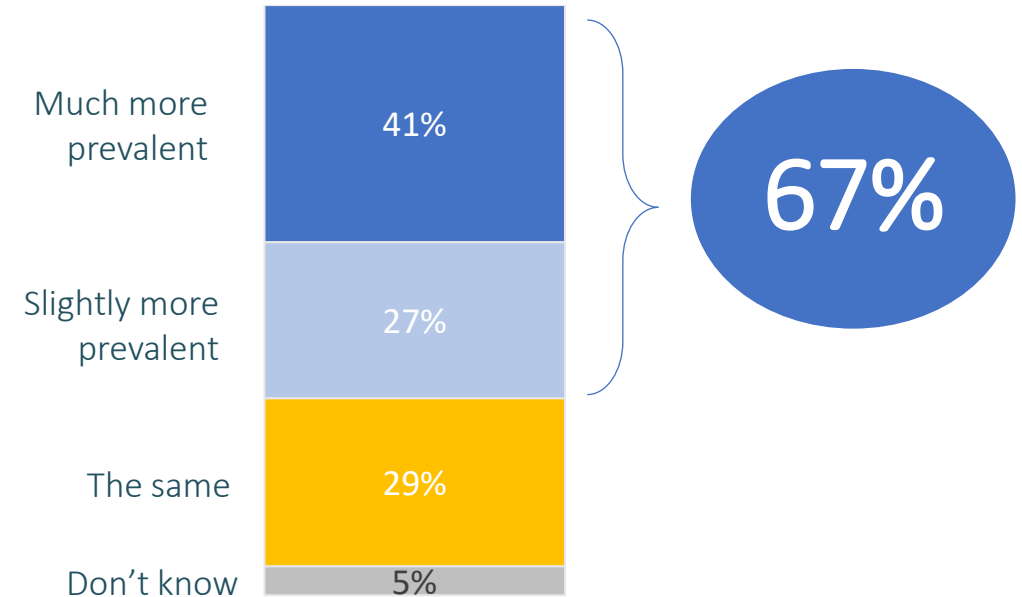
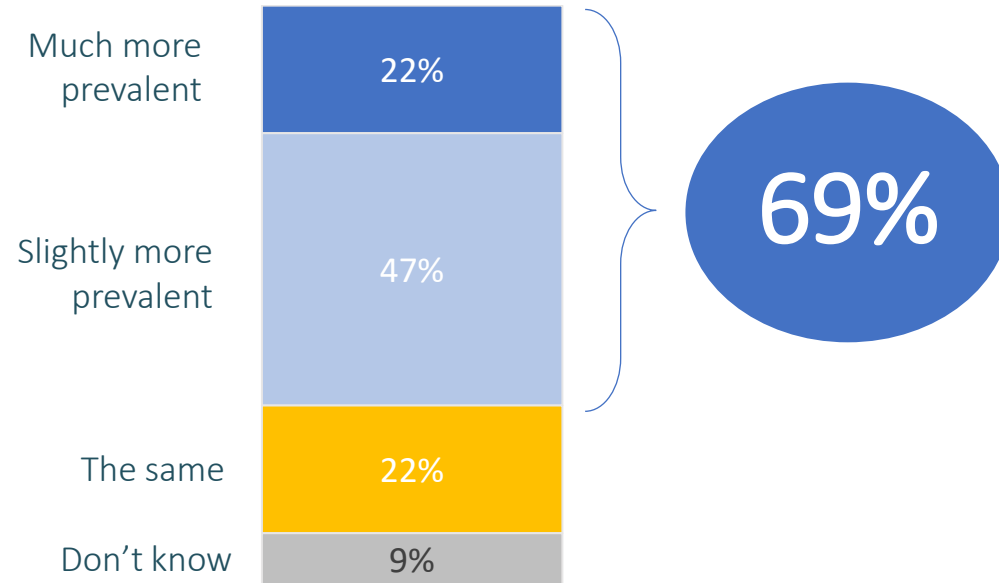
Only 46% reported having a procedure in place for dealing with a threat or abuse

21% of employers deem psychosocial hazards as more difficult than other risks

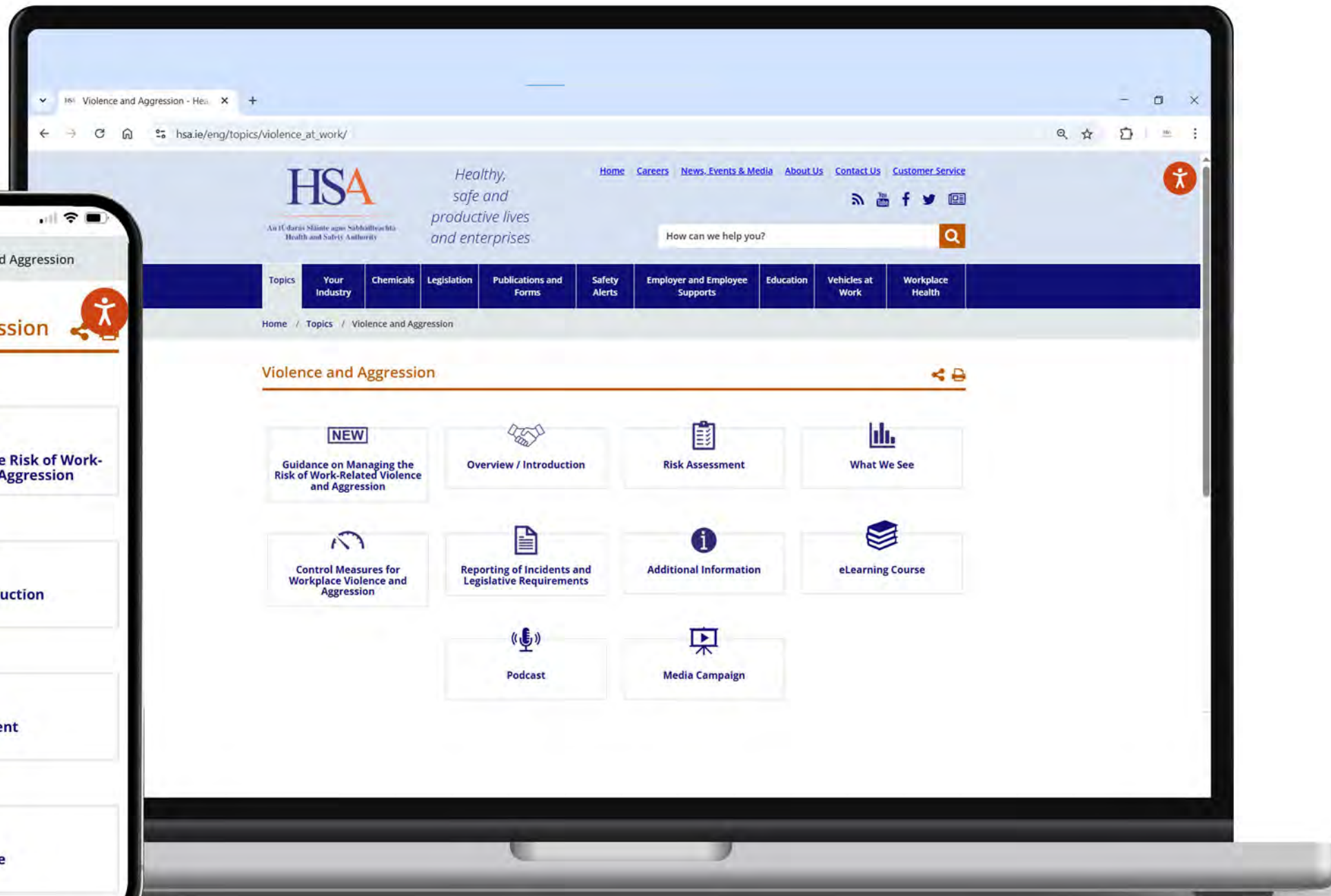
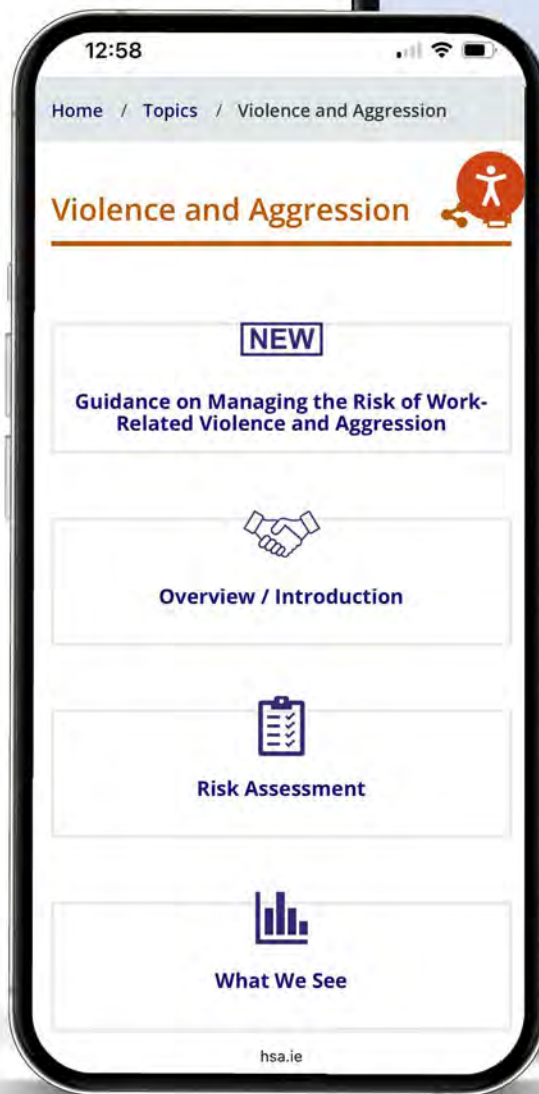
Prevalence of work-related V&A in recent years



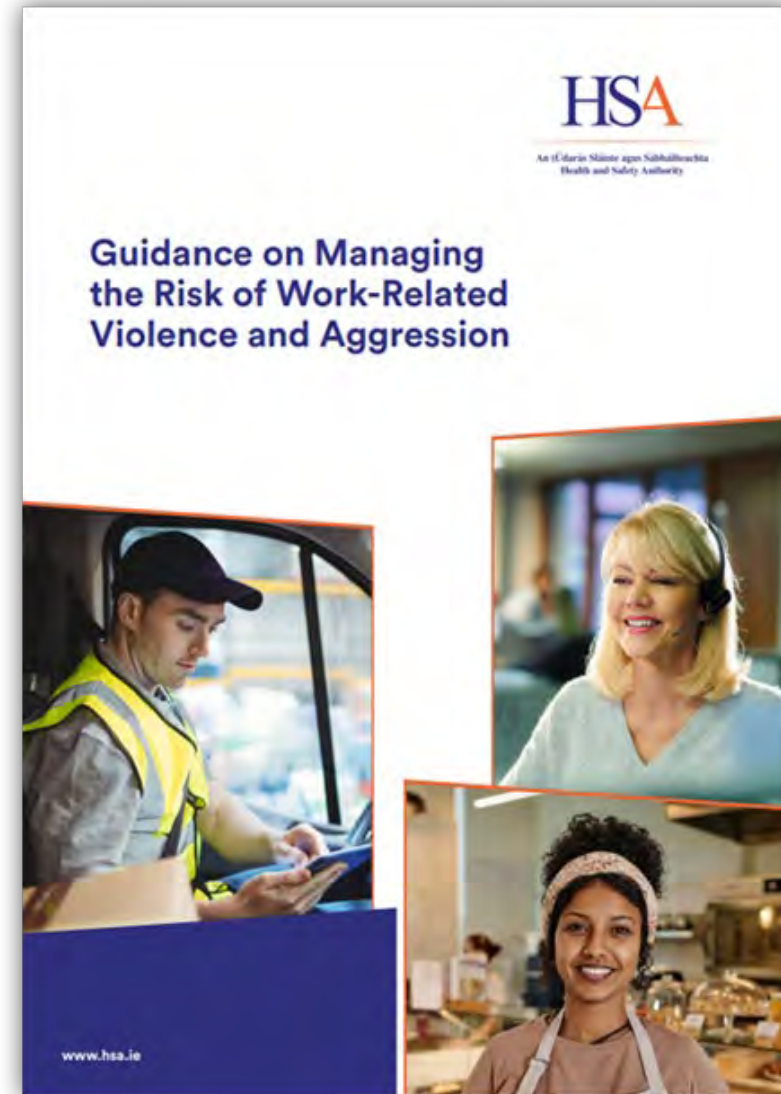
- Both employers/managers and employees report an increased prevalence of work-related violence and aggression in recent years.
- Prevalence of V&A in recent years**



Employer Supports



- Introduction of Hazard
- General Guidance
- Risk Assessment
- Control Measures
- Factors Influencing Violence and Aggression
- What are the Effects of Incidents?
- Recording of Incidents



Is violence and aggression an issue in my workplace?



The answer to this question involves systematically going into the workplace and work operations under the employer's control and finding out if there are any problem areas. This can be done by:

- reviewing the workplace, the work organisation and the tasks being carried out,
- discussing work practices with staff,
- looking at your incident records,
- learning from similar workplaces,
- paying attention to any incidents that have previously occurred and the circumstances under which they occurred, and
- getting relevant health and safety information and generally being vigilant on an ongoing basis.

What situations can cause or worsen violence?

When reviewing your workplace for the potential for violence it is helpful to think about:

The aggressor

The employee

The work environment

and how these might come together to create a violent situation.



How to ensure adequate safeguards

ORGANISATIONAL

WORKPLACE AND
ENVIRONMENT

MANAGEMENT/SYSTEM
OF WORK

Sample form – Reporting an Incident of Violence and Aggression

1. Who was involved?

Personal data about the victim and, where possible, the assailant should be recorded separately. The victim data should include job/position and extent of training in handling violence.

(2) What happened?

A full written description, including use of weapon.

(3) Why do you think it happened?

(4) Where did it happen?

(5) When did it happen? Did anything occur prior to the incident?

Further Supports

Sample risk assessment – work-related violence and aggression

Step 1: Identify hazards	Step 2: Assessing the risks			Step 3: Additional control measures (further actions needed)		
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk?	Current controls (What are you already doing?)	Level of risk? (Your estimate of the remaining risk level, based on the current controls. For example, High, Medium, Low)	Additional Controls Needed (Further action to reduce the remaining risk level to be as low as possible)	Action by whom and by when?	Date completed
Work-related violence and aggression	All customer-facing employees (management, supervisors, employees, or security)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCTV is installed so that staff have visibility of all high-risk areas. Signage is also in place informing customers that CCTV is in operation. External high-risk areas around cash points, entrances and exits are well lit to deter thieves or violent individuals. All employees have unrestricted visibility across the store. 	Low/Medium/High	Senior management are actively involved in the communication and promotion of a positive health and safety culture.	Included in senior management comms by end of XX/XX/202X .	

eLearning Course

HSA

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The flyer is titled 'FREE awareness raising courses online' and features the HSA logo and 'hsalearning.ie' website. It lists several benefits: 24/7 availability, certificates on completion, a Group Manager facility, and CPD points from CIRI, EI, and NMBI. It includes three images: a woman at a computer, a group of people in a meeting, and two workers in safety gear. Contact information for HSA is provided at the bottom, along with the 'BeSMART.ie' logo.

hsalearning.ie
HSA Online Courses

HSA
For all health, safety and environmental
Health and Safety Authority

FREE
awareness
raising courses
online

- ✓ Available 24/7
- ✓ Certificate available on completion
- ✓ Create an online group using a Group Manager facility
- ✓ CPD points available from CIRI, EI, and NMBI

Further Information and Guidance:

- hsa.ie
- 0818 289 389
- contactus@hsa.ie

hsalearning.ie
HSA Online Courses

BeSMART.ie
Free Online Safety, Environmental and Risk Assessment Tool

Courses by Topic:

- Bullying.
- Business Start-ups.
- Chemical Safety.
- Driving for Work.
- Employees in Small Business.
- Employers of Small Business.
- Ergonomic Risk Assessment.
- Human Factors. **NEW**
- Psychosocial Hazards and Stress.
- Reporting Workplace Accidents. **NEW**
- Safer Steps and Stairs.
- Safety Representatives.
- Slips, Trips and Falls.
- Work-Related Violence and Aggression. **NEW**
- Vulnerable Workers.
- Workplace Safety, Health and Welfare Induction.

Publishing this week.....

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Information Sheet on Work-Related Violence and Aggression in Retail

What is work-related violence and aggression?

Work-related violence and aggression can be defined as any incident where staff are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, health or wellbeing.

The purpose of this guidance document is to help retail employers manage the risks associated with work-related violence and aggression, and to implement suitable control measures, examples of which are provided below.

An aggressive or violent act can be physical or non-physical. Physical examples can include spitting, pushing, hitting, punching or attacking a person with a weapon or object. Non-physical can be verbal abuse, threats or threatening gestures towards the person.

The retail sector in Ireland employs over 200,000

Media Campaign

3 Key take aways

- Visit the webpage
- Take our eLearning Course
- Download our guidance document(s)



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Thank you



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