



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members

Dealing with Aggressive People Safety Message

Most of us have had to deal with an aggressive person at some point in our lives, even at work. It could be a coworker, vendor, or customer. Knowing what to do and say can prevent injury and improve relationships.

Handling Aggression

Aggressive people often want to force their viewpoint on you. They want to dominate others using physical and verbal intimidation that can easily spill into violence. If you find yourself in a situation with an aggressive person, de-escalation is one technique that can be used to diffuse the situation.

Some non-verbal de-escalation techniques include:

- Approaching the person privately
- Appearing calm and self-assured
- Maintaining limited eye contact
- Maintaining a neutral facial expression
- Maintaining a neutral posture
- Keeping your hands to yourself
- Positioning yourself for safety

Verbal techniques for de-escalation include:

- Disregard content, focus on calming the person down
- Use a soft and low tone of voice
- Do not interrupt
- Do not get defensive
- Be honest
- Empathize with feelings, not behavior
- Do not attempt to argue or persuade