

Protecting **What Matters Most!**



WHITE PAPER:

Partnering with Strategos International for Compliance with CA Senate Bill 553:

A Comprehensive Guide for Employers in CA



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White Paper: Partnering with Strategos International for Compliance with CA Senate Bill 553

Introduction:

This white paper is designed to guide employers in California on how to comply with CA Senate Bill 553. With a focus on employee rights and workplace safety, this bill represents a significant step in labor law. Strategos International, a leader in compliance and employment law, offers comprehensive services to help employers navigate these new regulations.

Executive Summary:

Strategos International, with its rich history in aiding employers, has become a cornerstone in enhancing workplace safety, particularly in the realms of violence preparedness and response. Our comprehensive approach, encompassing assessment, training, and policy development, has been instrumental in safeguarding numerous organizations against workplace violence.

History of Excellence:

For over a 22 years, Strategos International has been at the forefront of workplace violence preparedness. Our journey began with a simple mission: to create safer, more secure workplaces. Since our founding we have served over 350,000 corporate, government, healthcare, education, law enforcement and military professionals in 15 countries on security and safety related topics. Over the years, we have expanded our services in the categories of consulting, training and protection to meet the evolving challenges employers face in maintaining a secure work environment.

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Overview of CA Senate Bill 553 and Its Objectives

California's Senate Bill 553 (SB 553), enacted on September 30, 2023, mandates that virtually all employers in California develop and implement a comprehensive Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (WVPP). This legislation is significant as it introduces the first general industry workplace violence prevention safety requirements in the United States. The bill has several key aspects and requirements, which are outlined on the following page:



Key aspects and requirements:

1. **Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (WVPP):** Employers are required to establish, document, and train employees on a WVPP, which should be integrated into the employer's Injury and Illness Prevention Programs (IPPs).
2. **Documentation and Training:** Employers must document incidents of workplace violence and provide practical WVPP training for employees. This includes ongoing training when new or previously unrecognized workplace violence hazards are identified or changes to WVPP occur.
3. **Recording Incidents:** Information on workplace violence incidents must be recorded in a violent incident log.
4. **Affected Employers:** SB 553 applies to all California employers, broadly defined as any person engaged in any business in California employing at least one person.
5. **Protected Employees:** The bill protects all employees from workplace violence, including board members of corporations and public officers, as well as volunteers or independent contractors working at the employer's worksite.
6. **Prohibited Conduct:** SB 553 defines and protects against actual unlawful violence and credible threats of violence in the workplace.
7. **Temporary Restraining Orders:** From January 1, 2025, the bill allows bargaining employee representatives to file petitions for temporary restraining orders or orders after a hearing to protect employees from workplace violence.
8. **Enforcement:** Cal/OSHA is authorized to enforce compliance with SB 553, including accessing workplace violence incident logs and employer WVPP. The agency can issue citations and impose sanctions on noncompliant employers.
9. **Implementation Timeline:** The requirement for recording workplace violence incidents in an incident log and initial employee WVPP training becomes effective on July 1, 2024. From January 1, 2025, provisions related to temporary restraining orders and orders after hearing become effective.

SB 553 is a significant step towards ensuring workplace safety and health by focusing on preventing workplace violence. It requires employers to take proactive measures to protect their employees and provides a framework for reporting and responding to incidents of violence. The legislation emphasizes the need for ongoing training and education for both employers and employees to recognize and mitigate the risks of workplace violence.



The bill
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How Strategos International Assists Employers

Strategos International provides tailored solutions to help employers comply with CA Senate Bill 553. Our services include legal consulting, policy development, and compliance audits.

Strategos Specialized Services in Workplace Violence Preparedness

Our expertise extends to various phases of workplace violence prevention, response, and recovery, including:

Physical Security Assessments

- **Workplace Violence Focus:** Tailored assessments to identify vulnerabilities specific to workplace violence threats.



Comprehensive Workplace Violence Manual Development

- **Development of detailed manuals encompassing critical policies such as:**
 1. Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (WVPP) Development: According to CA SB 553, employers must establish, document, and train employees on a WVPP. This plan should be integrated into the employer's Injury and Illness Prevention Programs (IPPs).
 2. High-Risk Termination Policy: Guidelines for objectively measuring whether a termination or separation is "high-risk" and then safely conducting terminations that might pose a risk of violence through outlined protocols.
 3. Domestic Violence Awareness/Response Policy: Procedures for recognizing, reporting, and addressing incidents of domestic violence impacting the workplace.
 4. Body Language & Behavior Indicators: Training on recognizing signs that may indicate a potential escalation to violence and body language indicators of those who may be armed.
 5. Recognition & Reporting Policy: Encouraging and facilitating reporting of concerning behaviors or situations.
 6. Active Threat Response Protocol Policy: Procedures for responding to active shooter or immediate threat scenarios via Strategos "3 OUT" non-linear response model.
 7. Additional Policies: Cover various scenarios to prepare for and respond to workplace violence comprehensively.



Workplace Violence and Active Shooter Training

- **Offering diverse training delivery options:**
 - In-Person Training: Hands-on and interactive sessions.
 - E-learning Modules: Flexible, self-paced online learning.
 - Virtual Reality Training: Cutting-edge VR scenarios for immersive learning experiences.



High-Risk Termination Consultation and Protection

- Expert consultation for planning and conducting high-risk terminations.
- Offering protection solutions to ensure safety during such terminations.

Services and Solutions Offered

- Legal Consulting: Expert advice on the bill's implications for your business.
- Policy Development: Crafting company policies that align with the new regulations.
- Compliance Audits: Regular audits to ensure ongoing compliance.

Benefits of Partnering with Strategos International

Partnering with Strategos International for compliance with CA Senate Bill 553 and workplace violence preparedness benefits an organization. These include:

1. Enhanced Awareness and Response Capabilities:

- o Strategos International's expertise in workplace violence preparedness significantly increases awareness across all sectors of an organization.
- o Employees and management will be better equipped to recognize and respond to potential threats, creating a more secure and responsive work environment.

2. Reduction of Anxiety and Fear:

- o One of the key challenges in addressing workplace violence is the fear and anxiety it can generate among employees.
- o Strategos International's solutions aim to mitigate these concerns by providing practical, actionable strategies.
- o By having a well-defined plan and training in place, employees feel more secure, knowing that protocols exist to address potential threats. This reduction in fear and anxiety can increase morale and productivity within the workforce.

3. Reduced Liability Through Due Diligence Preparedness:

- o Compliance with CA Senate Bill 553 and implementing workplace violence prevention strategies are not just about meeting legal requirements. They are about demonstrating an organization's commitment to the safety and well-being of its employees.
- o Partnering with Strategos International helps an organization achieve the "due diligence preparedness standard." This is achieved by showing that reasonable efforts have been made to prevent harm related to workplace violence.
- o This proactive approach can significantly reduce the organization's liability risks. It demonstrates to regulators, employees, and the public that the organization takes workplace safety seriously and has taken steps to prevent incidents of violence.



In summary, the strategic partnership with Strategos International equips organizations with the tools, knowledge, and capabilities to create a safer workplace. This aligns with legal requirements and fosters a more secure, productive, and positive environment for all employees.

Successful Compliance Strategies

- Case studies of businesses that have successfully implemented compliance measures with our help.
- Testimonials from satisfied clients.

Roadmap for Employer Steps in Compliance with CA Senate Bill 553 and Workplace Violence Preparedness

To effectively navigate the requirements of CA Senate Bill 553 and enhance workplace violence preparedness, employers can follow this step-by-step roadmap, integrating the specialized services offered by Strategos International:

1. Understand SB 553 Requirements:

- Familiarize with the bill's provisions, focusing on the need for a comprehensive Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (WVPP).
- Recognize the documentation, training, and recording requirements outlined in the bill.

2. Initial Assessment and Physical Security Review:

- Conduct a thorough assessment of the current workplace environment to identify potential vulnerabilities.
- Utilize Strategos International's Physical Security Assessments, which are specifically focused on workplace violence.

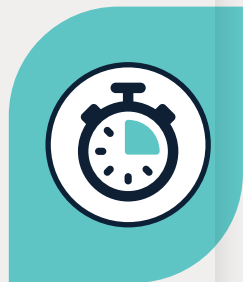


3. Development of a Workplace Violence Prevention Plan:

- Collaborate with Strategos International to develop a comprehensive WVPP.
- Ensure the inclusion of critical policies such as the High-Risk Termination Policy, Domestic Violence Awareness/Response Policy, etc.

4. Employee Training and Education:

- Implement Workplace Violence & Active Shooter Training programs offered by Strategos International.
- Provide In-Person, E-learning, and Virtual Reality Training options to accommodate diverse learning preferences.



5. Implementing High-Risk Policies:

- Focus on critical areas such as high-risk termination processes, using Strategos International's consultation and protection solutions.
- Regularly update and revise policies based on ongoing assessments and changing circumstances.



6. Documentation and Incident Logging:

- Establish a system for documenting and logging incidents of workplace violence as required by SB 553.
- Ensure that this documentation is accessible and regularly updated.

7. Ongoing Training and Policy Revisions::

- o Provide continuous employee training, especially when new risks are identified, or changes are made to the WVPP.
- o Regularly review and update the WVPP and associated policies to ensure they remain effective and compliant with the latest legal requirements.

8. Engagement with Employee Representatives:

- o Engage with employee representatives, particularly in unionized environments, to ensure their involvement in the WVPP.
- o Consider their feedback and concerns in the ongoing development of workplace violence policies.

9. Preparation for Restraining Order Provisions:

- o Regular audits should be conducted, possibly with the assistance of Strategos International, to ensure ongoing compliance with SB 553 and the effectiveness of the WVPP.

10. Regular Compliance Audits:

- o Establish a system for documenting and logging incidents of workplace violence as required by SB 553.
- o Ensure that this documentation is accessible and regularly updated.

11. Record-Keeping and Reporting:

- o Maintain thorough records of training, incident reports, and policy updates.
- o Ensure readiness for potential Cal/OSHA inspections and compliance verifications.



By following this roadmap, employers can systematically work towards achieving and maintaining compliance with CA Senate Bill 553 while also enhancing their overall preparedness for workplace violence scenarios. This comprehensive approach meets legal requirements and contributes to a safer and more secure work environment.

Addressing Common Misconceptions

Certain misconceptions can arise when implementing compliance measures for CA Senate Bill 553 and enhancing workplace violence preparedness. Addressing this head-on is crucial for clarity and effective action.

MISCONCEPTION 1: Increasing Awareness Creates More Fear

- **Reality:** While it might seem that discussing workplace violence could increase fear, the opposite is often true. Increased awareness through education and training typically leads to greater confidence and a sense of control among employees. Understanding potential threats and knowing how to respond effectively can reduce fear and anxiety.

MISCONCEPTION 2: High Costs in Time and Resources

- **Reality:** Partnering with Strategos International is designed to be a cost-effective solution. While an investment is involved, the long-term benefits, including reduced liability, improved safety, and compliance with legal requirements, often outweigh initial costs. Moreover, Strategos International's services are tailored to fit different organizational sizes and budgets, ensuring that the investment in safety and compliance is manageable.

MISCONCEPTION 3: Myths About CA Senate Bill 553

- **Myth 1:** It Only Applies to Large Companies: SB 553 applies broadly to all employers in California, regardless of size, including those with just one employee.
- **Myth 2:** It's Only Relevant to Certain Industries: While some industries may face more significant risks of workplace violence, SB 553's requirements are general and apply across all sectors.
- **Myth 3:** Compliance Is Just About Having a Written Plan: While having a written Workplace Violence Prevention Plan is a key requirement, SB 553 also emphasizes the importance of training, documentation, and active engagement in violence prevention efforts.

By debunking these misconceptions, employers can approach compliance with CA Senate Bill 553 and workplace violence preparedness with a clearer understanding and more realistic expectations. This approach fosters a more effective and cooperative environment for implementing necessary safety measures.

Conclusion

Strategos International is committed to helping California employers comply with CA Senate Bill 553. Our expertise, resources, and personalized approach ensure your business can adapt to these changes confidently and efficiently.



300 N. OSAGE STREET,
INDEPENDENCE, MO 64050
888-569-5444

WWW.STRATEGOSINTL.COM

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Contact Information: For more information on how Strategos International can assist with your security and compliance needs, please contact:

info@strategosintl.com