



A Few Thoughts on Safety From Your Security Committee

Security Tip #23: Internal Threats—Vigilance in the Workplace

You have been frequently reminded by your Security Committee of the importance of outer perimeter security. Every federal courthouse has security screening at all public entry points. However, several recent active shooter incidents have involved disgruntled employees or employees with mental illness within the target structure.

While a potential assailant's anger may be sparked by a single act of disrespect or adverse job action, its festering intensity can result in an undifferentiated response. In other words, the shooter may become convinced that all of his or her coworkers are working in collaboration to contribute to his or her misery.

In other situations, individuals experiencing interpersonal stress with family, friends, or other antagonists, may find that workplace stress simply ignites a violent response. This has been the case with several recent active shooters experiencing strained personal relations with other employees or facing adverse job action. Recent incidents counsel the adoption of a policy of casual observation in the workplace.

We do not suggest that every ill-tempered remark be reported to management or relayed to court security. Everyone blows off a little steam from time to time. But

displays or expressions of particularized anger toward people or institutions over an extended period of time may necessitate precautionary steps, especially if the tempo of acrimony becomes increasingly strident. Obviously, any mention of recent or contemplated purchases of firearms adds an element of concern.

Courthouse staff experiencing employees with persistent and unabating anger should share their observations with a court security officer or deputy U.S. marshal. The Marshals Service will consult with a trained threat assessment specialist who will determine if intervention is appropriate. In most cases, the identity of the reporting person need not be disclosed. Fortunately, in most cases, the employee's anger can be addressed through counseling, or if necessary, protective measures.

Security Committee
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Produced in association with the United States Marshals Service's
National Center for Judicial Security