



Riots and Protests

With the ongoing and growing civil unrest across the globe, workplaces face a growing exposure to workplace violence. While most events are peaceful and often do not target or involve specific businesses directly, some events have become violent. Taking steps to pre-plan can protect your business and employees from potentially fatal or life-changing injuries due to these potentially violent events.

What can your organization do to protect your employees during riots and / or protests in your area:

- Recognize vulnerability – understand location, proximity to town center, nearby city / state buildings, public or private property that may be targeted for protest activities.
- Monitor news and social media for planned events.
- Develop a business continuity plan that includes remote work or only having essential employees report to work during the event.
- Develop, review and practice emergency lockdown and evacuation procedures.
- Create emergency supply kits that include food, water, and other supplies to use in the event of a lockdown.
- Obtain sufficient supplies to board windows and increase locks on entrances. Consult with contractors that can respond to board up the building as well as get the business back up and running in the event of property damage.
- Establish a communication plan to thoroughly communicate with employees to keep them informed on special instructions / procedures to follow during the event.
- Ensure camera and security systems are functioning properly.
- Consider scheduling / hiring outside security and increasing access controls.
- Utilize one entrance / exit for employees. Use the entrance furthest from the protest and keep all other entrances secured.
- Consider offsite parking and shuttle drop off for employees or security escort from site parking lot.
- Instruct employees not to engage or debate with protestors.
- Have employees contact the police department if they feel unsafe, threatened, etc.
- Contact your corporate attorney and insurance agent for more information on how to handle your company's response to workplace violence.



Image Source: GettyImages

Remember, the past does not predict the future. Recognizing the potential for an event in your area. Pre-planning and implementing control strategies will increase the likelihood of a positive outcome for your business and employees.