

PERSONAL CONDUCT TO MINIMIZE VIOLENCE

Follow these suggestions in your daily interactions with people to de-escalate potentially violent situations. If at any time a person's behavior starts to escalate beyond your comfort zone – DISENGAGE.

DO

- Project calmness. Move and speak slowly, quietly and confidently
- Be an empathetic listener: Encourage the person to talk and listen patiently.
- Focus your attention on the other person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- Maintain a relaxed yet attentive posture.
- Acknowledge the person's feelings. Indicate that you can see that they are upset.
- Establish ground rules if unreasonable behavior persists. Calmly describe consequences of unacceptable behavior. Set limits.
- Use diversion tactics which will give the person time to calm down – such as a glass of water / coffee.
- Be reassuring and point out choices. Divide the big problem into smaller more manageable problems.
- Accept criticism in a positive way. If the criticism seems unwarranted, ask clarifying questions.

DO NOT

- ✓ Initiate hostile response such as apathy, brushing off, coldness, condescension, go strictly by the rules or give the run around.
- ✓ Reject all of client's demands from the start.
- ✓ Finger point or convey negative body language – crossed arms, hands on hips, distorted face or prolonged eye contact.
- ✓ Make sudden or threatening movements. Notice your tone, volume and rate of speech.
- ✓ Challenge, threaten or dare the individual. Never belittle or make the other person feel foolish.
- ✓ Criticize or act impatiently toward the agitated individual.
- ✓ Try to make the situation seem less serious than it is.
- ✓ Make false statements or promises you cannot keep.
- ✓ Try to impart a lot of technical or complicated information when emotions are high.
- ✓ Take sides or agree with distortions
- ✓ Invade the individual's personal space. Keep 3-6 feet between you.