

Client Alert | June 26, 2025

New York Retail Worker Safety Act is Now in Effect

As we previously detailed [here](#), the New York State Retail Worker Safety Act, which was passed in 2024, provides that employers ensure that certain safety measures are implemented for retail workplaces. After some delays in implementation, the amended version of this law is now in effect as of June 2, 2025.

Under this new law, employers with 10 or more retail employees in New York State must implement a workplace violence prevention plan and training, as described in more detail below. Additionally, effective January 1, 2027, retail employers with 500 or more employees in New York State must provide employees with a silent response button (also known as a “panic button”) to request immediate assistance in the event of an emergency, as well as training on its use.

Implementing a Written Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

Covered employers must establish a written retail workplace violence prevention policy. The New York State Department of Labor (NYDOL) has promulgated a model policy, which employers may customize and adopt for themselves. This model policy is available [here](#).

Employers who adopt the model policy, however, should be careful to remove placeholder references for “Employer Name” prior to distributing to employees.

Employers are not required to use the NYDOL model policy, and may choose instead to establish their own workplace violence prevention policies, provided that such policies encompass the topics listed below. The option to create an employer-specific policy, rather than simply adopt the NYDOL model policy, might work best for employers who seek to implement a single retail workplace violence prevention policy across retail locations in multiple states, given that California has similar requirements for workplace violence prevention policies. Employers may prefer to have one uniform policy that includes both the New York and California requirements, or, maintain separate policies for retail locations in different states.

A workplace violence prevention policy applicable to New York retail employees should include, at minimum, the following:

- A list of factors or situations that might place retail employees at risk of workplace violence, including, but not limited to: working late at night or early in the morning; exchanging money with the public; working alone or in small numbers; and uncontrolled access to the workplace. Luxury retailers may also wish to include as a potential risk factor the high-value and/or exclusivity of the items for sale in the retail workplace.
- Methods employers may use to prevent incidents of workplace violence, including any incident reporting systems.
- Information concerning relevant state and federal statutory provisions concerning violence against retail workers, including a statement that local laws may also apply.

- A statement that retaliation against individuals who complain about workplace violence or the presence of risk factors is unlawful.

Covered employers must provide the workplace violence prevention policy to all employees in writing upon hire, and annually thereafter.

Training Requirements

All employers with 10 or more retail employees in New York must also provide interactive violence prevention training to all employees at the time of hire. Employers with 50 or more retail employees must provide this training to all retail employees annually. Smaller employers (those with 49 or fewer retail employees) must provide this training at least every two years. Employers must also provide a written version of the interactive training to their employees. Such training must take place during paid work time.

Retail worker violence prevention training must include information and instruction on:

- The requirements of the New York Retail Worker Safety Act
- Measures retail employees can use to protect themselves when faced with workplace violence from customers or coworkers
- De-escalation tactics
- Active shooter drills
- Emergency procedures
- Instructions on the use of security alarms and related emergency devices
- A site-specific list of emergency exits and meeting places in case of an emergency
- Responsibilities of supervisors and managers before, during, and after an emergency

NYDOL has prepared a model training that can be used to meet several of the requirements of this law. The model training is available [here](#).

Although the model training is generally applicable to retail workplaces, it does not provide the requisite site-specific instruction. Employers who use the model training should prepare supplemental materials for their retail employees containing site-specific information, such as a floor map of emergency exits, the meeting location where staff should gather in the event of an emergency, and instructions on the use of emergency devices (such as fire alarms) that may be present in the workplace. Site-specific training may also vary from store to store within the same company. For example, a store located in a large mall or shopping center might have different site-specific emergency procedures than a standalone store on Madison Avenue. Employers should take care to provide customized emergency instructions for employees at each retail location.

Sample written training materials, which can be customized to include site-specific information, are available from NYDOL [here](#).

Key Contacts

Our [Labor & Employment](#) team is available to assist employers in attaining compliance with all New York workplace safety laws, including trainings, as well as other employment related matters.

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