

NY Retail Worker Safety Act Policy

Policy · US · Updated 2026-08-09 · Square brackets are placeholders to replace with your own details.

A NY Retail Worker Safety Act policy is the written retail workplace violence prevention policy that New York Labor Law Section 27-e requires covered retail employers to adopt: it names the risk factors that put retail workers in danger, the methods the employer uses to prevent violence, how employees report incidents and violations, the federal, state, and local legal protections available to victims, and a statement that retaliation against anyone who raises a concern is against the law.

New York wrote the required contents into the statute and published a model policy, so the failure mode is rarely the document itself — it is everything around it: the site-specific detail the model leaves blank (your exits, your meeting places, your devices), distribution in writing at hire and every year after, and the training cycle that quietly lapses after year one. This template is built so those moving parts have owners.

It gives you the complete policy — the definition and risk factors, prevention methods, reporting routes including the NY DOL complaint path, the no-retaliation statement, the training section, and the silent-response-button section for larger employers — with placeholders for the store-specific detail the law expects you to fill in.

Purpose and scope

This is [Your company]'s retail workplace violence prevention policy, adopted under Article 2, Section 27-e of the New York Labor Law (the Retail Worker Safety Act). It applies to all retail employees at [store name(s)/locations] — full-time, part-time, and seasonal — and to contractors and agency staff who regularly work on-site at our stores.

Its job is practical: name the situations that put our people at risk, set out what we do to prevent violence, and make sure everyone knows how to report a problem and what protections the law gives them.

Policy statement

[Your company] does not tolerate violence against retail employees in any form. We evaluate our stores for the situations that create risk, put controls in place, and act on every report. No sale, no merchandise, and no difficult customer is worth an injury: employees should put their own safety first, disengage, and get help rather than intervene physically.

Signed: [name], [title], [date].

What counts as workplace violence

Under the Act, workplace violence is any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring in the workplace, including:

- A verbal or physical threat against a retail employee, or an attempt to inflict physical injury.
- An intentional display of force that gives a retail employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm.
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Intentional, wrongful, and nonconsensual physical contact — with or without injury, and with or without a weapon.

- Stalking a retail employee, where it has arisen through their employment, with the purpose of causing fear for their physical safety.
- The workplace is anywhere a retail employee performs work duties — the sales floor, stockroom, parking lot, and [other work locations].

Risk factors at our stores

The Act requires this policy to name the factors that can put retail employees at risk of violence. At [Your company], they include:

- Working late night or early morning hours — [state which shifts and stores this applies to].
- Exchanging money with the public — registers, returns, and [other cash points].
- Working alone or in small numbers — [state when: opening, closing, quiet trading hours].
- Uncontrolled access to the workplace — customer entrances, delivery doors, and [other access points].
- [Add factors from your own store walk-through: cash held on site, history of incidents, isolated parking, high-theft product lines.]

How we prevent violence

- Reporting: a working route for employees to report incidents and concerns (below) — the Act treats a reporting system as a core prevention method, and so do we.
- Cash controls: register limits of [amount], regular safe drops, and signage stating that minimal cash is kept on site.
- Staffing: minimum staffing of [number] during [high-risk hours], and lone-work rules at opening and closing per our opening and closing procedure.
- Premises: clear sight lines to registers and entrances, exterior and parking-lot lighting checked [frequency], and delivery doors kept locked when not in use.
- Security devices: [alarms / cameras / silent response devices] at [locations], with instructions on their use given in training and posted at [location].
- De-escalation first: staff are trained to stay calm, disengage, and summon help — and in a robbery, to comply, hand over what is demanded, and get to safety.
- After any incident or near miss: [name/role] reviews what happened and what enabled it, and updates the risk factors and controls above.

Reporting violence and concerns

In an emergency, or if anyone is in immediate danger, call 911 first. Then report the incident to [manager on duty / name/role] the same shift, so we can act and record it.

For concerns short of an emergency — a threatening customer pattern, a broken lock, a schedule that regularly leaves someone alone — tell [name/role] via [method]. Concerns can be raised anonymously via [method]. Every report gets a response: what we changed, or why not.

The Act also gives employees a route to the state. If you believe there is a serious violation of this program, tell a supervisor in writing and give [Your company] a reasonable opportunity to fix it; if it is not resolved, you can file a complaint with NY DOL's SHER program. Written notice first is not required where you believe there is imminent danger of workplace violence and, in good faith, that telling a supervisor would not lead to corrective action — follow emergency procedures, then contact SHER directly.

No retaliation

Retaliation against any employee for reporting workplace violence, raising a concern about a situation that could give rise to it, filing a complaint, or assisting or testifying in any related proceeding is against the law and against this policy. That includes cut shifts, changed schedules, discipline, and any other adverse treatment. Report suspected retaliation to [name/role]; it is investigated with the same seriousness as the underlying incident.

Your rights under federal, state, and local law

Federal and New York law both address violence against retail workers. Under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act, employees are entitled to a workplace free from recognized serious hazards; under New York law, violence against retail workers can be a crime, and victims of workplace violence have remedies that can include compensation and protective orders — [victim services contact / how to get help]. There may also be applicable local laws in [city/county].

NY DOL's Retail Worker Safety pages carry the current legal framework and the state's model documents — this policy points there rather than restating detail that changes.

Training

Every retail employee receives workplace violence prevention training at hire, with refreshers on the cycle the Act sets by employer size — NY DOL currently describes this as annual for employers with 50 or more retail employees and every two years for smaller employers; verify current requirements at NY DOL. We use [the NY DOL model training / our own program that equals or exceeds it], covering:

- What the Act and this policy require.
- Ways employees can protect themselves.
- De-escalation tactics.
- Active shooter situations and drills.
- Emergency procedures, and the emergency exits and meeting places for [each store] — the site-specific detail NY DOL expects employers to add to any model training.
- How to use our security alarms, [silent response devices], and other emergency devices.
- Supervisor responsibilities in an emergency.
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Training is delivered in English and in an employee's primary language where NY DOL publishes a translation, and completion is recorded at [system/location].

Silent response buttons

[Include and complete this section if [Your company] is over the statutory size threshold — 500 or more retail employees, which NY DOL currently describes as counted within New York State, with the requirement taking effect on January 1, 2027. Verify current requirements at NY DOL.]

From [date the requirement applies to us], [Your company] provides silent response buttons so that any retail employee can summon immediate assistance from a security officer, manager, or supervisor. Ours take the form of [buttons installed at registers/stockroom/office / wearable devices / a mobile app on company-provided devices].

- Devices are located at [locations] / issued to [roles]; how to trigger them is covered in training and shown at [location].
- Mobile and wearable devices are provided by [Your company] on employer-provided equipment only, and are not used to track an employee's location except when the alarm has been triggered.
- Devices are tested [frequency] by [name/role]; faults are reported to [name/role] and fixed before the next [high-risk shift, e.g. late opening].

Distribution, records, and review

This policy is given to every retail employee in writing at hire and annually after that, in English and in the employee's primary language where NY DOL publishes a translation of its model. Acknowledgments, training records, incident and concern reports, and the store risk evaluation are kept at [system/location] for [period].

[Name/role] reviews this policy [frequency, e.g. annually], after any incident of workplace violence, and whenever NY DOL updates its model documents or the law changes. Owner: [name/role]. Next review due: [date].

How to use this template

1. Count your retail employees and check the current thresholds at NY DOL — coverage starts at 10 retail employees, and the Act's thresholds and dates have already been amended once.
2. Read NY DOL's model policy alongside this template: your policy must equal or exceed the model, so keep every required element when you edit.
3. Walk each store and fill in the site-specific placeholders — risk factors, exits, meeting places, and where the security devices actually are.
4. Set up distribution so every new hire gets the policy in writing on day one, in their primary language where NY DOL publishes a translation, and diarize the annual re-issue.
5. Schedule training on the cycle for your headcount and record every completion at [system/location].
6. If you are anywhere near 500 retail employees, plan the silent response button rollout well before the January 1, 2027 deadline — hardware, wearables, or an app all need procurement and training time.

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Official guidance

- › [NY DOL — Retail Worker Safety Act](#)
- › [NY DOL — Model retail workplace violence prevention policy](#)
- › [NY DOL — Retail workplace violence prevention training](#)

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