

Workplace Violence Prevention



A Review of Automated Safety

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Is Technology Enough? The Answer is a Resounding “NO”

We are fortunate to be living in the “Digital Revolution,” which began in 1975 and continues today. We are experiencing some of the greatest technological advancements known to humankind. Today, we are surrounded by artificial intelligence, 5G technology, high-speed internet, smartphones, and quantum computing. While these technologies have arguably made life easier and more efficient, they are also being overly relied upon in certain instances.

For example, in 2015, Tesla introduced the first autonomous vehicle on its Model S. By 2019, Tesla included standard autopilot features in all its vehicles. While this technology is impressive in theory, it comes with significant caveats. Since the introduction of autonomous vehicles, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) database reports 3,979 incidents involving these vehicles, 496 of which resulted in injuries or fatalities. These incidents include crashes into stopped emergency vehicles, phantom braking, wrong-way driving, and failures to detect pedestrians and cyclists. It's important to note that Tesla is not the only manufacturer facing issues with autonomous vehicle technology. Major carmakers such as General Motors, Ford, Waymo (Google), Honda, Subaru, Toyota, and many others have all experienced incidents involving autonomous vehicles.

The point is: while technology is excellent when it works, it is unwise to rely solely on it to keep us safe.

A more sobering example occurred during the Antioch High School shooting in Nashville, TN, in January 2025. The school had installed an AI-powered gun detection system integrated into its existing security cameras, designed to automatically detect and identify weapons and alert authorities. Unfortunately, the system failed. A 17-year-old student brought a gun into the school, opened fire in the cafeteria, killed one student, injured another, and then took his own life. Afterward, the company responsible for the system stated it had not malfunctioned—the shooter had simply concealed the weapon in a way that made detection impossible. Again, in theory, this technology should have worked.

However, the Antioch incident highlights the limitations of technology and the urgent need for **multi-layered** security measures to truly mitigate the risks of gun violence. I'm not suggesting that technologies like gun detection systems are bad or should be avoided. Rather, I'm emphasizing that technology is only **one layer** of a comprehensive security strategy. In today's increasingly violent world, believing that technology alone can provide a security blanket is a mistake. The human element in safety, security, and self-preservation remains crucial. Technology and human intervention must work **in tandem** to strengthen an organization's safety plan. Just as autonomous vehicles require a manual override option, workplaces must also be prepared to act when technology fails—especially in crisis scenarios like an active shooter situation.

So, what additional layers should a security plan include beyond technology? The answer is straightforward and can be implemented within any organization. Layers such as pre- and post-employment background checks, drug and alcohol testing, and safety education and training create **concentric circles** of protection for your workforce, vendors, clients, and the public. While pre-employment checks offer a “point-in-time” safeguard, only ongoing post-hire monitoring combined with proactive training—especially in situational awareness and critical incident response—can close risk gaps and foster a strong safety culture.

Of all the layers mentioned, **training and education** are the most critical. Studies show that only 37% of employees feel safe at work. In 2025, it's fair to assume that most workplaces have implemented some level of security technology, such as cameras, access control systems, or alarms. However, these systems alone are insufficient. The human element must be trained—and that level of preparedness only comes from consistent and relevant education, not from technology alone.

The goal of training is to create a **conditioned response**. Under extreme stress, the body enters “fight, flight, or freeze” mode. As stress levels rise, we experience physiological effects such as increased heart rate, tunnel vision, loss of fine motor skills, and impaired critical thinking. Ongoing training helps override these effects. There's a reason first responders and military personnel constantly train under high-stress conditions: people

Furthermore, data from OSHA and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) shows that in 2024, approximately **two million** U.S. workers were victims of workplace violence, with **458** workplace homicides reported. Workplace violence costs businesses over **\$130 billion** annually due to lost productivity, medical expenses, and legal fees. The healthcare and social services industries are experiencing the highest rates of violence. This data, while alarming, offers a critical lesson.

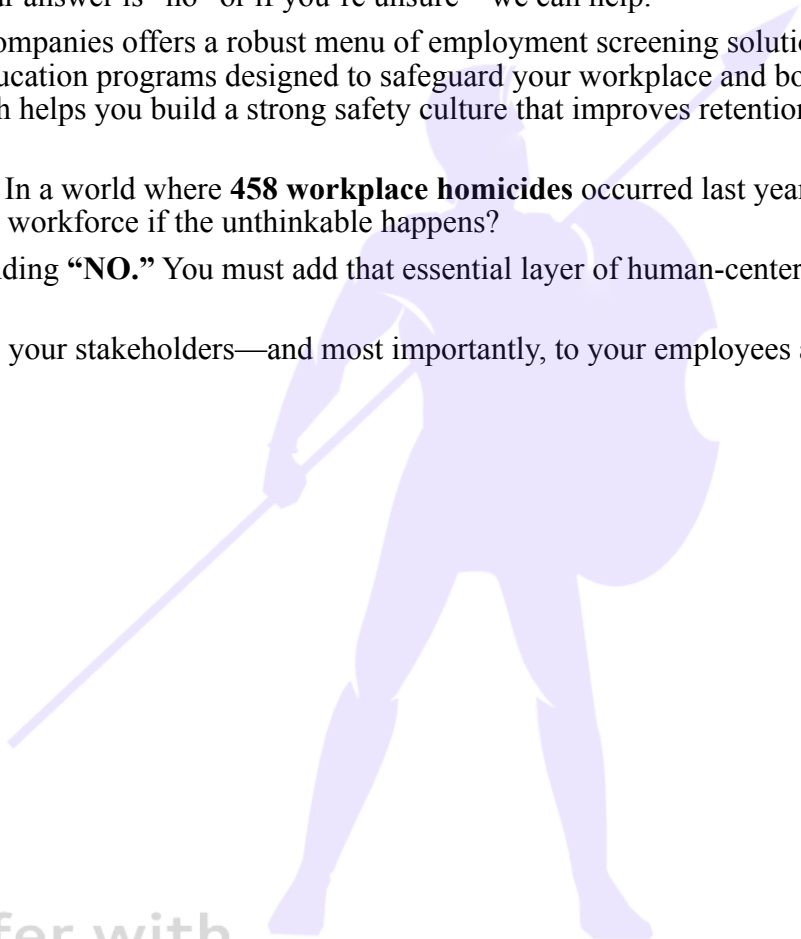
Ask yourself: Does your organization's security plan offer a comprehensive, multi-layered solution to keep employees safe? If your answer is "no" or if you're unsure—we can help.

The Noble Group of companies offers a robust menu of employment screening solutions and both online and in-person training and education programs designed to safeguard your workplace and boost employee confidence. Our proactive approach helps you build a strong safety culture that improves retention, engagement, and productivity.

To close, ask yourself: In a world where **458 workplace homicides** occurred last year, is technology alone enough to protect your workforce if the unthinkable happens?

The answer is a resounding **"NO."** You must add that essential layer of human-centered protection within your organization.

After all, you owe it to your stakeholders—and most importantly, to your employees and their families.



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