



Dealing with Hostile Individuals

Anyone can become aggressive. The following are traits/factors that indicate a greater potential for violence:

- History of prior violence
- Feelings of fear, humiliation, boredom, grief and a sense of powerlessness
- Physical factors, such as: lack of sleep, physical exhaustion, use of drugs or alcohol, brain trauma, heat, hunger, cold, physical disability or chronic pain
- Situational factors such as: access to weapons, feeling a sense of injustice or oppression

UnitedHeartland.com
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Potential Aggression

The following are signs of potential aggression that need to be heeded with caution:

- Body language, such as pacing, fidgeting, clenched fist or jaws, “wild” look in eyes
- Speaking in loud voice or verbally abusive
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Dealing With Hostile/Angry Individuals

- Individuals can react with anger because of difficulty in finding help with their situations, emotional pain or discomfort, or fear and anxiety.
- React and respond to the individual in a calm but firm manner.
- Lower the volume of your voice and speak in an even tone to help the individual calm down.
- Move slowly and give yourself an out.
- To help the individual define their anger, verbally acknowledge it. For example:
“I understand that you are upset” or “It sounds like you’re really angry about this.”
- Reinforce the positive long-term benefits of your assistance, your commitment to their best interests and your role as their ally.
- Encourage the individual to sit down.
- Rehearse ahead of time what you’d say or do in these situations.
- If situation appears dangerous, leave and call your supervisor or 911.

United Heartland works with our health care and long-term care customers to reduce workers’ compensation injuries resulting from physical altercations with individuals served by these organizations. Contact your Loss Control representative for more information and resources at 800-258-2667.

