

NEW YORK RETAILERS MUST ACT NOW TO COMPLY WITH NEW SAFETY ACT: MODEL POLICY AND TRAINING MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE USE

Insights
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Now that the June 2 effective date for New York's landmark retail safety law is here, the state Department of Labor has released model policy and training materials to help you with your compliance efforts. New York retailers must promptly adopt these models or develop their own policies and training materials that meet or exceed the law's minimum requirements. Here's what you need to know about the New York Retail Worker Safety Act (RWSA) and the steps you should take to comply.

Available Here!

You can find the model policy and training materials from the York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) on its [website](#).

What is the RWSA?

The RWSA addresses the growing issue of workplace violence in retail stores.

- It mandates that all employers with at least 10 employees at a New York retail location develop a workplace violence prevention **policy** and conduct **training** for employees. These requirements take effect today, June 2.
- Additionally, by January 1, 2027, larger retailers – those with 500 or more retail employees statewide – must provide employees with silent response buttons to request assistance from security officers, managers, or supervisors.

Related People



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- You can read more about the law [in our detailed Insight here](#).

What Does the Policy Requirement Entail?

Retail employers must implement a retail violence prevention policy, either by adopting the NYSDOL's [model policy](#) or creating their own that meets the law's minimum requirements. The policy must include:

- A list of factors that might place retail workers at risk of workplace violence, such as working late or early hours; handling cash; working alone or in small numbers; or uncontrolled access to the workplace.
- Methods the retailer will use to prevent incidents of workplace violence including implementing workplace violence reporting systems.
- Information on federal and state laws concerning violence against retail workers and remedies available to victims, along with a statement that local laws may also apply.
- A statement that retaliation against individuals who report either workplace violence or risk of violence, or who testify in related proceedings is unlawful.

Retailers must provide this policy to employees at the time of hire and annually thereafter. Employers must provide the policy in English and in the primary language identified by each employee at the time of hire, provided it is one of the languages for which the NYSDOL has provided a translation.

What Are the Training Requirements?

Retailers must also conduct workplace violence prevention training upon hire and annually thereafter, or biennially for employers with fewer than 50 retail employees in New York. The training must occur during paid working time. The NYSDOL has prepared [model training materials](#) and will soon release a free training video. Employers can use the model training with necessary site-specific information added or develop their own training. The training must include:

- Information regarding the RWSA requirements
- Examples of measures employees can use to protect themselves from workplace violence

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- De-escalation tactics
- Active shooter drills
- Emergency procedures
- Instruction on using security alarms or buttons, and other emergency devices
- Site-specific emergency exits and meeting places
- Supervisory responsibilities before, during, and after emergencies

Employers using the model training materials must customize them with site-specific or company-specific information, including emergency exits and meeting points, instruction on emergency devices, any additional emergency procedures, and any history of security issues at the location. At the time of training, employers must provide their employees with a written version of the training.

Next Steps

With the RWSA's June 2 effective date here and state-approved models now available, retail employers need to act swiftly to create their workplace violence prevention plans and conduct training. Larger retailers should also prepare for the January 1, 2027, requirement for silent response buttons.

Conclusion

For detailed guidance and compliance assistance, reach out to your Fisher Phillips attorney, the authors of this Insight, any attorney in [our New York City office](#), or any attorney on our [Retail Industry Team](#). We will continue to provide the most up-to-date information on labor and employment developments in New York, so make sure you are subscribed to [Fisher Phillips' Insight System](#).