

*The Worksite Security Act became law in New York State in June 2006 after CSEA led the way in urging the passing of this critical law.*

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Thanks to CSEA, New York State leads the nation in protecting its public employees from potential workplace violence.

The Worksite Security Act was signed into law in June 2006 after CSEA led a statewide grassroots campaign in support of the legislation. The law had widespread, bipartisan support from state lawmakers.

The law requires public employers with more than 20 employees to assess potential workplace violence risks and take appropriate measures to reduce them. The law establishes a complaint procedure for workers to call attention to the potential for violence. The legislation also protects members of the public who use public work sites, reduce injuries, save taxpayers money, and improve morale and productivity in the public work force.

"CSEA believes this legislation is a common-sense approach to a challenging situation," CSEA President Danny Donohue said. "Assessing and reducing risks in public work sites will not only benefit the people who work in those locations, but will benefit all the people of New York."

### **Spurred by tragedy**

The union has led the fight for safer work sites since 1992, when four CSEA members employed at the Schuylar County Department of Social Services in Watkins Glen were murdered at their workplace by a disgruntled client.

After the murders, CSEA worked with many localities across the state to assess risks in public buildings and work sites and develop appropriate, cost-effective measures to protect workers and the public. During this time, it became clear to CSEA that New York needed baseline statewide standards for safer work sites.

National statistics also strongly support the need for a work site security law. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health reports the following:

- Violence is a substantial contributor to death and injury on the job. NIOSH data indicates that homicide has become the second leading cause of occupational injury death, exceeded only by motor vehicle-related deaths.
- Homicide is the third leading cause of death on the job for men and the leading cause of death for women in the workplace.
- Government workers make up 18 percent of the U.S. work force, but 31 percent of the victims of workplace violence.

The Worksite Security Act will go a long way toward addressing any potential risks of workplace violence, and many CSEA activists have been working to ensure their work sites are prepared to address any risks as outlined by the law.

"CSEA is proud of everyone who got involved in this effort," Donohue said. "It will make a difference in people's lives."