VNA health & wellness is highlighting workplace violence in the month of January. Incidents of violence can occur anywhere at any time.  Here are some tips to help reduce potential vulnerability.

**Outside tips:**

* Park as close to a destination as possible, and in well-lighted areas whenever feasible.
* Always be observant and aware of your surroundings.
* Don’t wear air pods or headphones while walking outside. It will block your ability to hear someone approach you. If you must use them, only use one air pod.
* Look around as you walk. Talking on a cellphone or looking at it while walking can be a distraction. Make it difficult for anyone to take you by surprise.
* Try to limit the number of items you carry, so you can defend yourself if necessary. Try to always keep your hands free.
* If you carry a handbag, carry it close to your body with fastener closed and turned toward your body
* Always have your keys ready to unlock the car door and enter without delay. You will appear vulnerable if you are looking for your keys as you approach your car. Take a quick look inside the car before getting in. Once inside your car, lock the doors immediately – even before turning the ignition on.
* Keep cellphones charged up to call for help if necessary.

**Inside tips:**

* Always be aware of the exits in a location or home you have entered.
* Be familiar with who is coming and going - who belongs and who doesn't
* If you feel like there is immediate danger, act quickly to remove yourself from the dangerous situation. Leave the home and call your supervisor or police as soon as you are in a safe place and you are no longer in danger.
* If at any time an employee in a client/patient home feels in danger, the following protocol should be followed:

**RED FILE CALL** Employees will be notified to call the Main Reception in Kennett at 1-800-286-5892. You will hear the welcome message. Immediately dial 1101. The employee should immediately tell the main receptionist their full name and that they have a **Red File** patient/client. ***Example: This is Jane Doe; I am currently at John Smith’s home in Kennett, MO. I have a Red File patient/client I need information on.*** This will alert the receptionist to ask the following four questions:

1. What is the patient/client’s name?
2. Should I call 911?
3. Do you need a VNA employee?
4. Do you just want someone to know where you are?

The receptionist will then tell the employee that she will notify their supervisor and the authorities if we have not heard back from them in 10 minutes. If you requested number 4, you should call back within 10 minutes to let the receptionist know the status of your original call. If the receptionist does not hear from you, the police and someone from the most local VNA office will be alerted.

**Always trust your instincts. when you feel something is wrong.**