



# Keep Things Cool When Tensions Flare

There are times when we may have to interact with members, patients or co-workers who are angry or upset. Learn to defuse conflicts – and the potential for workplace violence — by staying cool, calm and respectful. And remember to report all incidents to help maintain safety at work.



## TEAM ACTIVITY

If you find yourself in an uncomfortably tense workplace situation, remember to:

- » Use a calm voice and maintain eye contact
- » Empathize: *“I understand you are frustrated.”*
- » Leave a door open. Maintain a safe distance: *“Can we sit down and talk this over?”*
- » Be respectful. Ask instead of tell: *“Please, can you tell me what’s wrong?”*
- » Give options, not threats: *“Can we take a quick break while I get some information for you?”*

## This month, ask your team:

- [ ✓ ] What situations or conflicts in your workplace could lead to heated disagreements and, potentially, violence?
- [ ✓ ] What changes can be made to reduce the risks of heated conflicts or violence?
- [ ✓ ] What are the steps for getting help in resolving tense situations in your department?



Jot down their answers, then share your findings with your unit-based team co-leads. Follow up by working with your team on strategies to reduce the potential for workplace conflicts that could result in violence.

**STAY SAFE:** If you feel unsafe or witness a conflict that is escalating, leave the area and contact your manager or security. Follow the rules for your department or facility. For all emergencies, call 911. For more information, take the Prevention of Workplace Violence training on [KP Learn](#).