

ED Violence

Dangerous, Rising and Unacceptable

April 2024

ED Violence: Dangerous, Rising and Unacceptable

A January 2024 poll of ACEP members received 1,980 responses and reinforces that violence in the nation's emergency departments is dangerous and on the rise. As part of that effort, ACEP gathered more than 800 [stories directly from the frontlines](#). The consensus is clear: More must be done to make sure that emergency physicians can do their jobs and focus on saving lives, without fearing for their safety.

Key findings:

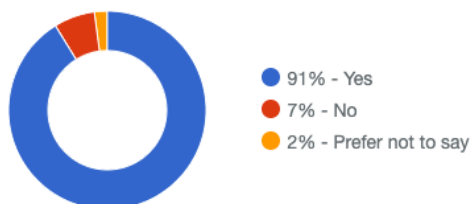
- More than nine in ten (91%) of emergency physicians indicated that they have been threatened or attacked in the past year.
- Nearly three-quarters (71%) of emergency physicians believe that violence in the emergency department is worse than last year.
- Nearly half (48%) said that legislation to strengthen workforce protections would make them feel safer on the job.

Have you or a colleague been threatened or attacked in 2023?

91% - Yes

7% - No

2% - Prefer not to say

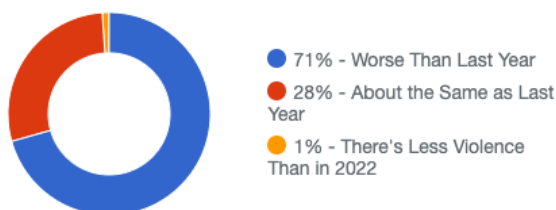


How would you characterize the prevalence of ED violence in 2023?

71% - Worse Than Last Year

28% - About the Same as Last Year

1% - There's Less Violence Than in 2022



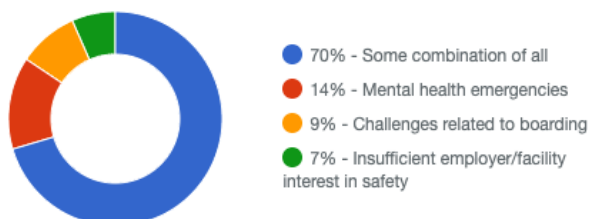
Why would you say it's worse?

14% - Mental health emergencies

9% - Challenges related to boarding

7% - Insufficient employer/facility interest in safety

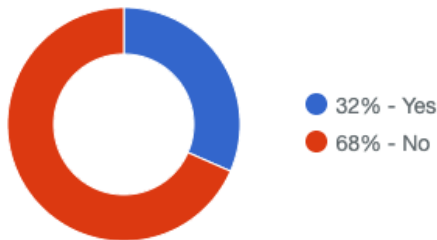
70% - Some combination of all



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Do you feel your employer's response was appropriate?

68% - No
32% - Yes



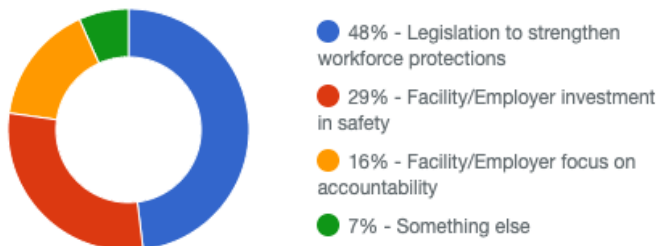
Describe their response:

(anecdotes available)

- 50% - Nothing was done
- 23% - Behavior flag in patient chart
- 13% - Patient arrested
- 10% - Other
- 4% - Hospital pressed charges

What would make you feel safer on the job?

- 48% - Legislation to strengthen workforce protections
- 29% - Facility/Employer investment in safety
- 16% - Facility/Employer focus on accountability
- 7% - Something else



The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) is the national medical society representing emergency medicine. Through continuing education, research, public education, and advocacy, ACEP advances emergency care on behalf of its 40,000 emergency physician members, and the more than 150 million people they treat on an annual basis.

For more information, visit www.acep.org and www.emergencyphysicians.org.