

SAMPLE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY

Department:	Human Resources – Health and Safety	Policy Number: HRWPV14
Subject:	Workplace Violence	Supersedes: HRWPV13
Approved by:	Michelle Merrell – Compliance Officer	Date Issued: 01/01/2014

I. MINIMIZING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

(Name of organization) seeks to provide a work environment that minimizes workplace violence or other security risks. Violence in the workplace poses a threat to the safety of employees and the public and affects productivity. All employees are responsible for minimizing workplace violence. This policy establishes procedures that minimize the threat of violence in the workplace, without restricting appropriate public access to _____ employees and facilities, and provides guidelines for responding promptly and effectively to workplace violence.

II. WHAT IS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- A. **Workplace Violence** – Workplace violence is any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting, whether committed by a _____ employee or by anyone else and which occurs in a _____ workplace, at a _____ site location or while an employee is engaged in _____ business.
- B. **Examples** - Verbal threats to inflict bodily harm; including vague or covert threats Attempting to cause physical harm; striking, pushing and other aggressive physical acts against another person; Verbal harassment; abusive or offensive language, gestures or other discourteous conduct towards supervisors, fellow employees, or the public, Disorderly conduct, such as shouting, throwing or pushing objects, punching walls, and slamming doors.
- C. **Workplace** – All _____ property and any other locations where _____ employees are performing their work.

III. ADOPTING DEPARTMENTAL PLANS TO MINIMIZE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- A. **Facility Risk Assessment** – The department director/office administrator or designee must conduct and maintain an assessment of the risk of workplace violence or other security risks that exist as a result of the nature of the work and physical environment of the department. The **Workplace Violence Resource Team** or designee shall conduct the risk assessment for all _____ property that is not in the control of a specific department. The Workplace Violence Resource Team shall develop guidelines for facility risk assessments and shall consult with departments if requested to do so (see ATTACHMENT A).

At the conclusion of the facility risk assessment, the department shall complete a written report and submit it to the Workplace Violence Resource Team for review. The facility risk assessment report may include recommendations to alter the physical environment and make it more secure from the risk of violent acts, while at the same time maintaining an appropriate level of public access to the department’s employees and facilities. All recommendations will be considered and acted upon if found to be necessary, beneficial, and not posing an undue hardship on _____.

The facility risk assessment must be approved by the Workplace Violence Resource Team. The Workplace Violence Resource Team may review and revise the report or return it to the department for further review.

Copies of the risk assessment report shall be kept by the department and by the Workplace Violence Resource Team. It is the department's responsibility to review the risk assessment report annually and at any time the department's physical environment changes, the nature of the work performed by the department changes, and at such other times as determined by the Risk Manager or Workplace Violence Resource Team.

Department Security Procedures – The Workplace Violence Resource Team shall provide each department with basic departmental procedures for minimizing and effectively responding to workplace violence. A department may modify the basic procedures to meet its unique circumstances. These written procedures shall provide for prompt reporting of workplace violence to the Police Department and to all employees and other persons who could be physically affected by workplace violence. These procedures will provide guidelines to supervisors on how to respond to employees whose work performance or safety is affected by workplace violence. These procedures shall also provide for on-going measures to minimize and respond to workplace violence that occurs away from _____ property for those departments that have employees who regularly perform duties away from _____ property. The Workplace Violence Coordinator or designee will assist departments in developing departmental procedures (see ATTACHMENT B). A department's procedures must be approved by the Workplace Violence Resource Team. Copies of a department's procedures shall be kept in the department and in HR and shall be distributed to departmental employees.

IV. RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- A. **Employees' Responsibilities when Workplace Violence Occurs** – Employees shall respond promptly to workplace violence in accordance with their department's procedures.
- B. **Supervisors' Responsibilities when Workplace Violence is Reported** – Supervisors shall respond promptly to workplace violence in accordance with their department's procedures and shall orally report workplace violence to the Director/Office Administrator and to the Workplace Violence Coordinator as soon as possible.
- C. **Reporting Workplace Violence** – All employees shall promptly report workplace violence to the Police Department and then to their supervisors. In emergency situations, employees may report workplace violence to supervisory or managerial level employees other than their own supervisors. Employees shall promptly report to their supervisors situations that they believe could lead to workplace violence, including but not limited to protective orders or other "no-contact" orders.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT AND THE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE RESOURCE TEAM

A. Management

Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that behaviors and actions that are likely to result in workplace violence are dealt with promptly, firmly and fairly. Disciplinary actions for violations will be consistent with (**Name of organization**) policies and procedures.

(Name of organization) will not tolerate acts and behaviors that are likely to result in workplace violence and which may include but are not limited to abusive language, hitting or shoving, threats of bodily harm, threats or violence arising out of sexual or racial harassment, brandishing of an object which may be used as a weapon, insubordination, the sending of threatening, harassing or abusive e-mail and faxes, using the workplace to violate protective orders, and stalking.

Employees are prohibited from possessing firearms or other weapons on **(Name of organization)** property (except sworn personnel).

1. **The Workplace Violence Resource Team**
2. **Appointment and Purpose** – The Workplace Violence Resource Team (Resource Team) shall be appointed by the **(appropriate administrator or manager)** to consult with and assist the **Workplace Violence Coordinator** in assisting departments in preparing for, responding to and minimizing workplace violence. The **Director of Human Resources** shall serve as the **Workplace Violence Coordinator**.
3. **Membership** – The Resource Team shall be chaired by the **Workplace Violence Coordinator**. Membership on the team will include the **Domestic Violence Coordinator, Security Manager** and membership from each of the following departments: **police, legal, HR and _____**.

VI. TRAINING

- A. A significant element in minimizing workplace violence is a workforce trained in the identification of situations that are likely to result in workplace violence and in the handling and reporting of such situations. HR, in consultation with the Resource Team, shall develop and provide training programs to inform employees of methods and procedures to identify, minimize and respond to such situations, whether perpetrated by a co-worker or by a third party.
- B. HR, in consultation with the Workplace Violence Resource Team, shall develop and provide training to departments in conducting departmental facility risk assessments and developing departmental procedures (See ATTACHMENT C).

ATTACHMENT A

SAMPLE FACILITY RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

I. PERFORM BUSINESS ASSESSMENT

A. Identify Potential Risks and Vulnerabilities

1. What type of business does the department handle?
2. Amount of public contact?
3. Average number of employee terminations?
4. Stress level employees are likely to reach daily / weekly?
5. Does the department handle cash transactions?
6. Consider the location of the building/department? Is it in a remote location or is it around other departments? Do employees work in the field?

II. ASSESS PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

A. Outside of Facility

1. Lighting
2. Shrubs
3. Hiding places
4. Obstructions (i.e. dumpsters) etc.

B. Access Control

1. Door and window locks
2. Number of public entrances
3. After hours lock down plan
4. Key control

C. Inside of Facility

1. Visitor and employee identification methods (I.D. badges, sign in procedures etc.)
2. Public areas and personal work spaces
3. Electronic security options (closed circuit TV, Card access, electromagnetic combination locks, door alarms and panic buttons)

III. IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Balance customer service (citizen access) with employee safety

IV. IMPLEMENT FACILITY SECURITY IMPROVEMENT

ATTACHMENT B

SAMPLE DEPARTMENT SECURITY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES TOPICS TO ADDRESS IN DEPARTMENT SECURITY PROCEDURE

I. STAFF RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES

- A. Evaluate facility risk assessment as it applies to department staff and visitors
- B. Assess staff and visitor interactions
- C. Assess field operations

II. SAFETY STRATEGIES

Cash control, secondary door usage, alarms, duress devices (panic buttons), code names, signals, etc.

III. REPORTING ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Department reports, police reports, report to Workplace Violence Coordinator

IV. RESPONDING TO ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Develop a response plan / protocol

ATTACHMENT C

Topics to be covered in Annual Workplace Violence Training

- I. How to conduct and write a Facility Risk Assessment**
- II. How to develop a Department Security Procedure**
- III. What constitutes 'violent' behavior**
- IV. Warning signs of potentially violent individuals**
- V. Bullying and Disruptive Behavior**
- VI. Sexual Harassment Training**
- VII. Ways of minimizing or diffusing potentially violent situations**
- VIII. Role of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**
- IX. Domestic Violence Awareness education**
- X. Recognizing domestic violence in the workplace**