



**Series:** 1200 Human Resources

**Policy Name:** Workplace Violence

**Policy Number:** 1230

**Origination Date:** 11/01/2013

**Revision Date:** July 1, 2018

**Regulation:** N/A

**Policy:** Communities Connected for Kids will review the Workplace Violence Policy and any associated procedures as part of the orientation process for all new employees and periodically throughout the course of employment. Supervisors and Human Resources will respond to questions, concerns and solicit recommendations from employees on the prevention of potential workplace violence. All employees are required to bring concerns regarding workplace violence to the immediate attention of their supervisor and/or Communities Connected for Kids management.

**Procedure:**

## TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

Agency training should include the following information:

- Communities Connected for Kids Workplace Violence Policy and any associated and/or related Procedures (i.e. Emergency Preparedness Training)
- Risk factors that cause or contribute to assaults; harassment, and/or workplace violence
- Early recognition of escalating behavior or recognition of warning signs or situations that may lead to assaults
- Ways to prevent or diffuse volatile situations or aggressive behavior, and manage anger
- A standard response action plan for violent situations, including the availability of assistance, response to alarm systems and communication procedures
- Ways to deal with hostile people other than clients, such as relatives and visitors
- The location and operation of safety devices such as alarm systems, along with the required maintenance schedules and procedures
- Ways to protect oneself and coworkers, including use of the "buddy system"
- Policies and procedures for reporting and recordkeeping



- Information on multicultural diversity to increase staff sensitivity to racial and ethnic issues

Supervisors will periodically review with staff the Communities Connected for Kids *Talk to Us* and the Positive Approach to Sharing Concerns/Suggestions policy and procedures. Supervisors shall meet as needed with staff to give a step-by-step explanation of these policies and procedures and express Communities Connected for Kids commitment to open communications. In addition, reporting procedures should be reviewed no less than annually at established supervisor / employee meetings.

Communities Connected for Kids will provide training on creating a safe work environment, which should include a review of Communities Connected for Kids Non-Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Non-Retribution / Non-Retaliation and Workplace Violence policies.

In addition to providing training, Communities Connected for Kids supervisors shall reinforce Communities Connected for Kids commitment to providing and maintaining a positive and safe workplace that affords all employees an opportunity to actively contribute to helping to achieve Communities Connected for Kids mission. Further, it is critical that supervisors enforce the policies and take corrective action should any form of harassment occur.

Human Resources department personnel and designated managers will review Communities Connected for Kids termination practices to ensure that during the termination process employees are treated with respect and dignity.

### **Identifying Problem Situations / Warning Signs**

It is important for both supervisors and employees to remain alert to problematic behavior that, in combination, could point to possible violence. While no one behavior, in and of itself, suggests a greater potential for violence, all must be looked at in totality. Problematic behaviors that signal an alert include, but are not limited to:

- Noticeable changes in behavior
- Personality conflicts (between coworkers or between an employee and supervisor)
- Erratic behavior
- Withdrawal from friends and co-workers
- Present or previous threats of violence

- Violent activities outside the workplace (people who engage in violent behavior are usually repeat offenders)
- Excessive, unexcused absences, along with distracted and agitated behavior
- A grudge over a real or imagined grievance
- Recent acquisition/fascination with weapons; bringing weapons to the work site
- Drug or alcohol use on the job
- Increasing belligerence
- Ominous, specific threats
- Hypersensitivity to criticism
- Apparent obsession with a supervisor or coworker or employee grievance
- Preoccupation with violent theme
- Excessive interest in recently publicized violent events
- Outbursts of anger
- Extreme disorganization
- Homicidal/suicidal comments or threats
- Breakup of a marriage or romantic relationship
- Family conflicts
- Financial or legal problems

### **Workplace Environmental Risk Factors**

The following factors can contribute to negativity and stress in the workplace, which in turn may precipitate problematic behavior. Such factors include:

- Understaffing that leads to job overload or to an employee performing excessive amounts of overtime
- Frustration arising from poorly defined job tasks and responsibilities
- Downsizing or reorganization
- Poor employee-management relations
- Poor management styles (i.e. arbitrary or unexplained directives; micromanagement; reprimands in front of other employees; inconsistent discipline)
- Failure to address employee issues, concerns, and/or inadequate employee counseling
- Excessive number of grievances

### **THREAT ASSESSMENT**

Many times, a violent act is preceded by a threat. Whether a threat is explicit, veiled, spoken, unspoken, vague or specific - regardless of the nature of the threat, it **must not** be ignored or dismissed. Dealing with threats



and/or threatening behavior – detecting them, evaluating them and finding a way to address them – may be the single most important key to preventing violence.

**The threat assessment has two parts:**

1. The evaluation of the threat itself – *“Is it a credible and viable expression of the intent to do harm?”*
2. The evaluation of the aggressor

The threat assessment is critical in helping to evaluate whether the person who made the threat is likely to carry it out. The assessment helps differentiate whether someone is making a threat vs. posing a threat.

**If a threat is immediate, specific, and critical - Contact law enforcement authorities immediately.**

If the threat is veiled or less specific and does not appear to foreshadow immediate violence, a less urgent approach may be warranted, including referring the employee to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for evaluation. It is important to remember that Communities Connected for Kids designated Emergency Response Team will not conduct the threat assessment, but rather will work collaboratively with outside professionals to assess and manage the situation. To be fully effective, Communities Connected for Kids Emergency Response Team should establish relationships with law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, emergency response personnel and other external resources and professionals before an emergency occurs.

At times, a threat assessment should be completed before disciplinary action is taken. Communities Connected for Kids will take appropriate action based on the specific facts of a situation. Such action may include termination of employment; however, Human Resources department personnel and senior management should be consulted before a termination is executed. Terminating an employee in the heat of the moment without any time for evaluation or preparation may be counterproductive, and may result in removing a potentially dangerous employee from observation and possibly provoking a violent act instead of preventing one.

**COPING WITH THREATENING OR VIOLENT INDIVIDUALS**

Effective handling of threatening or violent individuals requires the use of good judgment, common sense and your own assessment of a particular situation. Nevertheless, you might be able to resolve or cope with many types of threatening or violent situations using the following guidelines:



When confronted with an angry or hostile individual:

- Stay calm
- Listen attentively
- Maintain good eye contact
- Be aware of your own body language
- Be courteous and patient, but try to keep the situation under control by expressing a willingness to sit and calmly discuss the matter with the individual

Approved: Carol DeLoach

Carol DeLoach, CEO

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