

Plumas County Department of Risk Management



1446 East Main St. Quincy CA 95971 Phone: (530) 283 – 6315

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN **Required under SB 553 Labor Code section 6401.9**

Workplace violence is defined as a spectrum of behaviors – including overt acts of violence, threats, and other conduct – that generates a reasonable concern for safety from violence, where a nexus exists between the behavior and the physical safety of employees and others on-site, or off-site when related to the County.

The intent of this policy is to provide Plumas County's position on workplace violence, threats, intimidation and associated factors; and, to provide a systematic approach to the prevention, assessment, investigation and mitigation of these issues.

Plumas County seeks to provide a safe and secure working environment for all Plumas County employees, contractors, visitors and guests, free from any acts or threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation or other threatening and disruptive behavior. The County will investigate and, when applicable, work to remedy all reports of violent acts and factors associated with workplace violence. All employees, contractors, and visitors shall report all observed, known or suspected workplace violence or indicators of violence to their supervisor, risk management, human resources or through the designated reporting platform.

DEFINITIONS

Emergency – Unanticipated circumstances that can be life threatening or pose a risk of significant injuries to employees or other persons.

Engineering controls – An aspect of the built space or a device that removes a hazard from the workplace or creates a barrier between the employee and the hazard.

Log – The violent incident log required by Labor Code section 6401.9.

Plan – The workplace violence prevention plan required by Labor Code section 6401.9.

Serious injury or illness – Any injury or illness occurring in a place of employment or in connection with any employment that requires inpatient hospitalization for other than medical observation or diagnostic testing, or in which an employee suffers an amputation, the loss of an eye, or any serious degree of permanent disfigurement, but does not include any injury or illness or death caused by an accident on a public street or highway, unless the accident occurred in a construction zone.

Threat of violence – Any verbal or written statement, including, but not limited to, texts, electronic messages, social media messages, or other online posts, or any behavioral or physical conduct, that conveys an intent, or that is reasonably perceived to convey an intent, to cause physical harm or to place someone in fear of physical harm, and that serves no legitimate purpose.

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Workplace violence – Any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs in a place of employment.

Workplace violence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The threat or use of physical force against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma, or stress, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.
- An incident involving a threat or use of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, including the use of common objects as weapons, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.
- The following four workplace violence types:

Type 1 violence – Workplace violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the worksite, and includes violent acts by anyone who enters the workplace or approaches employees with the intent to commit a crime.

Type 2 violence – Workplace violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, or visitors.

Type 3 violence – Workplace violence against an employee by a present or former employee, supervisor, or manager.

Type 4 violence – Workplace violence committed in the workplace by a person who does not work there, but has or is known to have had a personal relationship with an employee.

Workplace violence does not include lawful acts of self-defense or defense of others.

Work practice controls – Procedures and rules which are used to effectively reduce workplace violence hazards.

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Responsibility

All Department Heads, Managers and Safety Representatives are responsible for implementing and maintaining the provisions of this program for Plumas County. They shall develop a system to communicate with, and answer questions from, their employees about the Workplace Violence Policy and ensure that a copy of the policy is available in every work location. It is the responsibility of all employees to follow the policy and report violations of the policy to management immediately.

County employees are not encouraged to intervene in a violent situation or place themselves in danger and are authorized to use their best judgment when confronted with an immediate threat of harm or risk to safety, health and security, and call 911. When the threat potential is not immediate, the procedures of the Threat Assessment Team will proceed.

Identifying Workplace Violence Hazards

Risk factors are the ecological and personal features in an individual's life that increase the statistical probability of the individual engaging in violent behavior. Risk factors and behavior include but are not limited to:

A. Family History:

- ✓ Divorce and/or domestic violence
- ✓ Substance abuse or dependence
- ✓ Emotional, physical and sexual abuse

B. Mental Health Factors:

- ✓ Suicidal / Homicidal
- ✓ Real or perceived loss / grief
- ✓ Other mental health issues

C. Criminal Background:

- ✓ Past (non)violent acts / crimes
- ✓ Police contacts
- ✓ Probation / Incarceration

D. Social Factors:

- ✓ Institutionalization
- ✓ Foster care
- ✓ Homelessness

E. Environmental / Situational Factors:

- ✓ Inconsistent implementation of policies and/or other discipline
- ✓ Real or perceived demeaning and oppressive treatment
- ✓ Lack of adequate security

F. Precipitating Event:

- ✓ Victim of bullying, teasing or humiliation
- ✓ Loss of personal relationship or rejection

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✓ Personal failure

G. Problems with Current / Past Employment

- ✓ Long or frequent periods of unemployment
- ✓ Numerous occasions of being fired / terminated
- ✓ Serious conflicts with fellow employees or bosses

Many individuals exhibit warnings signs; yet pose no immediate danger to themselves or others. It is important to recognize patterns of behavior or combinations of warning signs that indicate the need for further assessment. Many of these are present in non-violent individuals and there is evidence that some violence prone individuals demonstrate no evidence of any of these signs. However, observations and feedback will be helpful in the investigation and resolution of potential violent incidents upon the review of a threat assessment team. Employees should report their observance or suspicion of violent thoughts or behavior to Risk Management, County Department Heads, supervisors, managers or Human Resources.

A. Verbal Clues:

- ✓ Direct and indirect threats against themselves or others
- ✓ Expresses a wish to kill, a wish to be killed, or a wish to die
- ✓ Threats or bragging about bringing a weapon to work
- ✓ Threatening / harassing phone calls or e-mails
- ✓ Hopeless statements

Behavioral or Physical Clues:

- ✓ Inappropriate weapons possession or use
- ✓ Drawings and other creative outlets with persistent or intense violent themes
- ✓ Identifiable violent tattoos or attire
- ✓ Short-fused, loss of emotional control
- ✓ Deteriorating physical appearance and self-care
- ✓ Isolating and withdrawn
- ✓ Signs or history of substance use / abuse / dependence
- ✓ Signs of depression / severe mood swings

B. Bizarre Thoughts:

- ✓ Persecutory delusions with self as victim
- ✓ Paranoid
- ✓ Grandiose delusions that involve power, control, destruction
- ✓ Significantly deteriorated thought processes

C. Obsessions:

- ✓ Self as victim of an individual
- ✓ Grudges and resentments
- ✓ Object of desire
- ✓ Perceived injustice, humiliation, disrespect
- ✓ Narrow focus – “sees no way out” – tunnel vision
- ✓ Historically violent figures

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D. Types of Perpetrators:

- ✓ Criminal Intent – The perpetrator has no legitimate relationship to the County and is usually committing a crime in conjunction with the violence. These crimes can include robbery, shoplifting, trespassing, and terrorism.
- ✓ Customers/Clients/Patients – The perpetrator has a legitimate relationship with the County and becomes violent while being served by the County. This category includes customers, clients, patients, interns, inmates and other groups for which the County provides services.
- ✓ Co-Worker – The perpetrator is an employee or past employee who attacks or threatens another employee(s) or past employee(s) in the workplace.
- ✓ Personal – The perpetrator usually does not have a relationship with the County but has a personal relationship with the intended victim. This category includes victims of domestic violence assaulted or threatened while at work.

How to Report

A. Immediate Threats

- ✓ All immediate threats of violence, whether to employees or the public, must be reported to local law enforcement by calling 9-1-1.

B. Immediate Supervisor

- ✓ Employees shall be encouraged to report workplace violence incident to their immediate supervisor, without fear of retaliation.
- ✓ Retaliation toward employees, vendors and contractors who make good faith reports under this policy is forbidden. However, protection from retaliation does not extend immunity for any complicity in the matters that are the subject of the allegations.
- ✓ In cases where an employee does not feel comfortable reporting to their immediate supervisor, employees should be encouraged to report to any supervisor or department head.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of such supervisor or department head to document and report violations using the "Workplace Violence Incident Report Form."

C. Workplace Violence Incident Report Form

- ✓ Employees shall be encouraged to report workplace violence using the "Workplace Violence Incident Report Form."
- ✓ Incident Reports should be forwarded to the Risk Management Department. Contact for the Risk Management Department is, travisgoings@countyofplumas.com, or joshmizrahi@countyofplumas.com,
- ✓ Phone number: (530) 283-6315.

Plumas County Threat Assessment Team (TAT)

Threat assessment is the process of investigating and evaluating the risk of violence posed by someone who has expressed the intent to inflict harm on another. Threat assessment evaluates the context and circumstances of the threat in order to uncover any evidence that the threat may

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be carried out. All reports of workplace violence or associated behaviors will be documented, reviewed and if required investigated by an ad hoc Threat Assessment Team. Mitigating and preventative measures will be implemented and assigned based on the findings of the team. The Plumas County Threat Assessment Team shall convene as necessary.

- A. The Threat Assessment Team may review a variety of issues, including but not limited to:
 - ✓ Determining what actions to take against employees that threaten the safety of other employees or the public,
 - ✓ Determining what actions to take against the public that threatens employees,
 - ✓ Responding to employee concerns about building security.
- B. The Threat Assessment Team may include members of the following departments or groups:
 - ✓ Behavioral/Mental Health professionals
 - ✓ County Administrative Officer
 - ✓ County Counsel
 - ✓ County Risk Management
 - ✓ District Attorney
 - ✓ Human Resources
 - ✓ Sheriff's Department
 - ✓ Threat Assessment professional (internal or external)
 - ✓ Additional members may be consulted as needed on a case-by-case basis
- C. Components of the Threat Assessment Team
 1. Identification
 - a) Review the completed "Workplace Violence Incident Report Form"
 - b) Identify threats made by individual(s)
 - c) Interview individual(s) if practical or necessary
 2. Evaluation & Investigation
 - d) Evaluate the seriousness of the threat and danger that it poses to others.
 - e) Complete: "Threat Assessment Initial Review"
 3. Intervention
 - f) Use counseling and other interventions to reduce risk of violence
 4. Follow-up
 - g) Review outcomes of intervention strategies and assess the need for additional or ongoing interventions
 - h) Post Incident responses including counseling and other EAP Services
 - i) Complete: "Threat Assessment Comprehensive Review & Response"

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Disciplinary Action

Employees found to be in violation of the policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment. An employee convicted of a violent crime or engaging while on or off-duty in behavior which violates this policy, may be subject to disciplinary action, if, during the crime or behavior, the employee represented himself as a county employee.

Active Shooter

Departments are responsible for working with Risk Management in developing an “Active Shooter Emergency Action Plan.” In addition, County employees are responsible for attending Workplace Violence Prevention Training. The training provides guidelines of what to do in an active shooter situation.

A. Run – Evacuate

- ✓ If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.
- ✓ Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- ✓ Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- ✓ Leave your belongings behind.
- ✓ Keep hands free (do not run with cellphone in hand)
- ✓ Help others evacuate, if possible.
- ✓ Call 911 when you are safe.
- ✓ Keep your hands visible and do not run toward police officers.
- ✓ Follow the instructions of any law enforcement officers.
- ✓ Do not attempt to move wounded people.

B. Hide – Shelter in Place

- ✓ If evacuation is not possible, find a place where the active shooter is less likely to find you.
- ✓ Be out of the active shooter’s view.
- ✓ Find protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e. an office with a closed and locked door).
- ✓ Do not trap yourself or restrict your options for movement.
- ✓ Prevent an active shooter from entering (i.e. lock the door or blockade the door with furniture).
- ✓ Silence your cell phone and turn off any other sources of noise.
- ✓ Remain quiet.

C. Fight – Protect Yourself

- ✓ As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter.
- ✓ Throw items and improvise weapons
- ✓ Yell
- ✓ Commit to your actions

D. When Police Arrive

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- ✓ Put down any items in your hands.
- ✓ Keep hands visible.
- ✓ Follow all instructions.
- ✓ Avoid making quick movements towards officers.
- ✓ Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises.

E. Post Incident Response

- ✓ Crisis Counseling
- ✓ Psychological Counseling
- ✓ Debriefing
- ✓ Support Groups
- ✓ Utilize the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Training

Risk Management and the Human Resources Department will coordinate training of all managers, supervisors, and employees on Workplace Violence. Training is provided upon hire, and then on an annual basis. Additional training is required when new or previously unrecognized workplace violence hazards are identified, or when there are changes to the plan.

Record Keeping & Review

Risk Management will be responsible for recording and maintaining information on each incident. The effectiveness of the Workplace Violence Prevention Plan will be reviewed annually or when a deficiency is apparent. Any records are retained for 5 years and omit personal identifying information. Employees are entitled to view and copy the log, which shall be made available within 15 calendar days of a request.

Employer Reporting Responsibilities

As required by California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 8, Section 342(a) Reporting Work-Connected Fatalities and Serious Injuries, the Risk Management Department will immediately report to Cal/OSHA any serious injury or illness (as defined by CCR, Title 8, Section 330(h)), or death (including any due to Workplace Violence) of an employee occurring in a place of employment or in connection with any employment.

Forms required- Workplace Violence Incident Report Form.