



TRINITY COUNTY

Human Resources Policy

SUBJECT:	Workplace Violence Prevention Policy
POLICY NO.:	2024-01
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I. PURPOSE

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 Trinity 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.

Trinity County seeks to provide a safe and secure working environment for all Trinity 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 be encouraged to 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.

II. DEFINITIONS

Workplace Violence: means any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs in a place of employment. The term workplace violence shall not include lawful acts of self-defense of others.

Intimidation: is intentional behavior that “would cause a person of ordinary sensibilities” to fear injury or harm. It is not necessary to prove that the behavior was so violent as to cause terror or that the victim was actually frightened.

Threat of Violence: means a statement or conduct that causes a person to fear for his or her safety because there is a reasonable possibility the person might be physically injured, and that serves no legitimate purpose.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

All Department Heads, Managers, and Safety Representatives are responsible for implementing and maintaining the provisions of this program for Trinity County. They shall develop a system to communicate to and answer questions from employees under their responsibility 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 they are encouraged to report any 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 investigation process will begin.

Supervisors shall be trained to recognize the signs of employees needing assistance or showing signs of anger management issues and provide information about the Employee Assistance Program or Law Enforcement Assistance Program (EAP and LEAP).

IV. 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 a 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
 - Personal failure
- G. Problems with Current/Past Employment
 - Long or frequent periods of unemployment
 - Numerous occasions of being fired
 - Serious conflicts with fellow employees or bosses

Many individuals exhibit warning 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 designated individuals. Employees should report their observance or suspicion of violent thought or behavior to supervisors, Risk Management, or Human Resources.

A. Verbal Cues:

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

B. 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

C. Bizarre Thoughts

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

D. 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

E. Types of Workplace Violence

- Type I: 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.
- Type II: 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.
- Type III: Co-Worker - The perpetrator is an employee or past employee who attacks or threatens another employee(s) or past employee (s) in the workplace.
- Type IV: Personal - The perpetrator usually does not have 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.

V. **REPORTING**

A. Immediate Threats

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

B. Immediate Supervisor

- Employees shall be encouraged to report workplace violence incidents 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, department head, or Human Resources or Risk Management.
- It is the responsibility of such supervisor or department head to document and report violations using the “Workplace Violence Incident Report Form.” (See **Attachment A.**)

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 Risk Management at hr@trinitycounty.org or call (530) 623-1325 or may be submitted anonymously to the drop box outside the Human Resources Department.

VI. THREAT ASSESSMENT

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 or other workplace factors. Threat assessment evaluates the context and circumstances of the threat in order to uncover any evidence that the threat may be carried out. All reports of workplace violence or associated behaviors will be documented, reviewed by the Director of Human Resources, Risk Management, Department Head of the employee, supervisor and other parties of the threat assessment team as needed. Mitigating and preventative measures will be implemented and assigned based on the findings of the team. The Trinity County 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.
 - Identifying potential hazards and areas of concern at the workplace and having them addressed (open areas accessible by the public, efficiency of security alarms, concealment issues of surrounding environment, etc.)
- B. The Threat Assessment Team may include members of the following departments or groups:
- Behavioral/Mental Health professionals
 - County Administrator

- County Counsel
- 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
 - a) Evaluate the seriousness of the threat and danger that it poses to others.
 - b) Complete the "Threat Assessment Initial Review".
3. Intervention
 - a) Use counseling and other interventions to reduce risk of violence.
4. Follow-Up
 - a) Review outcomes of intervention strategies and assess the need for additional or ongoing interventions.
 - b) Post Incident responses including counseling and other LEAP/EAP Services.

VII. 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, based on the severity and pervasiveness of actions. An employee convicted of a violent crime or engaging while on or off-duty in behavior which violates this policy, may be subject to discipline up to and including termination, if, during the crime or behavior, the employee represented himself as a county employee.

VIII. 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 indicated, or when there are changes to the plan.

IX. 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 by the Threat Assessment Team. The Threat Assessment Team will meet

annually with a group of employees consisting of a representative of each bargaining group, their Union representative, and will cover such issues as:

- (a) Previous reports of Workplace Violence
- (b) Identification of new or existing hazards during the prior year and corrective measures taken.
- (c) Trainings, completed, including the topics covered, delivery methods used and potential updates.
- (d) Security, including alarms, emergency response, and security personnel available.

Any records are retained for 5 years and omit personal identifying information. Employees and their Union representative are entitled to view and copy the log with 15 calendar days of notice of a request.



TRINITY COUNTY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND UNDERSTANDING OF POLICY FOR WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

I acknowledge that I have been given the opportunity to review the County's Policy for Workplace Violence Prevention. I have read and understand my responsibilities under the Policy, and I agree to abide by it. I understand that I will be subject to discipline for violating this Policy, or subject to other appropriate sanctions for failing to fulfill my responsibilities as outlined in this Policy.

I understand that the Policy is available for my review at any time on the County's website. If I have trouble accessing the Policy, I will contact the Human Resources Department.

I understand that the County strongly encourages all individuals to use the Workplace Violence Prevention Reporting procedure described in this Policy to make good faith reports of potential threats. I understand that I have a duty to cooperate with, and to answer truthfully and fully in any investigation undertaken to enforce this policy.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____



County of Trinity

Workplace Violence Incident Report Form

Section 1: Information about the Individual Completing the Report

Name: _____

Department: _____

Job Title: _____

Date Completed: _____

Section 2: Information about the Incident

Date of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Location of Incident: _____

Classify the nature of the location (e.g., workplace, parking lot, area outside of workplace, or other area):

Workplace Violence Type (Check one box):

- Type 1– Violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the workplace.
- Type 2– Violence committed by a customer, client, patient, student, inmate or visitor.
- Type 3– Violence committed by a present or former employee, supervisor or manager.
- Type 4– Violence committed by a nonworker with a personal relationship with the employee.

Classify the type of person committing the violence (e.g., customer/client or their family member, coworker, spouse, parent or other family member or stranger with criminal intent):

Type of Incident (Check all boxes that apply):

- Physical attack without a weapon (e.g., punching, kicking, spitting, biting, choking, grabbing, or pushing).
- Attack with a weapon or other object (e.g., firearm or knife).
- Threat of physical force or use of weapon or other object.
- Sexual assault or threat of sexual assault (e.g., rape, attempted rape, or physical display).
- Other:

