



# **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE** **PREVENTION POLICY**

Updated: October 30, 2012

# **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY**

## **Statement of Policy**

The Development Authority of the North Country (Authority) is committed to the safety and security of our employees. The Authority will not tolerate violence or threats of violence in the workplace. Our goal is to foster and maintain an environment free from violence.

Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests or other individuals by anyone on Authority property will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including summoning criminal justice authorities when warranted.

Violence is defined as behavior that intentionally threatens, attempts, or inflicts physical or psychological harm on others, as well as non-contact actions such as invasion of personal space, menacing, or stalking.

All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other, as well as customers, following all policies, procedures, and program requirements, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

All employees must refrain from hostile or threatening behavior (words or actions), which intimidates or creates fear for other's safety.

All employees are directed to immediately report activities, incidents and behavior which they reasonably believe may lead to acts of violence.

It is essential all Authority employees are aware and understand the Authority remains committed to assisting its employees with problems affecting their personal and family lives, including those that may be limiting their ability to cope successfully in the workplace. If appropriate, the Employee Assistance Program is available for referrals and will provide services for any employee.

Employees will not be discriminated against for bringing forth a safety and health concern, for filing a complaint or for participating in, or causing, any proceeding or inspection relating to this program.

The goal of this Policy is to promote the safety and well being of all people in our workplace. All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to immediately upon notification.

## **Incident Reporting**

All Authority personnel are responsible for notifying their Division Manager of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

Employees who are subjected to, or who witness violent behavior, must report it to their Division Manager immediately, completing the Authority's standard Incident Reporting Form as soon as practicable.

In the cases of domestic violence, if any employee has a court order that directs the abuser to stay away from the workplace, the employee shall advise their Division Manager so the Manager may assist the employee should it be necessary or requested.

Copies of all Incident Reports shall be retained as permanent Authority records in the custody of the Authority Compliance Officer.

*Standardized Incident Reporting Form – Appendix A*

## **Division Manager's Responsibility**

Must inform subordinate employees of their responsibility to behave in a manner consistent with this Policy and insist that any violations be brought to their attention immediately.

Must document incidents and complaints of this nature and report them immediately to the Compliance Officer and Executive Director.

Must refer reports of immediate or serious threats of violence to the local criminal justice authorities for any action the criminal justice authorities deem appropriate.

Must ensure appropriate departmental corrective actions are taken with employees who behave in a hostile or threatening manner consistent with the Authority Personnel Policy.

Must facilitate in the enforcement of all known court orders, particularly those in which abusers have been ordered to stay away from the workplace.

Assist the employee in enforcement of an existing, known order, including gathering and providing evidence related to whether a violation of an order has occurred.

Assist with referrals to Employee Assistance Program or other programs, as appropriate.

Assure that injured employees receive prompt and appropriate medical care; this includes, but is not limited to, providing transportation of the injured to medical care.

Address the need for appropriate treatment of victimized employees; in addition to physical injuries, victims and witnesses may suffer from psychological trauma.

### **Prevention Program**

The Authority is responsible for assessing the employees' work environment for the risk factors (hazards) they are actually or potentially exposed to.

The Authority is responsible for analyzing the risk evaluation data to determine appropriate control measures that will prevent or reduce workplace violence.

The Authority has a responsibility to address all risk factors that its employees are potentially exposed to. When considering the most appropriate control measures, an effort should be made to try to eliminate the hazards whenever possible.

The Authority has designated its Health and Safety Committee as the vehicle for evaluating the effectiveness of the Prevention Program and ensuring appropriate employee participation.

### **Health and Safety Committee**

The Authority's Employees' Health and Safety Committee shall conduct an annual risk assessment and evaluation.

The Committee shall conduct an Annual Employee Survey. Responses will be confidential and the results tabulated by the Compliance Office and Executive Director.

The Committee shall identify potential risks (hazards) and offer recommendations for corrective actions.

The Committee shall review the results of a Physical Workplace Evaluation and Workplace Security Checklist completed by each Division Manager.

The Committee shall review all Incident Reports and post incident responses and offer recommendations based upon its review. In circumstances that are deemed privacy concern cases, the Authority shall redact the victim's name and maintain confidentiality, but will otherwise complete a thorough review of the Incident Report.

The Committee shall maintain a training matrix which shall schedule and document annual training activities related to the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Program.

## **Employee Awareness**

The Authority shall post, in a conspicuous location at each workplace site where employee notices are normally posted, a copy of its Workplace Violence Prevention Policy Statement. This Statement shall be a one page document that briefly summarizes the Authority's commitment Policy and Program.

The Authority shall post to its electronic bulletin board, accessible to all employees, the complete Policy and Program content.

The Authority shall post to its publicly accessible website, the complete Policy and Program content.

After bringing a matter to the attention of the Division Manager, the employee shall afford the Authority a reasonable opportunity to correct the issue. However, if after a reasonable opportunity to correct the concern has passed and the matter remains unresolved, then the employee may request an inspection of the workplace by the Department of Labor.

**Reference:** Article 2 Section 27-b, NYS Labor Law, 12 NYCRR Part 800.6

## **APPENDICES:**

A – Workplace Violence Incident Reporting Form

B – Employee Survey on Workplace Violence Hazard Assessment

C – Workplace Violence Prevention Policy Manager's Site Evaluation

Reference – OGS Shelter-in-Place Procedures

Revision/Review Approval Date: August 20, 2009  
Added OGS Shelter-In-Place Procedures: October 30, 2012



**Appendix A**

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Workplace Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Division Manager: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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What was the employee doing just prior to the incident? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Incident Description (minimally include names of involved employees, extent of injuries and names of witnesses): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Provide information on preventative actions that the Authority has taken or is considering as a result of the incident to prevent against further like occurrences: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

After the occurrence of a workplace violence incident, the Authority shall consider prevention enhancements, which may be necessary to properly protect employees.

The Authority is responsible for maintaining copies of reports which shall be used when the program is reviewed and updated.

cc: Compliance Officer



## Appendix B

### EMPLOYEE SURVEY ON WORKPLACE VIOLENCE HAZARD ASSESSMENT

(No Signature Needed)

Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Location (if at alternate worksite): \_\_\_\_\_

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Please assess your division over the last year. Circle TRUE (T), FALSE (F), or DON'T KNOW (?).  
Thank you for your honest assessment.

#### Management Commitment and Employee Involvement:

1. Violence/threats are not accepted as "part of the job" by managers, supervisors and/or employees.    T    F    ?
2. Employees communicate information about potentially assaultive/threatening customers or visitors to appropriate staff.    T    F    ?
3. Management communicates information to employees about incidents of workplace violence.    T    F    ?
4. Employees feel they are treated with dignity and respect by other employees and management.    T    F    ?
5. Employees are basically satisfied with their jobs.    T    F    ?
6. Employees are basically satisfied with management.    T    F    ?
7. Employees are basically satisfied with the Authority (i.e., mission, vision, goals).    T    F    ?
8. Employees generally feel "safe" when they are at work.    T    F    ?
9. Employees are familiar with the Authority's violence prevention policy.    T    F    ?

Potential Risk Factors:

- 10. Employees do not work in high-crime areas.      T      F      ?
- 11. Employees do not work with drugs.              T      F      ?
- 12. Employees do not work with cash.                T      F      ?
- 13. Employees do not work with customers who have a history of violent behavior or behavior disorders.      T      F      ?
- 14. Employees do not work in isolated work areas.      T      F      ?

Hazard Prevention and Control

- 15. The Authority facilities have adequate lighting to, from and within the worksite.  
    T      F      ?
- 16. The employee parking lot/garage is secure when arriving, leaving and during changes of shift.  
    T      F      ?
- 17. Access and freedom of movement within the workplace are restricted to those persons who have a legitimate reason for being there.      T      F      ?
- 18. After hours, the building is locked down with only one access point.      T      F      ?
- 19. Visitors are signed in and out.              T      F      ?
- 20. Exits are accessible and clearly marked.              T      F      ?
- 21. Employees are able to locate emergency equipment such as fire alarm boxes or emergency generator outlets.      T      F      ?
- 22. Emergency equipment is accessible and free from obstruction.      T      F      ?
- 23. Employees are able to locate cellular phones, power-failure phones and/or radios for emergency communication.      T      F      ?
- 24. Employees know of the proper procedures if a bomb threat is announced.      T      F      ?
- 25. Employee emergency call-back list is up-to-date and available.      T      F      ?
- 26. Employees provide privacy to reflect sensitivity and respect for customers and visitors.  
    T      F      ?
- 27. Employees use the "buddy system" to work together if problems arise.      T      F      ?
- 28. Employees working in the field have cellular phones or other communication devices to enable them to request aid.      T      F      ?



29. Staffing levels are appropriate for division functions.      T      F      ?
30. Reference manuals are up-to-date and available to employees.      T      F      ?
31. There is a grievance policy available to employees.      T      F      ?
32. There is a Safety Committee available as a resource to staff for any hazard concern.  
T      F      ?

Training:

33. Employees have received training on the company's workplace violence prevention program.  
T      F      ?
34. Employees know how to ask for assistance by phone or by alerting other staff.  
T      F      ?
35. Employees have been trained to recognize and handle threatening, aggressive or violent behavior.      T      F      ?
36. Employees have been trained in verbal de-escalation techniques.      T      F      ?
37. Employees have been trained in self-defense/restraint procedures.      T      F      ?
38. This division has not experienced violent behavior and assaults or threats from strangers.  
T      F      ?
39. This division has not experienced violent behavior and assaults or threats from visitors or customers.      T      F      ?
40. This division has not experienced violent behavior and assaults or threats from others employed in the organization.      T      F      ?
41. This division has not experienced domestic violence issues.      T      F      ?
42. Employees are required to report incidents or threats of violence, regardless of injury or severity; the reporting system is clear.      T      F      ?
43. Medical and psychological counseling services were offered to employees who have been assaulted or threatened.      T      F      ?



**Appendix C**

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY**  
**MANAGER'S SITE EVALUATION**

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe location and access to site:

2. Describe security systems in place (gates, locks, alarms, cameras, etc.):

3. Note site characteristics that may require a higher degree of caution:

4. Identify any potential risks (hazards) within the worksite:

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## Shelter-in-Place Procedures

The term, **Shelter-in-Place**, means to seek Immediate shelter and remain there during an emergency rather than evacuate the area. **It is always preferred to evacuate. Shelter-in-Place should only be used when an evacuation is not safe.** Certain events may necessitate the initiation of the Dulles State Office Building Shelter-in-Place Protocol. The decision to Shelter-in-Place will be made by the Building Manager in consultation with emergency personnel.

Once the decision has been made, the Building Manager will instruct the tenants to Shelter-in-Place. This notification will be made by means of the building's public address system.

Examples of instances when Shelter-In-Place protocol may be used:

### Shelter-in Place (hazardous incident) Recommendations.

In the event of a critical incident where hazardous (including chemical, biological or radiological) materials may have been released into the atmosphere either accidentally or intentionally, a decision to Shelter-in-place may be the preferred method of safely waiting out the release. The following recommendations should be considered.

- Move to rooms with no windows.
- Rooms that have little or no ventilation are preferred.
- Close all doors.

Come out only when you are told it is safe by the Building Manager.

### Shelter-in-Place (violent person) Procedures.

In the event of the presence of a person or persons deemed to be a threat to the tenants, a decision to Shelter-in Place will be made by the Building Manager. This is the preferred method of keeping people out of harm's way.

Upon receiving notification to Shelter-in-Place by way of the building public address system:

- Stay in your office and lock the doors to the hallway.
- Encourage others to remain in your office rather than try to leave the building.
- Turn off the lights in your office and remain calm.
- Stay away from windows and doors.
- Report any suspicious activity, sounds or smells to the Building Manager's office.
- Come out only when you recognize the authority directing you to do so.

#### Shelter-in-Place (weather) Recommendations.

A severe weather event such as a tornado or wind event during normal operating hours may necessitate that you shelter-in-place until the threat of bad weather has passed. Relocating from your normal work area to a space that has no windows or to a lower floor may increase your chances of survival. It is recommended that you:

- Move to a lower floor if possible.
- Move to an interior room that has no windows.
- Move to an interior stairwell.
- Stay in the center of the room away from all windows.
- Stay in place until the danger has passed.

**Please note that in the event of a hazardous incident or a weather incident, the heating and ventilation systems will be shut down to prevent drawing in outside air.**

Security personnel will be assigned to the front entrance to prevent persons other than emergency responders from entering the building.

### **Initiation of Shelter-in-Place**

The Building Manager in consultation with the appropriate emergency personnel will make the determination when a situation requires the shelter-in-place procedures to be initiated. The Building Manager will:

- Direct the protocol until the arrival of the appropriate emergency personnel (i.e. Fire Chief or Police Department.)

**Voice message: A situation has occurred in the building that requires you to stay inside until a recognized authority tells you it is safe. Please remain in your offices and lock your doors.**

**RECEIVED**

**OCT 30 2012**

**DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF  
THE NORTH COUNTRY**