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## Safety and Health: Prevention of Workplace Violence

### Policy:

No Department of Human Services (DHS) facility will tolerate workplace threats or violent acts.

DHS facilities must promote, establish and maintain a work environment that is free from intimidation, threats or violent acts, and must implement local policies or procedures for responding to all threats or violent acts.

### Authority:

Minnesota Statutes, section 15.86, "Zero Tolerance of Violence"  
Minnesota Statutes, section 182.653 subdivision 2, "Rights and Duties of Employers"  
Minnesota Statutes, section 182.653 subdivision 8, "Workplace Accident and Incident Reduction Act"  
Minnesota Statutes, section 626.557, "Vulnerable Adult Act"

### Purpose:

To inform employees of the DHS commitment to a zero tolerance of threats or violent acts in the workplace, to define manager and employee responsibilities, and to encourage the development of local procedures to prevent, investigate, and respond to threats or violent acts at facilities.

### Definitions:

**Workplace violence:** A threat or action, which occurs at the workplace, in which someone (employee, client, contractor, volunteer or visitor) seeks to intimidate, threatens to harm or harms another person.

**Critical incident coordinator:** A designated employee who will coordinate the response to a workplace threat or violent act against an employee.

### Responsibilities:

Commissioner or designee, site administrators, managers, supervisors, human resource directors and safety officers are responsible for implementing and enforcing this policy. All employees are responsible for conducting themselves within the spirit and intent of this policy.

Regional administrators or designees must develop and effectively implement, facility policies or procedures to ensure that client initiated threats or violent incidents are reviewed to determine if additional or alternative violence prevention techniques are required.

### Procedures:

Commissioner, site administrators or designees must develop and effectively carry out facility policies and procedures to ensure that:

1. A violence prevention policy or procedure is developed and implemented. The local policy may include the appointment of a critical incident coordinator to organize the response to a violent threat or incident.
2. A facility climate is maintained in which threats or acts of violence are less likely to occur.
3. Employees are aware of this policy, the local violence prevention policy or procedure, and the various violence reduction resources available to employees.
4. All threats or violent acts are documented and reported according to local procedure.
5. All threats or violent acts are promptly, completely and accurately investigated or if an imminent danger exists, reported to the local law enforcement agency.

6. If the result of an investigation concludes that the employee threat or violent act did occur, appropriate disciplinary steps are taken and the local law enforcement agency is notified, when appropriate.

**References:**

[DHS Policy - Critical Incident Stress Management](#)

[DHS Policy - Prohibition of Weapons](#)

[DHS Policy - General Harassment](#)

State Operated Services Policy Manual Number 3020 Contraband

State Operated Services Policy Manual Number 6260 Therapeutic Intervention


Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers OSHA 3148-01R 2004

[DHS Personal Safety Guidelines](#)

**CANCELLATIONS:**

This policy supersedes DHS Policy, dated 12/06.

**Policy Contact:**

Joe Piwoschuk  
Safety and Health Manager  
(651) 431-2993 

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