



<b>POLICY TITLE: Workplace Violence Prevention</b>		<b>PAGE 1 OF 8</b>
 	<b>CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY</b> <b>Approved by: <u>Brenda Donald</u></b> Agency Director  <b>Date: <u>November 1, 2012</u></b>	<b>REVISION HISTORY:</b> August 17, 2005
	<b>LATEST REVISION:</b> September 6, 2012	

<b>I. AUTHORITY</b>	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable Federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations including the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970.
<b>II. APPLICABILITY</b>	This policy is applicable to all CFSA employees.
<b>III. RATIONALE</b>	<p>Workplace violence is a serious recognized occupational hazard, ranking among the top four causes of death in workplaces during the past 15 years. More than 3,000 people died from workplace homicide between 2006 and 2010, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Additional BLS data indicate that an average of more than 15,000 nonfatal workplace injury cases was reported annually during this time. In 2009, approximately 572,000 nonfatal violent crimes (rape/sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault) occurred against persons age 16 or older while they were at work or on duty, based on findings from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS).</p> <p>An act of workplace violence may include direct acts of violence, the proposed threat of violence, or other disruptive behaviors that happen in the work place environment. Violent acts or behaviors may be directed towards CFSA employees, or perpetrated by CFSA employees towards other co-workers, contractors, customers/clients, volunteers or visitors.</p> <p>CFSA recognizes the right of its employees to work in a safe and secure work environment free of violent acts or threats towards employees or by employees towards others. Therefore, CFSA has established a "zero tolerance" policy for violence in the workplace.</p>

<p><b>IV. POLICY</b></p>	<p>It is the policy of CFSA to promote a safe work environment for all employees, contractors, and agency volunteers and/or visitors by prohibiting any and all forms of workplace violence, including displaying, brandishing or possessing a weapon in the workplace environment. Additionally, CFSA seeks to maintain an environment free of violent incidents or threats towards employees, or by employees towards others by doing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopting a zero tolerance policy against violence in the workplace</li> <li>2. Promoting the responsibility of staff in preventing violence in an effort to reduce the incidences of workplace violence</li> <li>3. Providing training and education for employees in the recognition and prevention of workplace violence</li> <li>4. Ensuring that all reported incidents of workplace violence shall be taken seriously and investigated promptly</li> </ol> <p>It is CFSA's policy that under no circumstance shall any employee, supervisor, manager, or other person acting on his or her behalf, or under his or her direction, retaliate against, harass, or coerce an employee because that employee has filed or asserted a claim of workplace violence, been a witness in a workplace violence investigation, or challenged an allegation of workplace violence.</p> <p>Any employee found in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.</p>
<p><b>V. CONTENTS</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A.</b> Definitions of Workplace Violence</li> <li><b>B.</b> CFSA Employee Responsibilities</li> <li><b>C.</b> CFSA Manager and Supervisor Responsibilities</li> <li><b>D.</b> Role of the Human Resources Administrator</li> <li><b>E.</b> Role of the Office of Risk Management</li> <li><b>F.</b> Domestic Violence</li> <li><b>G.</b> Confidentiality Statement</li> <li><b>H.</b> Involvement of Children in Violent Incidents</li> <li><b>I.</b> Intervention</li> </ol>
<p><b>VI. PROCEDURES</b></p>	<p><b>Procedure A: Definitions of Workplace Violence</b></p> <p>The following definitions shall apply in this policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Workplace violence: any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting. This includes, but is not limited to beatings, stabbings, suicides, suicide attempts, shootings, rape, psychological traumas such as threats (including by electronic transmission), obscene phone calls, intimidation, and harassment of any nature such as being followed, sworn at, or shouted at (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health).</li> </ol>

POLICY NUMBER/TITLE	CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	2 of 8

	<p>2. Workplace environment: any place where a CFSA employee, vendor, contractor, agent, temporary worker or volunteer is executing the responsibilities and duties of his/her job, including agency offices or any field location.</p> <p>3. Zero Tolerance: A standard that establishes that any behavior, implied or actual, that violates this policy will not be tolerated.</p> <p>4. Violent incidents or threats include a broad scope of serious behavior, and may include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assault: The intentional use of physical injury (impairment of physical condition or substantial pain) to another person, with or without a weapon or dangerous instrument.</li> <li>b. Harassment (including verbal): Intentionally striking, shoving or kicking another or subjecting another person to physical contact, or threatening to do the same (without physical injury). Also, using abusive or obscene language or other discourteous conduct towards any fellow employee or the public or following a person in a public place, or engaging in a course of conduct which alarms or seriously annoys another person.</li> <li>c. Threat: The implication or expression of intent to inflict physical harm or actions that a reasonable person would interpret as a threat to physical safety or property.</li> <li>d. Verbal or Physical Conduct of a Sexual Nature: this conduct may include public lewdness, sexual abuse, sodomy, rape. (For further information on procedures on reporting such conduct, see <i>Reporting Sexual Harassment in the Workplace</i> policy).</li> <li>e. Weapons (use or threatened use): includes, but is not limited to firearms of all types and sizes, BB-guns, pellet guns; knives, swords, switchblades, razors (except for small pocket knives) and utility knives with blades of less than three inches in length; incendiary or explosive devices; tasers, clubs, bludgeons or bats; and any other item carried with the intent to threaten, intimidate, or harm another person.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Pepper spray and mace are not permitted in federal or city government buildings, District of Columbia courts or airport carry-on luggage. If discovered, the pepper spray or mace may be confiscated. Any employee who carries either product should have it registered with either the District or state departments of police.</i></p>
	<p><b>Procedure B: CFSA Employee Responsibilities</b></p> <p>CFSA employees shall cooperate in establishing a safe workplace environment for themselves, co-workers, volunteers and customers/clients. Employees shall conduct themselves in a professional, courteous and respectful manner at all times. Employees shall also adhere to the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read and review the Workplace Violence Prevention policy.</li> <li>2. Refrain from any type of behavior as described in Procedure A above.</li> </ul>

POLICY NUMBER/TITLE	CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	3 of 8

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Safely work in accordance with the District of Columbia Department of Human Resources' (DCHR) policies, and the established CFSA employee policies and procedures, including acceptable standards of professional conduct.</li> <li>4. Attend required workplace violence prevention training.</li> <li>5. Report all instances of workplace violence immediately to a supervisor or manager. If the instance of workplace violence is caused by the employee's immediate supervisor, report the incident to another supervisor, manager, administrator of the Human Resources Administration (HRA).</li> <li>6. Cooperate fully with CFSA officials and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in the investigation and the prosecution of violent incidents in the workplace.</li> <li>7. Notify supervisor(s) immediately of any personal application for and issuance of a Temporary or Civil Protection Order against another individual.</li> <li>8. Report to supervisor(s) and HRA Employee/Labor Relations when the employee is charged with any crime of violence.</li> <li>9. As much as possible, protect the confidentiality of co-workers involved in workplace violence.</li> </ol>
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	<p><b>Procedure C: CFSA Manager and Supervisor Responsibilities</b></p> <p>CFSA managers and supervisors shall promote a safe workplace environment for all CFSA employees and clients. <b>When an incident of violence or a threat occurs or is reported, managers and supervisors shall take these actions seriously and respond immediately.</b> Managers and supervisors shall also adhere to the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respond promptly to immediate dangers to employees or others in the workplace, whether reported or are clearly evident.</li> <li>2. Report instances of violence in the workplace. Notify the CFSA Office of Risk Management (when the incident involves a CFSA employee) and HRA Employee/Labor Relations and follow the guidance from these offices.</li> <li>3. Ensure employees are familiar with CFSA employee policies and procedures, the DCHR policies, as well as the standards for professional conduct.</li> <li>4. Be aware of the general signs and symptoms of an employee who is at risk or is displaying potentially violent behavior.</li> <li>5. Resolve an internal episode involving employee violence by taking appropriate administrative action as applicable to DCHR policies, union contract provisions, etc.</li> </ol>
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POLICY NUMBER/TITLE	CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	4 of 8

	<p>6. Protect the confidentiality of workplace violence incidents as much as possible, including the prevention of retaliation against employees for reporting.</p>
	<p><b>Procedure D: Role of the CFSA Human Resources Administrator</b></p> <p>The CFSA Human Resources administrator or designee shall have the overall responsibility for maintaining this policy and for identifying resources for development and implementation of training programs and violence prevention measures. As is necessary, the Human Resources administrator or designee shall intervene, mediate, investigate and take steps to prevent violence in the workplace. Further, the Human Resources administrator shall fulfill the following responsibilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take the lead in the investigation of workplace violence incidents.</li> <li>2. Provide administrative interpretation concerning personnel rules, policies and procedures.</li> <li>3. Assist with the development of workplace violence prevention training for CFSA employees.</li> <li>4. Brief the CFSA director or designee of specific incidents, as required.</li> <li>5. Assist the Office of Risk Management in the development and maintenance of unusual incidents notification procedures and the assurance that employees are aware and have access to the procedures (see <a href="#">Employee Unusual Incident Policy</a>).</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure E: Role of the CFSA Office of Risk Management</b></p> <p>The CFSA Office of Risk Management shall provide expert resources and knowledge for the prevention, intervention, and resolution of violent incidents or threats in the CFSA workplace and shall fulfill the following responsibilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assist the Human Resources Administrator with the provision of workplace violence prevention training to employees.</li> <li>2. Assist with the investigation of workplace violence incidents.</li> <li>3. Brief the CFSA director and Human Resources administrator or their designees of specific incidents as required.</li> <li>4. Develop detailed procedures for employees to follow when workplace violence incidents occur (see Office of Risk Management <i>Procedures for Unusual Incidents</i>).</li> <li>5. Develop and maintain unusual incident notification procedures and ensure employees are aware and have access to the procedures (see <a href="#">Employee Unusual Incident Policy</a>).</li> </ol>

POLICY NUMBER/TITLE	CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	5 of 8

### **Procedure F: Domestic Violence**

The U.S. Department of Justice defines domestic violence as, “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.”

Domestic violence, while often originating in the home, can significantly impact workplace safety and the productivity of victims as well as co-workers.

1. CFSA recognizes that domestic violence may occur in relationships regardless of the marital status, age, race, or sexual orientation of the parties.
2. Behaviors in cases of domestic violence may be directed to a person who is in any of the following relationships:
  - a. persons related by blood, legal custody, or marriage
  - b. having a child in common
  - c. sharing of the same residence (currently or in the past)
  - d. having a romantic dating relationship (currently or in the past)
  - e. parties with a partner in common (currently or in the past)
  - f. parties who claim they have been stalked or otherwise harassed
3. If an employee has been granted a Temporary or Civil Protection Order against another person, the following actions shall apply:
  - a. The employee shall immediately report the existence of the Order to his or her supervisor
  - b. The supervisor shall notify the appropriate security staff and/or receptionist, as is necessary
  - c. The supervisor shall suggest that the employee seek assistance from the Employee Assistance Program (COPE)
  - d. The supervisor shall consult with the Office of Risk Management and the HRA to provide accommodations that are reasonable, as may be appropriate, to protect the safety and well-being of all employees within the unit.

### **Procedure G: Confidentiality Statement**

CFSA will protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals who are victims of violence, those who report violence, and those who are being investigated for suspicion of violent behavior, to the extent possible. Managers and supervisors shall adhere to the following provisions:

1. Limit the sharing of individual information during investigations. Identifying information may be disclosed on a “need to know” basis for the purposes of investigation.

<b>POLICY NUMBER/TITLE</b>	<b>CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b>
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	6 of 8

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Protect all employee file information from public disclosure.</li> <li>3. Take steps to limit the internal spread of confidential information among employees.</li> <li>4. Take steps to protect individuals who are victims of violence, those who report violence, and those who are being investigated for suspicion of violence behavior from retaliation.</li> <li>5. Inform employees of individual information if there is likely cause of violence to occur. This information may be publicly shared to protect other individuals from likely harm.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure H: Involvement of Children in Violent Incidents</b></p> <p>Violent incidents involving children or adolescents on CFSA premises will be taken extremely seriously. These incidents will be reported, investigated, and prosecuted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All incidents of violence involving children or adolescents that occur in the workplace environment shall be reported to the MPD, with a copy of the report forwarded to the Office of the General Counsel.</li> <li>2. An employee that is witness to an incident shall report the incident directly to the social worker and supervisor responsible for the child's case.</li> <li>3. All appropriate efforts shall be taken to ensure the safety and protection of the child.</li> <li>4. HR and ORM shall thoroughly and efficiently investigate all allegations of violence against children that happen in the workplace.</li> <li>5. In the case that an employee is the perpetrator of violence towards a child, immediate disciplinary action shall be taken.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Procedure I: Intervention</b></p> <p>If a CFSA employee is threatened by violence, it is imperative that the employee take the following steps to minimize harm to self and others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In violent or potentially violent situations ALL CFSA employees shall: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Utilize the support of MPD, building security, supervisors, the Office of Risk Management, HRA Employee/Labor Relations and other resources for a safe and peaceful resolution.</li> <li>b. Safely remove themselves from violent situations.</li> <li>c. Report violent situations to the necessary authorities for reporting and protection.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. If an employee is confronted by a hostile customer/client, the employee shall perform the following tasks:</li> </ol>

POLICY NUMBER/TITLE	CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	7 of 8

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Remain calm.</li> <li>b. Be courteous, respectful and helpful.</li> <li>c. Provide customer/client with another resource to vent their frustrations (call supervisor).</li> <li>d. Remain on Agency property/in Agency vehicle, if deemed to be safe, when clients are frustrated and become confrontational.</li> <li>e. Contact MPD for assistance.</li> <li>f. Report the incident according to the <a href="#"><u>Employee Unusual Incident Policy</u></a>.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. If a CFSA employee is confronted by a hostile co-worker, the employee shall perform the following tasks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Remain calm.</li> <li>b. Do NOT act to escalate the violent situation.</li> <li>c. Signal a coworker or supervisor that help is needed.</li> <li>d. Contact security personnel for assistance.</li> <li>e. Report the incident according to the Employee Unusual Incident Reporting policy.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Consequences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If an employee is found guilty of workplace violence, he or she may be subjected to disciplinary action up to and including termination.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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POLICY NUMBER/TITLE	CHAPTER NUMBER/TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
Workplace Violence Prevention	General Administrative Policies	8 of 8