

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT CENTER AND SCHOOL
AND FORT SAM HOUSTON
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-5014

FSH Pamphlet
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Health and Safety
VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

1. PURPOSE. To prescribe U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Sam Houston, policy pertaining to violence in the workplace. To set forth warning signs of potentially violent behavior and to establish procedures for responding to threats and acts of violence.

a. To establish guidelines for managers, supervisors, and employees regarding their responsibility to prevent and respond to potential and actual incidents of workplace violence. A variety of violent situations or conduct will be described.

b. To establish methods of investigating and reporting incidents of workplace violence. The objective is to prevent violence in the workplace and to motivate all individuals to conform to acceptable standards of conduct.

2. APPLICABILITY. This pamphlet applies primarily to the military and civilian workforce, but is also applicable to potential or real incidents involving visitors, contractors, and vendors at this installation.

3. REFERENCES.

a. DA Form 2701, Initial Information for Victims and Witness of Crimes.

b. FSH Form 845*#, Workplace Violence Report

4. GENERAL. The overall policy is to ensure a safe and secure environment; provide the highest standard of health and safety for all employees (both appropriated and nonappropriated fund), customers, vendors, contractors, and the general public, and to provide for the efficient and effective operation of Fort Sam Houston. As such, any form of threatening remarks or gestures in the workplace is unacceptable. There is no excuse for violence; there will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level. All incidents of violence will be thoroughly addressed and appropriate action will be taken. This pamphlet provides guidance for standardized treatment of workplace violence, to include the investigation and reporting of all incidents.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Supervisors: Ensure the safety and security of the workplace, the employees' immediate work site, and anywhere on the installation and Camp Bullis, during duty status.

b. The Provost Marshall: Identify and address violence or threats of imminent violence, actual physical assaults, related sabotage and vandalism, and the unauthorized possession of weapons.

c. The Chief, Civilian Counseling Services Office (CCSO): Chair and exercise convening authority of the Workplace Violence Intervention Team (WVIT).

d. The Education Coordinator, Fort Sam Houston Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention and Control Program: In coordination with the Directorate of Civilian Personnel, conduct the initial overview training on violence in the workplace, and the identification of early warning signs. Identify the roles and responsibilities of employees, supervisors, and the WVIT for all employees, military and civilian.

6. PROCEDURES.

a. Identifying potentially violent behavior. Managers and supervisors must be watchful for warning signs of potential workplace violence. There are frequently warning indicators that often precede violent behavior. Almost without fail, the violent individual exhibits certain identifiable behavioral characteristics. Although nonviolent individuals may also exhibit some of these characteristics; when several exist at one time, or the individual's behavior changes to reflect one or more of them, the potential for violent behavior should be considered. The following warning signs are frequently associated with individuals who later become violent:

(1) Performance decline. Recent marked performance decline, such as attendance problems or excessive absences from work, decreased productivity and inconsistent work patterns, concentration problems, increased accident involvement, a noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and/or personal hygiene, continual excuses, and marked reluctance to accept responsibility for even small errors.

(2) Serious stress. Serious stress in the employee's life, such as financial problems, receiving/making excessive personal telephone calls, or losses (e.g., pending job loss, divorce, death of loved one).

(3) Bizarre thoughts. Bizarre thoughts, paranoid or unusual behavior, such as fantasies with self-centered outcomes, irrational or violent associations or thoughts, a belief in being singled out, crying spells, fear that someone is "out to get me," sudden or unexplainable mood swings, obsession with hurting a specific person or group, abnormal emotional attachments (typically unilateral) to another person, or notoriously violent incidents.

(4) Substance abuse. Most drugs interfere dramatically with reasoning ability, social inhibitions, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong. Alcohol and certain drugs may cause agitation, create paranoia, and cause aggressive behavior. An individual who may have been marginally stable could be pushed over the edge.

(5) History of prior misconduct or violence.

(6) Unusual behavior. Unusual or improper (often intimidating) behavior, such as inappropriate, repeated social boundary crossing (to include making excessive telephone calls, leaving messages and/or writing letters, stalking, gift-giving). Angry confrontations (i.e., easily provoked, impulsive, unpredictable), or being belligerent toward customers.

(7) Verbal threats. States intentions to hurt or kill someone; makes repeated threatening statements, is constantly cursing others.

(8) Physical confrontations. Physical confrontations, such as intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another when it is known or should be reasonably known that the recipient will regard the contact as offensive or provocative, or intentionally or knowingly impeding or blocking the movement of another.

b. When violence has occurred or is imminent. Supervisors or employees (if a supervisor is not readily available) should immediately call the 911 emergency number, and remove other persons from the area as considered necessary. Additionally, the supervisor of the affected work group will:

(1) Notify the military police at 221-2222, and the CCSO at 221-0431/0133/1254. In situations involving military personnel, the individual's company commander will be informed and take appropriate action.

(2) Place the individual on administrative leave for the remainder of the day.

(3) Take steps to ensure the safety and well-being of the workforce and others.

(4) Make arrangements for the CCSO to conduct trauma debriefing for coworkers, if necessary.

(5) Complete FSH Form 845*#, Workplace Violence Report, forward to CCSO.

(6) Maintain notes of key events.

(7) Provide periodic updates to the chain of command until the situation has stabilized.

(8) Report it to the Union of the affected bargaining unit employees.

c. Military Police. The military police, upon arrival, will perform initial information gathering concerning the complaint, issue DD Form 2701, Initial Information for Victims and Witnesses of Crimes, to all witnesses, and interview victims and/or witnesses. If the employee is a bargaining unit member, and reasonably believes the interview may lead to disciplinary action, and requests representation during the interview, he or she is entitled to a union representative. The purpose of the interview is to determine:

- (1) Who made the threat or committed the violent act.
- (2) Who was threatened or subjected to injury.
- (3) What was the specific language of the threat.
- (4) Was there any physical contact
- (5) Where did the incident occur and at what time
- (6) Are there prior incidents involving the subject(s).

d. The CCSO will perform an assessment based on the collected information and make the decision to interview the employee, select the appropriate interview site, and determine if further action is warranted. The CCSO will adhere to the same representation requirements as stated in paragraph 5. The following additional steps will be considered:

(1) Background checks into criminal records pertaining to violent behavior.

(2) Identification of probable current source of problems (e.g., reduction in force notice, performance appraisal, debts, personal problems, etc.).

Check on prior disciplinary action.

(4) Refer criminal behavior to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

e. The CCSO will coordinate the overall post-incident response to occurrences of workplace violence and, in conjunction with the Provost Marshall, will perform an assessment based on the collected information. The CCSO will provide referrals for formal crisis intervention assistance, threat assessment, and clinical counseling and treatment methods for chemical dependency issues. The staff will assess the potential threat and recommend a course of action to the supervisor.

f. The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) Personnel Management Specialist will advise on the employee's present work status, and provide background on employee's past disciplinary and any other work-related issues. Advisors to the CCSO are as follows:

(1) Brooke Army Medical Center Department of Psychiatry, and Safety and Occupational Health.

Staff Judge Advocate

(3) Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

(4) Provost Marshal.

(5) Union.

g. When the potential for violence has been identified, supervisors will immediately investigate any potentially violent incident by interviewing the person that reported the threat, as well as any other witnesses to the incident. The supervisor will also gather as much information as possible about the threat and the person making it, document this information in detail, and provide these findings to the WVIT. The role of the WVIT is to assess potentially violent situations in the workplace and to develop an action plan to address the situation. The WVIT will:

(1) Include representatives from the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, CPAC, Provost Marshal's Office, and respective supervisors (to include unit commanders, if military personnel are involved).

(2) Provide information to the CCSO, if requested

(3) In conjunction with the CCSO, develop a clear plan based on available knowledge about the employee. In the plan, emphasis will be placed on locating information indicating how the employee responds to stress and will consider the predictors of violence previously outlined.

(4) With input from the CCSO, determine if the individual is a threat to self or others. If not considered a threat, a decision will be made concerning referral for counseling or other appropriate action.

(5) Consider referring information to law enforcement agencies or implementing appropriate security plans if the individual is considered a continuing threat.

(6) Provide appropriate feedback information and support to the victim(s) and/or target(s).

(7) Monitor and assign responsibility for implementation of all WVIT recommendations and actions.

(8) Invite a representative from the affected union(s).

The proponent of this pamphlet is the Directorate of Civilian Personnel, ATTN: MCGA-CP. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to the Commander, U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, ATTN: MCGA-CP, Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-5022.

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