

## CORPORATE POLICY

<b>SUBJECT: Workplace Violence Prevention</b>	<b>CATEGORY: Human Resources</b>
	<b>ORIGINAL DATE: November 7, 2001</b>
	<b>REVIEWED DATE: October 30, 2024</b>
	<b>REVISION DATE: January 22, 2025</b>

### I. **POLICY:**

Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center (LCHD/CHC) is committed to providing a safe environment that minimizes workplace violence or other security risks. It is the objective of this policy to reduce the potential for violence in and around the workplace, to encourage and foster a work environment that is characterized by respect and healthy conflict resolution, as well as mitigating the negative consequences for employees who experience or encounter violence in their work lives. Violence in the workplace poses a threat to the safety of employees and the public and affects productivity. All employees are responsible for minimizing workplace violence. This policy establishes procedures that minimize the threat of violence in the workplace, and provides guidelines for responding promptly and effectively to workplace violence.

### II. **SCOPE:**

All Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center (LCHD/CHC) employees, visitors and clients. This policy applies not only during working time and at specific work locations, but also to any activities on and off LCHD/CHC premises that could reasonably be associated with the workplace (e.g., business travel, social events, etc.), or in any location related to the work of the organization.

### III. **DEFINITIONS:**

Workplace Violence is defined as: An act or threat occurring at the workplace that can include any of the following: Verbal, written, or physical aggression; threatening, intimidating, harassing, or humiliating words or actions; bullying, sabotage, sexual harassment; or physical assaults involving staff, clients, or visitors.

Violent actions on Health Department property, in LCHD/CHC facilities or while on LCHD/CHC business, will not be tolerated. Persons engaging in violent behaviors as defined above are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, disqualification from service and/or civil and criminal action as specified by local, state, or federal ordinances and statutes.

### IV. **PROCEDURE:**

- A. Any employee may report threatening behaviors or situations involving employees, visitors or clients to their supervisor and/or Human Resources (HR) in accordance with LCHD/CHC procedures (see Incident Injury Reporting Policy). If a violent act occurs and constitutes an emergency, employees will respond promptly in accordance with LCHD/CHC procedures contained in the Emergency Action Plan (Combative Person).
- B. Clients or visitors may report incidents of workplace violence to staff who must then ensure they are documented in the SafetyZone portal.
- C. The LCHD/CHC is available to assist in the resolution of employee disputes and will not take disciplinary actions against individuals making volunteer requests for

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- assistance in raising such concerns.
- D. HR is responsible for responding to incidents of workplace violence, and in the event of a violent act, HR coordinates all responses to the incident. Incidents that involve criminal situations require HR to work in cooperation with the Lake County Sheriff's Department, the local police departments if necessary, and the Lake County State's Attorney's office. HR is responsible for evaluating an incident and making recommendations regarding the need to conduct an investigation.
  - E. The Safety Coordinator is responsible for tracking and monitoring workplace violence incidents reported in the SafetyZone portal. The Safety Coordinator must ensure that follow-up is performed and documented in the SafetyZone portal within 30 days of submission. The Safety Coordinator analyzes incidents and trends annually.
  - F. LCHD/CHC Program leadership are responsible for assisting in the resolution of employee disputes and providing support for staff and clients during and after workplace violence incidents. This may include referring staff to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and determining the need for any changes to the work schedule or assignments. Clients must be supported with crisis intervention services as needed as well as ongoing support through counseling and case management.
  - G. LCHD/CHC employees are responsible for participating in de-escalation training at designated intervals. Workplace violence incidents must be reported in the SafetyZone portal as soon as possible. LCHD/CHC encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or HR before the situation escalates into potential violence.
  - H. Security Guards are responsible for maintaining a physical presence at LCHD/CHC sites and serve as a deterrent to workplace violence. When requested by staff, Security Guards assist in de-escalating volatile situations. They also conduct periodic foot patrols of buildings and adjacent areas.
  - I. External Law Enforcement may be called to intervene when workplace violence situations cannot be de-escalated by staff, or the threat of violence is apparent.
  - J. Support for victims and witnesses affected by workplace violence, including trauma and psychological counseling, if necessary, will be provided to employees via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and to clients via their program staff.
  - K. Risk Assessment - The LCHD/CHC Safety Coordinator in conjunction with members of the Environmental Health and Safety Committee will conduct an annual worksite analysis of the risk of workplace violence or other security risks that exist as a result of the nature of the work and physical environment of LCHD/CHC. A completed written report of the risk assessment will be submitted to the Environmental Health and Safety Committee for review.
  - L. Training - Employee training includes the roles and responsibilities of leadership, clinical staff, security personnel, and law enforcement. Training also includes skills and de-escalation strategies to incorporate into problem solving and decision making when faced with challenging and disruptive situations.
  - M. Reporting - Workplace violence incidents must be reported to governance annually.

### **V. REFERENCES:**

Emergency Action Plan, Lone Worker Policy, Harassment Policy, Incident Injury Reporting Policy



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**VI. AUTHORS/REVIEWERS:**

Designated Review Team, Corporate Policy and Procedure Committee, Executive Team and Lake County Board of Health Personnel Committee

**VII. APPROVALS:**

Lake County Board of Health President

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_