INTRODUCTION

UC Davis Health System is dedicated to providing a safe, violence-free workplace. This handbook is intended to reinforce the health system's commitment to preventing and responding to violence in the workplace through education, adherence to rules and swift, decisive responses to threats and acts of violence.

The President of the University of California and the UC Davis chancellor have made it unequivocally clear that there is zero tolerance for any behavior that threatens personal safety, property and/or interferes with the mission of the university.

State and federal regulations, in addition to university policy, mandate safe working conditions. Therefore, the UC Davis Health System must strive to protect employees, patients, clients and visitors. The health system's Violence in the Workplace Policy (Policy Section III A.) states:

"The health system will not ignore, condone, or tolerate disruptive, intimidating, threatening, or violent behavior by any member of the University community or by affiliated visitors. An individual may be removed and/or prevented from returning to the health system premises for disruptive, intimidating, threatening, or violent behavior. Staff engaged in such behavior will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, under the applicable personnel policy or collective bargaining agreement."

As employees, managers and supervisors, we have a responsibility to insist on a zero-tolerance policy for violence in the workplace. However, there are no exact answers or foolproof solutions for preventing violence in the workplace. This handbook was prepared to increase individual awareness and insight into management of this problem.
EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

- Adherence to the Zero Tolerance Standard is required of all health system employees.
- Any conduct or “jokes” that involve disruptive behavior, intimidation, threats and/or acts of violence are prohibited and will be taken seriously.
- Every health system employee must assist in making the workplace as safe as possible. To accomplish this objective, all employees must fully understand and abide by the Zero Tolerance Standard.
- No employee shall be subject to criticism, reprisal, retaliation or disciplinary action for reporting threatening behavior or an act of violence pursuant to this standard.
- Employees who are the subject of, or witness to, a violation of this standard may be requested by management to document their experience and/or observations to help with an investigation and response.

MANAGER AND SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY

- Managers and supervisors must reduce the potential for workplace violence through appropriate and consistent application of the Zero Tolerance Standard. They should inform employees that workplace safety is a serious concern to the health system and that they are obligated to protect themselves and their co-workers.
- Managers and supervisors must report violations of this standard to their respective supervisors.
- Any suspected violation of the Zero Tolerance Standard must be documented to ensure thorough review of the matter and, if necessary, appropriate corrective/disciplinary action.
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POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Most experts in workplace violence agree that there are recognizable signs of the potential for violence. Individuals who exhibit one or more of these signs may engage in a violent act or threatening behavior. However, violent behavior has been initiated by individuals exhibiting none of the indicators.

- History of emotional or mental disturbance
- Displaced anger from a previous situation
- History of threatening or violent behavior
- Tense or agitated appearance
- Expressed fear of losing control
- Angry, withdrawn or brooding behavior
- Preoccupation with weapons
- Extreme stress from personal problems or a life crisis
- Difficulty with authority
- Inordinate reaction to organizational decisions/changes
- Identifying with incidents of workplace violence reported in the media

- Engaging in frequent disputes with supervisors or co-workers
- Obsessively involved with one's job with no apparent outside work interest.
- Romantically obsessed with a disinterested co-worker
- Excessive absenteeism
- Drastic change in appearance (clothing and/or hygiene)
- Inability to accept responsibility for one's own actions
- Indirect threats

The preceding factors are neither exhaustive nor definitive. They are provided to indicate some of the possible warning signs for violent behavior.
**SEEKING ASSISTANCE**

The circumstances and issues surrounding workplace violence can be complex and difficult to assess. Therefore, employees, managers, and supervisors are encouraged to seek advice from their supervisors and other available resources, including but not limited to, Employee & Labor Relations Department, Academic & Staff Assistance Program, Police Department, Equal Opportunity-Sexual Harassment Department, and the Violence Prevention Committee (VPC).

The VPC comprises representatives from the Police Department, Legal Affairs, Academic & Staff Assistance Program, Employee & Labor Relations, Equal Opportunity-Sexual Harassment, Risk Management departments, and Employee Health Services. The VPC, with its diversity of expertise, will help develop a strategy to best manage the situation and remain involved until it is resolved. However, in an emergency situation, immediately contact the police department.

**INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

Proper management of workplace violence must begin before there is an incident. The ability to prevent or limit violence depends largely on early recognition of potential problems and preventive measures. A safety plan is an essential violence-prevention tool. A formal plan, involving all department members, demonstrates institutional commitment to violence prevention. It also emphasizes that the Zero Tolerance Standard is everyone’s responsibility. The key elements of the plan are:

- Identification of physical security needs of the department
- Discussion and coordination of emergency strategies with department personnel
- Where possible, arrangements for limited access to work areas
- Protocols for calling the police in emergency situations
- Procedures to alert others to the need for help
- Procedure to cease normal operations and secure the premises
- Outline of emergency evacuation procedures
- Evaluation of the need for security alarm panic buttons, surveillance cameras, etc.
- Requirement for all department members to read the Violence in the Workplace Policy

**REFERRAL SERVICE**

To report incidents confidentially contact:
- Employee & Labor Relations: (916) 734-3362
- Police Department (Dispatch): (916) 734-3335
- Academic & Staff Assistance Program: (916) 734-3737
- Risk Management: (916) 734-3883
- Equal Opportunity-Sexual Harassment: (916) 734-3335

All disruptive, intimidating and/or violent behavior will be thoroughly investigated and met with appropriate action.