



City and County of San Francisco  
 London N. Breed  
 Mayor

## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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 Director of Health

### San Francisco Department of Public Health

<b>Policy &amp; Procedure Title:</b> Prohibition of Violence in the Workplace (HUR17)	
<b>Category:</b> Human Resources	
<b>Effective Date:</b> 1996	<b>Last Reissue/Revision Date:</b> September 2011
<b>DPH Unit of Origin:</b> Human Resources	
<b>Policy Contact - Employee Name w/ Title; &amp;/or DPH Division:</b> Human Resources	
<b>Contact Phone Number(s):</b> 554-2580	
<b>Distribution:</b> DPH-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Other:</b>

*\*All sections in table required.*

#### 1. Purpose of Policy

The Department of Public Health (DPH) is committed to maintaining a safe and secure work environment for all staff, patients and visitors. The purpose of this policy is to inform employees that violence in DPH’s workplace is prohibited, and to provide assistance for employees who have been subject to a verbal or physical threat and/or violent behavior.

#### 2. Policy

It is the policy of the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) and DPH that the workplace should be free of violence, threats of violence, intimidation and other disruptive behaviors. DPH will not tolerate any act or threat of violence by or against employees in the workplace.

Employees are required to treat co-workers, patients, and members of the public with courtesy and respect. Employees are prohibited from bringing weapons to the workplace, except where required by the CCSF in the performance of the employee’s official duties. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives and as defined in California Penal Code Sec. 12020.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in employee discipline, up to and including termination as well as criminal prosecution.

#### 3. Definitions

- a. “Workplace” refers to all DPH worksites and surrounding parking areas, or other areas where DPH employees perform duties in the scope of their employment.

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**The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans.**

We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~  
 ~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally-proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

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- b. "Violence" includes any conduct, verbal or physical, which causes another to reasonably fear for his or her own personal safety and that of his or her family, friends, associates or property. Workplace violence may occur due to a random act by an individual with no relationship to the Department, among current or former employees, or by someone receiving healthcare services. It includes acts and threats of violence in DPH's workplace by or towards:
- A DPH employee
  - A DPH patient or client
  - A CCSF employee
  - A contract employee, intern or volunteer
  - A member of the public or visitor

#### **4. Procedures**

##### **a. Reporting**

Employees have the responsibility to report any threats or acts of violence to their respective supervisors. If there is a threat of immediate danger, employees should call Emergency Response **9-1-1** or the on-site Sheriff's Department.

When notified by a health care provider of a threat against an employee ("Tarasoff Warning"), the department head, personnel official or designee shall notify the affected employee as soon as possible.

##### **b. Investigation**

Supervisors and managers have the responsibility to investigate any reported incidents of threats or acts of violence in the workplace and to take appropriate action. They are also responsible for documenting and reporting all observed or reported incidents of workplace violence.

##### **c. Corrective Action**

Appropriate action may include one or more of the following depending on the nature of the threat or act of violence:

- Consulting with appropriate resources (DPH Management staff, Human Resources, OSH, the City's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the Sheriff's Department) to assess the risk and identify violence prevention strategies;
- Filing a police report and/or referring the matter to the City Attorney to determine if a restraining order is appropriate;
- Approving any appropriate request for employee leave, placing an employee on administrative leave in accordance with Charter Section 8.341 or suspension in accordance with Charter Section 8.342, following consultation with DPH Human Resources;
- Requesting approval of the City's Human Resources Director for a fitness for duty examination, following consultation with DPH Human Resources;

- Admonishing employee(s) that such behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated;
- Imposing disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination;
- Referring the employee to the City's EAP or to a health care/medical provider;
- Referring any employee who is a target or threat of violence to the City's EAP or to a health care/medical provider;
- Providing a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing session in the workplace via the City's EAP;
- Other measures may be taken as appropriate under the circumstances.

## 5. References

- Health Commission Resolution No. 1-96 (*May be obtained by requesting from the Health Commission Secretary at 554.2666.*)
- [Civil Service Commission Policy on Prohibiting Violence in the Workplace, 1995](#)
- [CCSF Employee Handbook](#)
- See also SFGH Policy No. 22.04, [Violence in the Workplace: Zero Tolerance](#); LHH Policy No. 76-07, [Violence in the Workplace: Zero Tolerance](#).