

CF OPERATING PROCEDURE  
NO. 60-11, Chapter 2

STATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
TALLAHASSEE, July 5, 2017

Human Resources

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

2-1. Purpose. This operating procedure implements the Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention Program within the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and establishes a local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team within each region, facility and Headquarters. It provides guidelines for management to identify and handle incidents or potential incidents; a reporting protocol; a mechanism to assess individual employees, workplace situations, and facilities; training and awareness; and post-incident response and management. This operating procedure does not replace Department incident reporting requirements or local procedures and processes related to resident assaults.

2-2. Scope. This operating procedure applies to all region, facility and Headquarters employees during the performance of their assigned duties, during standby or on-call status, while on Department premises, in Department vehicles, or in personal vehicles on premises defined as Department property.

2-3. References.

- a. CFOP 215-6, Incident Reporting and Analysis System (IRAS).
- b. CFOP 60-11, Chapter 1, Policy on Domestic Violence Support.
- c. CFOP 60-55, Chapter 1, Standards of Conduct and Standards for Disciplinary Action for Department Employees.

2-4. Definitions. For the purposes of this operating procedure, the following definitions shall be understood to mean:

a. Workplace Violence. Any physical or verbal assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, stabbing, shooting, suicides and near suicides, rape, and psychological traumas such as stalking, intimidation, bullying, threats (direct or indirect), swearing or shouting with the result of provocation or fear.

b. Workplace. Any location, permanent or temporary, where an employee performs work-related duty. These may include buildings, premises, vehicles, parking areas, job sites, or areas of travel between duty locations.

c. Employee. Any full-time, part-time, permanent or temporary individual actively performing duties defined and controlled by the Department who is classified as an employee in accordance with Human Resource guidelines.

d. Violence by Strangers. Any act of violence toward an employee committed by an individual having no legitimate relationship with the employee or reason to be in the workplace.

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This operating procedure supersedes CFOP 60-11, Chapter 2, dated June 18, 2012.

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e. Violence by Customers. Any act of violence toward an employee committed by a non-resident individual receiving services from the Department or a family member of that individual. These acts may be on Department premises or off premises while an employee is performing work duties; or if not performing work duties, the violence connection is work related.

f. Violence by Co-workers. Any act of violence toward an employee, student, volunteer or intern by another employee, student, volunteer or intern while either is performing work duties or in the workplace.

g. Violence by Relations. Any act of violence toward an employee by an individual who shares a familiar or personal relationship with the employee while performing his or her duties or in the workplace. These may be issues of domestic violence between legally married or estranged parties, non-married partners, or family members.

h. Violence by Contractors. Any act of violence toward an employee by an individual acting in a contractual relationship to perform specified duties for the Department.

i. Management. Any employee charged with the responsibility to implement and enforce the policies and procedures of the Department.

j. Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team. A local core team comprised of representation from General Services, Human Resources, and the General Counsel. Additional participants may include, but are not limited to, Management, Building Security/Manager, and consultation with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and local law enforcement. This group is charged with the responsibility of assessing individuals, situations, and facilities with the goal of preventing, minimizing, or resolving acts of violence and advising executive leadership of incidents and resolutions. Other individuals may be included on a situational basis to facilitate the objectives of the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team.

k. Imminent Danger. A situation of threatening behavior and verbalizations that does not respond to intervention, where the individual has the ability and means to do physical harm to himself or herself or others.

l. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). A specific type of intervention following a significant and traumatic event to mediate the effects of the event and assist employees and the organization toward normalization.

m. Workplace Violence and Threat Assessment Checklist. A checklist tool to follow in the event of an incident of violence or the evidence that an incident could eventually escalate to violence.

n. Risk Assessment Plan. A plan of action developed using the Workplace Violence and Threat Assessment Checklist to address in a comprehensive way an incident of workplace violence.

## 2-5. Policy.

a. The Department is committed to a safe and secure work environment free from threats, intimidation, abusive behavior and violence. Acts of violence, direct or indirect threats, aggressive behavior, or harassment that could lead to violence will not be tolerated. These types of actions create fear and disruption and negatively impact employee security, morale and productivity.

b. Any violation by any employee while in the workplace shall be subject to investigation, and if substantiated, shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

c. All safety and health policies and procedures involving workplace security must be clearly communicated and understood by employees, on-site contractors and volunteers. Each individual is responsible for using safe work practices, following all directives, policies and procedures, and assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

d. All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and not engage in conduct or behaviors that may provoke an unsafe work environment.

e. Violence in the workplace will not be tolerated and the Department will make every reasonable effort to prevent violent incidents from occurring by implementing a Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention Program.

#### 2-6. Statewide Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention Program Responsibilities.

a. Headquarters Human Resources maintains the Department's Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention Program (set forth in this operating procedure) and reviews the policy for needed revisions.

b. A Workplace Violence and Threat Assessment Checklist (Attachment 1 to this chapter) has been developed to assist local managers with administering this program.

c. Provides technical assistance to local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Teams on all aspects of the program.

d. Consults with executive management on all founded incidents and actions being taken.

#### 2-7. Local Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention Program Responsibility.

a. The local HR employee relations representative shall have the authority and responsibility for implementing and coordinating the provisions of this program. The local HR employee relations representative may be found at the following website:

[http://eww.dcf.state.fl.us/myhr411/labor\\_Rel.shtml](http://eww.dcf.state.fl.us/myhr411/labor_Rel.shtml)

b. Local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Teams shall be established in each region, facility and Headquarters to assess the Department's vulnerability to workplace violence at the local level. Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team members reach agreement on preventive actions to be taken; assess and handle incidents within the scope of this policy; and ensure that any employee-training programs in violence prevention and specific plans for responding to acts of violence are implemented.

(1) The local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team consists of, at a minimum, staff from General Services, Human Resources (including employee relations), and the General Counsel's Office. Additional participants may include, but are not limited to, Management, Building Security/Manager, and consultation with the EAP and local law enforcement.

(2) In addition to statewide processes, the local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team develops and implements additional processes specific to the region, facility or Headquarters to enhance workplace safety and security.

(3) The local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team performs workplace hazard assessment for workplace security to include record-keeping and review, periodic workplace security inspections, and workplace surveys.

(4) The local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team identifies workplace violence and security issues and makes recommendations to management and employees.

c. All workplace violence incidents shall be immediately reported to the local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team, the Deputy Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for Operations by the Regional Managing Director or designee or other appropriate management official, and in accordance with the Department policy on incident reporting (see CFOP 215-6, Incident Reporting and Analysis System [IRAS]).

d. The local HR employee relations representative for each region, facility, and Headquarters shall be the designated point of contact for reporting incidents, so employees know who to contact to report an incident.

(1) The local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team investigates the incident by speaking with the appropriate managers, employees and witnesses.

(a) If the incident is related to violence by an employee, a determination is made regarding the employee's continued presence in the workplace. This would include the possibility of reassignment, administrative leave or dismissal of the employee.

(b) If the decision is made to remove the employee from the workplace, the servicing human resources staff (employee relations) prepares the documents and coordinates with the Office of the General Counsel Staff, appropriate management, and General Services/security staff.

(c) The servicing human resources staff works with General Services to collect and/or invalidate the employee's ID badge and other state property; delete computer access; and coordinate any need for the employee to return to the work location for administrative purposes.

(d) If either the intended victim or perpetrator is employed by the State, but not the Department, the local HR employee relations representative immediately notifies the appropriate agency human resources office of the incident.

(e) The local HR employee relations representative notifies General Services if the employee is terminated and provides the effective date of the termination.

(2) If the victim is employed by the Department, the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team will provide the victim with information and contacts for legal remedies such as restraining orders. A copy of any restraining order impacting the work area should be provided to General Services, so that security staff may be aware of the restraining order. The Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team will also consider moving the victim to another work location or determine other appropriate action.

(3) General Services coordinates all facility security measures and reports the status to management, the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team, supervisors and employees, as needed. This includes the establishment and maintenance of evacuation routes and procedures; and ensuring that state policies for bomb threats are followed.

(a) If the facility has security services, they are briefed and positioned to assist.

(b) Local security such as the Capitol Police, local police or sheriff or the Florida Department of Law Enforcement is notified as circumstances warrant.

(c) Active security measures are implemented, which may include total to partial lockdown of the facility, escorting staff to and from parking areas, increasing the size and type of security on-site, and coordinating the need for and use of all local efforts to increase visibility.

(d) Copies of any restraining order(s) related to the security issue are requested.

(4) All assessments of workplace violence, threats and physical injury will include, at a minimum, the following steps:

(a) Visiting the scene of the incident as soon as possible;

(b) Interviewing threatened or injured employee(s) and witness(es);

(c) Examining the workplace for security risk factors associated with the incident, including any previous reports of inappropriate behavior by the perpetrator;

(d) Determining the cause of the incident;

(e) Reviewing all previous incidents;

(f) Taking corrective action to prevent the incident from recurring; and,

(g) Recording the findings and corrective actions taken.

e. The EAP provider will be responsible for or participate in:

(1) Assessment of and assistance or resource to employees in a workplace violence situation, including victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

(2) Interventions to diffuse situations and assist supervisors and managers with hostile employees.

(3) Maintaining continuity between the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team and employee-related services.

(4) Resolution services in the workplace which include debriefings and stabilization, organizational recommendations and follow-up with employees and the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team.

f. The local leadership team is responsible for ensuring the success of the program at the local level by:

(1) Ensuring employees are aware of all Department operating procedures including this operating procedure CFOP 60-11, Chapter 2, entitled "Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention" which may be found at:

<http://eww.dcf.state.fl.us/asg/Publications.shtml>;

A recommended short training video by the Office of General Services, Safety and Risk Management, entitled "Run-Hide-Fight" is offered at the following website:

<http://eww.dcf.state.fl.us/asg/safety/activeshooter/>;

(2) Evaluating the performance of employees in complying with established workplace safety and security measures;

(3) Recognizing employees who perform work practices that promote safety and security in the workplace;

(4) Disciplining employees for failure to comply with workplace safety and security practices; and,

(5) Informing management of any incidents in accordance with paragraph 2-7c of this operating procedure and any critical incident report that may be required pursuant to CFOP 215-6, Incident Reporting and Analysis System (IRAS).

g. It is the responsibility of all managers, supervisors and coordinators to act on violations of this policy. They are expected to exercise "due diligence" to diffuse or resolve a conflict, if practicable, and are to report alleged violations to the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team for review and act accordingly on recommendations.

## 2-8. General.

a. Employee participation in designing and implementing this program is encouraged, and prompt and accurate reporting of all violent incidents whether or not physical injury has occurred is required. Discrimination or retaliation against employees who make reports in accordance with this procedure will not be tolerated.

b. All employees, on-site consultants, contractors and volunteers must adhere to work practices that are designed to make the workplace more secure. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are responsible for following all directives, policies and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

c. Workplace violence incident reports include all information compiled by the Department for recording assault incidents, such as, Incident Reports, Assault Logs, insurance records, police reports, workplace surveys, accident investigations, training records, grievances, inspection information, and any other relevant records or information unless otherwise exempted by law. These reports and information do not replace the requirements of CFOP 215-6.

d. Workplace Security Inspections to identify and evaluate workplace security hazards are performed by or coordinated with Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team members when new, previously unidentified security hazards are identified; threats of injury occur; or workplace security conditions warrant an inspection.

e. Based on review of workplace violence incident reports and security inspections, the local Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team identifies issues that need to be addressed to enhance workplace safety and recommends corrective measures to management as appropriate.

f. Management institutes necessary changes, which may include new or revised local procedures, as well as, physical changes.

2-9. Reporting Protocol. Incidents shall be reported and acted upon immediately in accordance with the Department incident reporting policy and this operating procedure. Employees shall report alleged violations of policy to their immediate supervisors. If this is not possible for any reason, the employee should contact a higher level supervisor or manager. As a final alternative, an employee may contact any representative of the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team directly. Factual information on behaviors exhibited or verbal threats should be conveyed in addition to time, place, witnesses, and other relevant information. **Situations of imminent danger are to be reported first and directly to law enforcement through 911.**

2-10. Training and Awareness.

a. The Department will make available to new employees, on-site consultants, contractors and volunteers this operating procedure upon commencing employment through the Department's intranet at <http://eww.dcf.state.fl.us/asg/Publications.shtml>.

b. All Department employees, on-site consultants, contractors and volunteers are required to familiarize themselves with this operating procedure.

2-11. Incident Response and Debriefing. During or following an act of violence in the workplace, and subsequent to stabilizing the scene, the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team should be contacted immediately. Interventions will be conducted, ideally within 24 to 72 hours, depending on circumstances and events. These interventions shall follow CISM protocol involving management, the EAP and other resources as appropriate. Follow-up shall be conducted as deemed necessary.

2-12. Confidentiality. The Department will make a good faith effort to respect the confidentiality concerns of employees who report suspected violations, or who are potential victims of workplace violence, subject to applicable provisions of law and policy considerations.

2-13. Consequences of Violation. If assessment and investigation support allegations of misconduct or other policy violation, appropriate disciplinary action will be administered.

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY:

*(Signed original copy on file)*

DENNISE G. PARKER  
Human Resources Director

SUMMARY OF REVISED, DELETED, OR ADDED MATERIALS

This revision is a major update of Department policy on workplace violence awareness and prevention including, but not limited to, the following changes:

1. Eliminates reference to "WRAT" and instead spells out Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team.
2. Includes a link to the website listing HR Employee Relations Representatives.
3. Includes a requirement that a copy of any restraining order be provided to General Services.
4. Includes a link to the "Run, Hide, Fight" training video on the General Services webpage.
5. Revises the training requirements to align with current practice and streamlines it.

## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND THREAT ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Employers have a legal and ethical obligation to promote a safe work environment free from threats and violence and employees have the right to expect a work environment that promotes safety from violence, threats and harassment.

Please read this very carefully. The safety of you and your co-workers is a primary responsibility we all share. Workplace violence is a rare but very volatile scenario in which we should all be prepared. All DCF employees should review and save this check list to identify present and potential workplace threat and violence problems.

### **If you believe there is an imminent and direct threat to harm persons or property:**

1. Upon observing an act of violence, immediately move to a place of safety.
2. Call 911 immediately:
  - Give dispatcher detailed information as to the direct threat.
  - Give a detailed description of the subject making the threat.
  - Give description of the type of weapon used if any.
  - Give the location or last known location of the subject making the threat.
  - Give description of vehicle and accomplice, if applicable.
  - Request medical assistance during the call if needed.
  - Contact building security or building manager, if applicable.
  - Administer appropriate first aid if necessary.
3. Contact the point of contact for the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team:
  - Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The contact person will convene the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team (General Services; Human Resources; General Counsel; Management; Building Security/Manager); and local law enforcement.
  - Management or the contact person will report the incident to Headquarters (the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Operations).
4. Assessment Team will Identify all risks and implement the Risk Assessment Plan:
  - Isolate or evacuate other people if there is immediate risk.
  - If possible, lock down building and restrict entrances and exits.
  - Request medical assistance, call 911.
  - Provide on-site counseling if necessary.
  - Provide referrals to the Employee Assistance Program, as necessary.

### **Examples of a direct and imminent threat, includes a person who:**

- Makes threatening remarks either spoken or via emails, texts, phone calls or displays threatening physical actions that causes others to be in fear of immediate bodily harm to persons or property.
- Makes a statement that they are suicidal or homicidal.
- Makes a statement that they will harm someone.
- Displays a firearm, knife or other instrument that could be used as a weapon to cause harm to a person or property.
- Makes a statement that they will go get a weapon.
- Is behaving erratically by yelling, screaming, flailing arms, or throwing objects.



**Warning signs shown by individuals include:**

- Makes threatening statements to kill or harm self or others, direct or veiled.
- Makes references or is preoccupied with other incidents of workplace violence.
- Exhibits behavior that is intimidating, belligerent, insubordinate, defiant or challenging.
- Exhibits confrontational, attitude with anger that is easily provoked, unpredictable, restless or antisocial behavior.
- Discusses or exhibits the fondness or fascination with firearms.
- Blames others for anything that goes wrong, with no sense of own responsibility.
- Shows a recent and marked decline in performance.
- Changes in personality, mood or behavior.
- Exhibits excessive crying.
- Exhibits decline in personal grooming.
- Crosses behavioral boundaries, such as:
  1. Excessive personal phone calls that are not work related.
  2. Excessive personal emails that are not work related.
  3. Signs of substance abuse.
  4. Serious stress in their personal life including financial or marital problems.

**If not an imminent or direct threat to harm persons or property:**

1. Contact the point of contact for the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team:
  - Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The contact person will convene the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team (General Services; Human Resources; General Counsel; Management; Building Security/Manager); and local law enforcement.
2. Management or the contact person will report the incident to Headquarters (the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Operations):
  - Provide detailed information as if it was a direct threat.
  - Provide the exact statements made by the subject and provide descriptions of the behavior and actions that have caused concern.
  - Contact building security or building manager.
3. The contact person will report the incident to local law enforcement:
  - If law enforcement responds, be sure to get the offense incident report number, the name of the reporting law enforcement officer and the name of the law enforcement agency.
  - Report to law enforcement the physical description of the subject and the make, model and color of vehicle if possible.

**What to do if an employee is experiencing threatening domestic situations:**

- The employee must notify the manager or supervisor if his/her domestic issues have escalated to the point of a direct and immediate threat. Precautionary actions are to be taken immediately by the manager or supervisor to ensure staff safety.
- The manager or supervisor will contact the point of contact for the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team: Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_.
- The contact person will convene the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Team (General Services; Human Resources; General Counsel; Management; Building Security/Manager).
- Management or the contact person will report the incident to Headquarters (the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Operations).

1. The manager or supervisor must do the following:
  - Provide assistance to the employee with services provided by HR and EAP.
  - Find out if the employee/victim has filed a sworn petition for an injunction for protection against domestic violence with a circuit court.
  - Request to review a copy of the petition to determine if the subject is prohibited from (DCF property and facilities) the workplace. If not, the employee must have the petition modified by the court.
  - After verifying that a court injunction (restraining order) for protection against domestic violence has been filed against an individual(s), take immediate and appropriate actions to notify staff, that under no circumstances, will the individual(s) be granted access on DCF property or facilities.
  - Notify building security or building manager, if applicable.
  - In all situations be prepared to contact local law enforcement. If local law enforcement responds, report the name and physical description of the subject and the make, model and color of vehicle, if possible. Make sure to get the offense incident report number, the name of the reporting officer and the name of the law enforcement agency.
  - If possible, from various resources, try to obtain a photo and physical description of the subject (name, date of birth and social security number) and vehicle and post it conspicuously in all common areas.

**Preventive and Ongoing Actions must be conducted by managers and supervisors:**

- Communicate the DCF Violence in the Workplace Policy to all new managers, supervisors and employees and provide periodic reminders of this policy to managers, supervisors and staff.
- Train all managers, supervisors and staff on the warning signs.
- Communicate expectations that all incidents that may be perceived as workplace violence must be reported immediately and actively responded to in accordance with DCF Operating Procedure 60-11, Chapter 2, Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention.