

**County of Inyo  
Workplace Violence Prevention Plan  
Formerly “Anti Violence Policy”**

**Adopted February 2024**

**Approved by Health and Safety Committee on 1/18/2024**

**Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on 2/06/2024**

**MESSAGING TO MEMORIZE:**

**“If you see something, say something.”**

**“RUN, HIDE, FIGHT.”**

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## **I. PURPOSE**

The County of Inyo provides a safe and healthful workplace for its employees and public officials and is committed to securing work environments. Workplace violence is any incident in which any employee is abused, threatened, battered, assaulted, or intimidated at the workplace. No form of violence will be tolerated. Any violent act or threat against a person's life, health, family, or property, directly or indirectly, regardless of intent, made by or to any County employee is unacceptable. If a county employee causes or contributes to an act of workplace violence, discipline will result up to and including separation from County employment.

Violence could be obvious and overt, such as physical assault and verbal abuse. It could alternatively be more subtle, such as intimidation and threatening body language. Here are some examples of workplace violence from the news over the last few years:

- Physical attack, including biting, choking, grabbing, hair pulling, kicking, punching, slapping, pushing, pulling, scratching, or spitting.
- Verbal abuse in person or by telephone, including voice mail.
- Written abuse by U.S. mail, intra- or inter-office mail, or by e-mail.
- Harassing surveillance or stalking.
- Unauthorized possession or implied use of firearms or any type of weapon.
- Destruction or threat of destruction of County property.
- Making either direct or veiled verbal threats of harm (i.e., predicting that bad things are going to happen to a co-employee or supervisor).
- Words or actions that are extremely unusual, disruptive and/or completely inconsistent with the workplace.

There are four types of Workplace Violence, and all four are included in the Plan: (1) Workplace violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the work site and includes violent acts by anyone who enters the workplace with the intent to commit a crime. (2) Workplace violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, or visitors or other individuals accompanying a client, customer, or patient. (3) Workplace violence against an employee by a present or former employee, supervisor, or manager. (4) Workplace violence committed in the workplace by someone who does not work there but has or is known to have had a personal relationship with an employee.

This Workplace Violence Prevention Plan replaces the County's previous version, called the Anti-Violence Policy, and the Plan covers all employees. The Plan is fully compliant with California SB 553, signed into law September 30, 2023. In accordance with SB 553, certain reporting aspects of the plan do not apply to healthcare facilities subject to Section 3342, POST participating law enforcement, employees working remotely, and work spaces with less than 10 employees with no public access. For questions about applicability, contact Risk Management or Personnel.

## II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Abuse: Language that condemns or vilifies usually unjustly, intemperately, and angrily; or physical maltreatment.
- B. Battery: Unlawful touching of another without his/her consent.
- C. Assault: Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury upon another person, when coupled with an apparent present ability so to do, and any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm. An assault may be committed without physically touching, or striking, or doing bodily harm to the person of another (e.g., lifting a fist in a threatening manner).
- D. Threat: Communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on any person or on property. Includes a statement or conduct that causes a person to fear for his or her safety because there is a reasonable possibility the person might be physically injured, and that serves no legitimate purpose.
- E. Intimidation: To make timid or fearful; frighten; to compel or deter by or as if by threats. Such fear must arise from the willful conduct of the accused, rather than from some mere temperamental timidity of the victim; however, the fear of the victim need not be so great as to result in terror, panic, or hysteria.

## III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Risk Manager is the point person for this plan. He brings periodic updates to the Board for consideration following review for effectiveness by the Threat Assessment Team and the Joint Labor Management Health and Safety Committee. Contact the Risk Manager at 760.872.2908 | [risk@inyocounty.us](mailto:risk@inyocounty.us) | 1360 North Main St, Ste 256, Bishop, CA 93514.

Department Heads are responsible for implementing this Plan in their units with guidance from Risk Management and Personnel. The Threat Assessment Team and the Joint Labor Management Health and Safety Committee provide recommendations on the plan and input to assist in implementation. In conjunction with other provisions of the Injury & Illness Prevention Program (including routine inspections, site security assessments, employee surveys, and hazard reports), the Threat Assessment Team and the Joint Labor Management Health and Safety Committee will review the plan annually for effectiveness.

Supervisors and their employees have important roles in maintaining a safe work environment and minimizing the risk of violence in the workplace. These roles can overlap, but the nature of the responsibility can differ, as distinguished by these guidelines:

- **Employee Responsibilities:** (a) Complete training/orientation as required; (b) Follow security precautions; (c) Know Run, Hide, Fight; (d) Report threats or suspicious behaviors; (e) Share suggestions for improvement with supervisor, union rep, or risk management; and (f) Do not engage in violence at work.
- **Supervisor Responsibilities:** (a) Conduct training/orientations as required; (b) Maintain this document and make it available to employees; (c) Ensure periodic review of security protocols; (d) Follow-up with employee after an incident; (e) Cooperate with outside agencies; and (f) Consider suggestions.

#### IV. PREVENTION AND HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

The County's commitment to preventing or minimizing the threat of violence in the workplace includes the utilization of engineering controls, administrative and work practice controls, and the awareness education of potential pre- or post- indicators of violence. Our IIPP carefully covers the process of hazard identification, so this section appears generalized and brief and is not intended to be a comprehensive review of workplace violence hazards. Furthermore, this plan is a public document, and we do not wish to disclose extemporaneously to the public potential avenues for someone to practice violence against our employees or visitors. Here are general themes to our solutions.

- Engineering Controls
  - Routine inspections – see IIPP
  - Keeping up with trash and debris collection
  - Clear panels in doors for monitoring, subject to further security review.
  - Curved mirrors to see around corners.
  - Closed circuit video in jail and in certain exterior areas.
  - Vehicle deterrence around buildings
  - Keyless door systems
  - Furniture arrangement to facilitate expedited egress.
  - Cell phones, panic buttons, silent messaging in Teams
  - Other warning and silent messaging systems
- Administrative and Work Practice Controls
  - Health and Human Services has its own custom violence prevention plan that is a subset of this one for employees working in the field since 2022 designed with the expertise of those employees working in the field and with the input of medical and law enforcement. That plan is not attached to this one.
  - Employees are provided cell or satellite phones when traveling remotely and when appropriate.
  - Panic buttons are being installed in treatment rooms.
  - Employees may request to have another employee or law enforcement accompany them in situations where they feel unsafe or threatened.
  - Coaching through routine Vector Solutions assignments

By identifying signal behaviors, officials, managers, and employees may be able to prevent violent incidents from occurring. We teach our employees vigilance without discrimination in their awareness and reporting efforts in service to themselves and others. Managers and employees shall report concerns about signal behaviors to their Division Head or Department Head and/or Risk Management or 9-1-1. The Risk Manager and Division or Department Head will conduct a confidential interview with the reporting employee. Anonymous reports may be made at <https://www.inyocounty.us/iipp>.

The following behaviors may be a signal that something is wrong. None should be ignored.

- Awareness - Indicators of Potential Tendency to Violence
  - Direct or veiled threats of harm.
  - Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying, or other inappropriate and

- aggressive behavior.
- Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees.
- Fascination with weapons.
- Statements showing fascination with incidents of workplace violence, statements indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve a problem, or statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace homicides.
- Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide.
- Drug or alcohol abuse.
- Extreme changes in behavior.
- Awareness - Indicators of Domestic Violence that could spill over to workplace
  - Signs of physical injury.
  - Emotional episodes.
  - Increased fear of a victim.

## **V. MANDATORY REPORTING OF WORKPLACE INCIDENTS**

Employees are required to report all instances of workplace violence or threats of workplace violence to their Division Head, Department Head, or Risk Management within 24 hours of the incident. No special form is required to make a report. The person receiving the report may collect information on the Workplace Violence Report form to ensure complete data collection. The County prohibits retaliation against an employee who makes a workplace violence report. If a violent act results in an injury to a County employee, the County will report the incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Nothing in this policy should be construed as prohibiting an employee from reporting an incident to a law enforcement agency.

## **VI. PROCEDURE FOR IMMEDIATE DANGER**

In the event an employee is in or feels in immediate danger of a workplace violence incident, the employee shall Dial 9-1-1 or 8-9-1-1 for emergency assistance if it is safe to do so. Employees are responsible for knowing how to summon emergency help from their particular offices. If you are unable to talk with the 911 dispatcher, discreetly dial 911 and leave the phone off the hook. The dispatcher will be able to hear what is going on and the address automatically appears on their screen. If applicable, follow the Active Shooter Guidelines in Appendix A.

## **VII. PROCEDURE FOR A POTENTIALLY VIOLENT SITUATION**

If you see something, say something. Retaliation against someone reporting a potentially violent person or situation is strictly prohibited.

In the event an employee is confronted with a situation that they feel could turn violent, the steps below are advised, subject to conditions and circumstances. This information may also be found in the Emergency Action Guide.

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- Stay calm.
- Speak in a calm voice, businesslike, and clearly.
- Be careful of your language - do not be verbally abusive or argumentative.
- Be non-threatening. Don't clench your fists.
- Keep at a distance from the perpetrator.
- Attempt to position yourself so that office furniture or other objects separate you and the perpetrator.
- Position yourself so that an exit route is accessible.
- Do not touch the perpetrator.
- Do not attempt to physically disarm a perpetrator holding a weapon.
- Obey the perpetrator's orders when you are physically in danger but be vigilant in looking for opportunities to get away.

### **VIII. PROCEDURE FOR AFTER AN INCIDENT OCCURS (POST INCIDENT PROCEDURE)**

The following are advised after an incident occurs.

1. The target employee shall immediately notify their Division Head or Department Head and Risk Management. If the employee's Department Head is the perpetrator, the notification shall be made only to Risk Management. If the perpetrator is the Risk Manager, then the report shall be made directly to the CAO.
2. Post-incident debriefing will be conducted as soon as possible after the incident with employees and supervisors involved in the incident.
3. Individual trauma counseling for all employees affected by the incident will be made available by Personnel.
4. A Workplace Violence Report shall be prepared by Risk Management during the investigation with the assistance of the initial reporting employee and the Threat Assessment Team. The depth and timeliness of the investigation shall be commensurate with the severity of the incident. Employees who work most closely in the area where the event occurred may have special insight into the causes and solutions and will be interviewed to ascertain their insights and recommendations.
5. A review of whether appropriate engineering and administrative and work practice control measures were effectively implemented will be conducted and recommendations for the future, if any, will be prepared.
6. The investigative findings may be put in writing, and electronic copies of the findings will be made available to affected employees.
7. To the extent possible, confidentiality of the facts and circumstances surrounding an incident of workplace violence will be maintained. All employees involved in the incident and/or investigation, whether the target employee, perpetrator or witnesses, shall not discuss the incident with anyone other than law enforcement, the Risk Manager, County Counsel, union representative or Threat Management Team. Any requests for information, whether verbal or written, shall be referred to Risk Management.
8. The Risk Manager shall record information in the Violent Incident Log about every incident, post-incident response, and investigation in accordance with Cal-OSHA regulations. Risk Management will report to the appropriate state agency.

## **IX. THREAT MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The Threat Management Team comprised of the Risk Manager, Assistant or Deputy Personnel Director, and representatives from the offices of County Counsel, Sheriff's Department, and Behavioral Health. The Team assembles to determine courses of action in immediate or potentially violence situations, to provide their expertise and assistance to Department Heads and Risk Management in investigations of workplace violence incidents, and to make recommendations regarding discipline, counseling, fitness for duty exams and special security measures. The Team meets as needed and no regular schedule is required at this time.

## **X. TRAINING**

The County will provide training to employees that addresses the workplace violence risks that the employees are reasonably anticipated to encounter in their jobs. The training will include: (a) How to obtain a copy of the workplace violence prevention plan and how to participate in its development and implementation; (b) the definitions and requirements of applicable regulations; (c) how to report workplace violence incidents or concerns to the employer or law enforcement without fear of reprisal; (d) workplace violence hazards specific to one's job, corrective measures the employer has implemented, how to seek assistance to prevent or respond to violence, and strategies to avoid physical harm; (e) the violent incident log and how to obtain copies of required records; and (f) an opportunity for interactive questions and answers with a person knowledgeable about the employer's plan.

The Threat Assessment Team and the Joint Labor Management Health and Safety Committee will review the effectiveness of the training and advise on continuous improvement.

## **XI. RECORDKEEPING**

Violence Incident Logs are recorded on a calendar basis and maintained by Risk Management. Logs are maintained for five years per SB553. Aggregated (nameless) data are shared with the Joint Labor Management Committee annually if there is any data. The Risk Manager is the contact person for questions regarding data or other records.

## **XII. EXHIBITS**

Three appendices follow.

- A. Active Shooter Guidelines (2 pages)
- B. Concerns, Recommendations, and Feedback (1 page)
- C. Jobs and Tasks Requiring Annual Training on this Plan (1 page)
- D. Sample Violent Incident Log (1 page. Sorry, it's hard to read as a PDF. It's a big spreadsheet. Email Risk Manager for a printout.)



## **EXHIBIT A: ACTIVE SHOOTER GUIDELINES (2 pages)**

The objective of these guidelines is to assist employees in dealing with an active shooter event. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes and prior to the arrival of law enforcement, employees must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation. An active shooter is defined as an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. There is usually no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

### **A. HOW TO RESPOND: RUN**

If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Get out of there! Be sure to:

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Help others escape, if possible.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Call 911 when you are safe. The information to provide the 911 operator is the location of the active shooter, number of shooters, physical description of the shooter(s), number and types of weapons, and number of potential victims at the location.

### **B. HOW TO RESPOND: HIDE**

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you, but watch for the situation to change. Your hiding place should:

- Be out of the active shooter's view.
- Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door).
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture.
- Not trap you or restrict your options for movement.

While in your hiding place:

- Silence your cell phone.
- Turn off any source of noise.
- Hide behind large items such as cabinets or desks.
- Remain quiet.
- Turn out the lights.

### **C. HOW TO RESPOND: FIGHT**

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.
- Throwing items and improvising weapons (i.e., fire extinguisher).
- Yelling.
- Committing to your actions.

### **D. WHAT TO DO WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES**

Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible, not to evacuate victims. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard. They might march right past you even though you're bleeding. Let them.

- Remain calm and follow officers' instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets).
- Immediately raise your hands and spread your fingers.
- Always keep your hands visible.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers or holding on to them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling.
- Do not stop to ask officers for directions when evacuating, just proceed in the safest direction, which is more than likely the direction from which officers are entering the premises.
- Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held there until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

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EXHIBIT B: CONCERNS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND FEEDBACK  
REGARDING THE INYO COUNTY WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN

In the interest of providing a safe and healthful work environment, all Inyo County employees are encouraged to bring any concerns about this plan or its impact, to their supervisor, labor representative, or Risk Management. This form may be used to do so. Labor representatives are encouraged to bring these forms to the Joint Labor/Management Safety Committee for review and recommendation. To express concerns anonymously, see <https://www.inyocounty.us/iipp>.

CONCERN:

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RECOMMENDATION

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Employee Name: _____ Title: _____ <i>(You may elect to remain anonymous.)</i>
Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

*RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO SUPERVISOR, RISK MANAGEMENT, OR UNION REP*

EMPLOYEE – PLEASE DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

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Name of Department Head or Supervisor (Print): \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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### EXHIBIT C: JOBS AND TASKS WITH POTENTIAL OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE TO WORKPLACE VIOLENCE WHEREIN ANNUAL TRAINING MAY BE REQUIRED

Inyo County employees assigned to any of the following tasks are considered to have potential occupational exposure to workplace violence incidents, however unlikely, and must complete annual training on how to protect themselves. Such employees hold any of the following countywide job titles:

The Sheriff's Department is exempt from the annual training assigned by the Risk Manager under this policy, as the Sheriff's Department trains Sheriff's Department staff on workplace violence prevention. **All other departments and employees will be assigned at least one annual training topic related to workplace violence prevention.** Entirely remote ("at home") workers may be exempted from the annual training requirement by their department head or designee. Remote workers who return to the office should take the previously exempted course upon return to the office.