

CLASSIFICATION: All Personnel

ADOPTED: 9/29/98

REVISED:

SUBJECT: Violence and Threats in the Workplace

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The County Board of Education has established a zero-tolerance standard regarding any threats and violent behavior, implied or actual, from any person directed toward other employees or members of the public in a facility of the County Superintendent of Schools or in connection with business of the County Superintendent of Schools.

Examples of prohibited behavior are physical assault, verbal threats and/or abuse, bullying or non-verbal threatening behavior (including stalking) which communicates a threat to inflict physical harm, vandalism, arson, and use of weapons. For purposes of this administrative regulation, the following definitions are provided as guidelines.

DEFINITIONS

Workplace violence means acts of violence against an employee or member of the public, threats to inflict physical harm or damage to property, or any purposeful or knowing behavior which would cause a reasonable person to feel threatened with physical harm. Workplace violence may be committed by an employee or non-employee. Workplace violence does not include reasonable force to defend oneself or others.

Bullying is the use of physical or verbal coercion to obtain control over others or to be habitually cruel to others.

Physical assault is the attempt or act to strike or touch a person or that person's property with a part of the anatomy or an object, with the intent to cause hurt or harm.

Stalking is the persistent following, contacting, watching, or any other such threatening actions that compromise the peace of mind or the personal safety of the individual.

Verbal abuse is the use of speech, writing, or gestures that is threatening, insulting, intimidating, obscene, crude, or derogatory directed at an individual or group, face-to-face, or by any electronic communication (e.g., telephone, facsimile, modem, e-mail) with the intent to cause a person fear or injury.

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Weapon is any firearm, whether loaded or not loaded; or any other device designed as a weapon or, through its use is capable of producing bodily harm or death; or imitation weapon or any other device or instrument which is, or can be, used to threaten or cause bodily harm or death.

Possession is defined as having a weapon on one's person, or in an area subject to one's control in a facility operated, or property controlled, by the County Superintendent of Schools or in connection with business of the County Superintendent of Schools.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

The County Superintendent of Schools establishes a Threat Assessment Team. Members of the team will include:

- C Director, Human Resources
- C Director, Risk Management
- C EASE Manager
- C Security Guard

The Threat Assessment Team is responsible for the following:

1. Assess the San Diego County Office of Education's readiness for dealing with workplace violence.
 - C Review of physical facilities
 - C Review of security measures
 - C Review of training of management in diagnosing early warning signs of violence and in dealing with potential violence
2. Make recommendations to improve security and training.
3. Become knowledgeable about workplace violence.
4. Serve as liaison with specialized resources from the community.

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5. As assigned by the Director, Human Resources, conduct investigations of identified situations where workplace violence has occurred, or is alleged to have occurred, or where it is likely to occur at the offices or programs of the San Diego County Office of Education. The Director, Human Resources, is responsible to coordinate all investigations into reports of workplace violence and to report findings and recommendations through the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources and Communication Services, to the County Superintendent of Schools.
6. Advise appropriate follow-up action(s) such as EASE counseling and/or medical assessment, including discipline for employees engaging in workplace violence or threats of violence.

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING PROCEDURES

All threats of workplace violence must be reported and will be taken seriously.

Employee Responsibilities

1. Employees are expected to treat other people and property with respect. No employee is permitted to commit or threaten violence against any other employee or member of the general public.
2. Employees are encouraged to report to their supervisor the existence of any restraining orders against another person and provide a photograph of the person to whom the restraining orders apply.
3. Employees are not permitted to bring any weapon to the workplace unless the weapon is authorized and required to fulfill the employees' job duties.
3. Employees shall immediately report any threat or incident(s) of workplace violence to their supervisor, Director, Human Resources, or any other member of the management staff. Reports may be made verbally and must be followed by a confidential written report. When the employee believes that there is an immediate serious threat or the commission of a crime, he/she may report the situation or incident to the San Diego Police Department.

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Management Responsibilities

Managers are expected to appropriately intervene upon becoming aware of an employee receiving verbal abuse or threats, whether from another employee or a member of the public. All threats of workplace violence must be reported and will be taken seriously. Managers/supervisors will:

1. Attend San Diego County Office of Education sponsored training on workplace violence and techniques for identifying and defusing workplace problems and conflicts.
2. Inform and assist all employees of how to complete a *Workplace Violence /Threat Report* form.
3. Immediately contact the Director, Human Resources or his/her designee, security, and the San Diego Police Department, if appropriate, if an incident of workplace violence is suspected of occurring or has actually occurred, or if they become aware of a threat.
4. Inform the offending person that threats will not be tolerated and that, if the offending person is an employee, disciplinary action may follow. The Director, Human Resources, may require employees to undergo an assessment by a medical doctor and/or an EASE counselor regarding the offending employee's fitness for duty.
5. Consult with the Director, Human Resources to evaluate the need for immediate removal of the offending person from the worksite and take necessary steps to protect employees against whom violence or threats are directed.
6. Consult with the Director, Human Resources and cooperate, as necessary, in the investigation and documentation of an incident of workplace violence.

Board Policy Nos.: 4019, 3510

Administrative Regulation Nos.: 3510, 3515

**Legal References: California Civil Code
51.7 and 52.1**