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# Workplace Violence Prevention Program

Patchogue-Medford UFSD

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**Workplace Violence Prevention Policy Statement**

Patchogue-Medford School District is committed to the safety and security of our employees. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to our agency, staff and clients.

Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of their employment including but not limited to: an attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee; any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm; intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without their consent that entails some injury; or stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

Acts of violence against any of our employees where any work-related duty is performed will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including involving law enforcement authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other as well as students and visitors, following all policies, procedures and practices, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of New York State Labor Law Art. 2, §27-b and highlights some of the elements that are found within our Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The process involved in complying with this law includes a workplace evaluation that is designed to identify the risks of workplace violence to which our employees could be exposed. Authorized Employee Representative(s) will, at a minimum, be involved in:

- evaluating the physical environment;
- developing the Workplace Violence Prevention Program; and
- reviewing workplace violence incident reports at least annually to identify trends in the types of incidents reported, if any, and reviewing the effectiveness of the mitigating actions taken.

All employees will participate in the annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program. The goal of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of all people in our workplace. All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to immediately upon notification.

All personnel are responsible for notifying the Director of Security of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

*Alternatively*

*All personnel are responsible for notifying their Supervisor and Building Administrator of a workplace violence incident. The notification process at a minimum shall entail completing an Employee Injury/Incident Report, providing it to their Supervisor and sending to Nicole Ciminiello, Workplace Violence Coordinator. Subsequently, the notification process for that Report form shall be followed.*

This policy shall be enforced in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, collective bargaining agreements, and the *Code of Conduct*, as may be necessary.

### INTRODUCTION

This Workplace Violence Prevention Program is designed to prevent, minimize and respond to any workplace violence incidents in accordance with Labor Law 27-b and Code Rule 800.6, "Public Employer Workplace Violence Prevention Programs."

Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or acts of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty during his or her employment including but not limited to:

- An attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee;
- Any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm;
- Intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without his or her consent that entails some injury;
- Stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

### RISK FACTORS

Patchogue-Medford School District has evaluated its workplaces to determine the presence of factors or situations in such workplaces that might place employees at risk of workplace violence. An evaluation of relevant records including past reports of workplace violence incidents and injuries to identify patterns in the type and cause of injury as well as workplaces, operations or individuals was conducted. A review of relevant policies, work practices and work procedures that may impact the risk of workplace violence was also completed. Lastly, an evaluation of the physical workplaces was completed to determine the presence of factors which may place employees at risk of workplace violence.

Below is a list of the risk factors identified as a result of the workplace examinations;

- Violence directed at employees by students.
- Violence directed at employees by parents or guardians of students.
- Violence against coworkers, supervisors, or administrators by a present or former employee.
- Violent acts by criminals who have no other connection with the workplace but enter to commit a crime.
- Violent acts by approved contractor or visitor to the workplace upon an employee.
- Violence at the workplace by a non-employee, but who has a personal relationship with an employee, this includes domestic violence related incidents that occur at the workplace.
- Bomb threats.
- Intrusions.
- Building Access (Students and Staff).
- Harassment that could lead to violence.
- Sexual Harassment.
- Altercations (Staff injured when intervening in student altercation).
- Violent behavior.

Employee vulnerability varies across the workplace and is based on several factors. Workplaces with increased vulnerability include work practices that can involve;

- Working alone or in small numbers.
- Working in public settings.

- Working in a setting with uncontrolled access to the workplace.
- Working late after typical operating hours.
- Working early morning hours.
- Working evening shifts.
- Working in high-risk locations or job duty functions with known previous security problems or vulnerabilities .

### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Methods used to prevent the occurrence of workplace violence incidents include but are not limited to:

- Enforcing existing workplace Policies and procedures.
- Training to increase employee awareness of the signs/effects of workplace violence. The District requires that all employees review the Workplace Violence Prevention Program annually. Also, the Workplace Violence Prevention Program Policy and Plan will be posted in all Main Offices in each school building. The Workplace Violence Policy will also be posted by each time clock in the building.
- The importance of swift reporting of workplace violence incidents and injuries - The District has developed a new form for employees to fill out if an incident occurs. These forms will be made available on the District's intranet, Main Office of each building and the nurse's office. The form should be shared with their building administrator and the original should be sent to the Workplace Violence Coordinator.
- Making high-risk areas more visible to more people.
- Ensuring sufficient external lighting - Buildings and Grounds employees as well as Security Personnel work together to ensure there is adequate lighting on the exterior of the building and in parking lots.
- Adequate security camera coverage in common spaces (corridors, stairwells, entrances, exterior parking lots) - The District is in the process of adding another 200 cameras that Principals and the Director of Security deemed to not have adequate coverage within their respective buildings. When the project is completed there will be over 800 cameras installed district wide.
- Providing training in conflict resolution and nonviolent self-defense responses - The District has had several administrators, psychologists, social workers, and teachers trained in C.P.I. This training is provided annually to staff members.
- Establishing and implementing reporting systems for incidents of workplace violence – A new form was developed for workplace violence incidents. Training will be provided to Main Office clericals and nurses to inform them that these forms must be made available in the Main Office of each building as well as in the Nurses' Office. The Workplace Violence form should be reviewed by the Administrator of that building and then sent to the Workplace Violence Coordinator for the District.
- Eliminating isolated work areas.
- Installing security hardware.
- Implementing access control procedures.
- The District has created, and enforces, a detailed Code of Conduct to describe the expected behavior of students, staff, and visitors to school buildings and the disciplinary actions resulting from violations of the code.
- District Wide Safety Plan and Building Wide Emergency Response Plans.
- Engineering Controls (RAVE App, Lockdown System, Security vestibules).
- Threat Assessment Team.

### HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS

In situations where the risk associated with a potential workplace violence hazard cannot be eliminated, control measures can be used to reduce the risk to employees. There are three main types of controls to help safeguard employees. The three controls are listed in order of the most effectiveness. Engineering controls, followed by work practice controls and lastly, personal protective equipment.

- i. **Engineering Controls**: eliminates or reduces risk through physical changes to the workplace. Some examples of this would be as follows:
  - a. Security vestibules
  - b. Greeter windows
  - c. Lockdown buttons
  - d. Increase lighting in remote areas
  - e. Installation of fencing and gates
  
- ii. **Work Practice Controls**: reduce the hazard by changing organizational policies and procedures. Examples of Work Practice Controls include:
  - a. Implementing Visitor Management procedures which require all visitors to provide a License or Passport to enter a building. Once they show this proof, the visitor can enter with a “visitors badge which must be worn at all times within the building”.
  - b. Provide training to employees on de-escalation techniques and recognizing precursors to violence.
  - c. Providing cell phones or handheld radios to employees.
  - d. Institute communication/itineraries across shifts to be able to share information regarding agitated staff or students so that all employees are on one accord.
  
- iii. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**: For the most part, this type of intervention is not relevant to workplace violence prevention. However, there can be some job duties PPE would be appropriate; body armor for law enforcement personnel or armed security guards, or in some cases aids could use specific PPE based upon student anticipated behaviors.

Policies, plans, and procedures applicable to workplace violence prevention, hazard mitigation and notification are consistent with the above control methods.

### HAZARD MITIGATION

Hazard mitigation includes the methods and means by which the employer shall address each specific risk identified in the workplace evaluation. The table in Attachment No. 1 lists the risk factors compiled and assigns control measures for each specific hazard identified.

### INCIDENT REPORTING

If the workplace violence situation warrants a response from emergency services, all building occupants are authorized to request help via established and available communication tools. Additionally, all incidents of workplace violence, whether they result in physical harm or not, are to be reported in accordance with the District’s Workplace Violence Incident Report Form. This report must be sent to Nicole Ciminiello, the

Workplace Violence Prevention Coordinator following a report of workplace violence with a copy given to your immediate supervisor or Building Principal. It will be maintained for use in the annual Workplace Violence Prevention Program review and update.

The report must include at a minimum:

- Workplace location where incident occurred;
- Time of day/ shift when incident occurred;
- A detailed description of the incident, including events leading up to the incident and how the incident ended;
- Names and job titles of involved employees;
- Name or other identifier of other individual(s) involved;
- Nature and extent of injuries arising from the incident; and
- Names of witnesses.

If the case is a “privacy concern case” as defined below, a Workplace Violence Incident Report as set forth above is still required. However, before sharing a copy of such Report, the employer shall remove the name of the employee who was the victim of the workplace violence and shall instead enter “PRIVACY CONCERN CASE” in the space normally used for the employee’s name.

The employer shall treat incidents involving the following injuries or illnesses as privacy concern cases:

- An injury or illness to an intimate body part or the reproductive system;
- An injury or illness resulting from a sexual assault;
- Mental illness;
- HIV infection;
- Needle stick injuries and cuts from sharp objects that are or may be contaminated with another person’s blood or other potentially infectious material;
- Other injuries or illnesses, if the employee independently and voluntarily requests that his or her name not be entered on the Report.

### EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Each employee must be provided with information and training on the risks of workplace violence in their workplace(s). Training must be provided at the time of the employee’s initial assignment and at least annually thereafter. Information as necessary shall be provided to affected employees whenever significant changes are made to the workplace violence prevention program.

At a minimum training shall address the following:

- The requirements of the workplace violence regulations, described here, and the risk factors that were identified in the risk evaluation determination;
- Measures that the employees can take to protect themselves from the identified risks including specific procedures that the employer has implemented to protect employees, such as incident alert and notification procedures, appropriate work practices, emergency procedures and the use of security alarms and other devices;
- The location of the written workplace violence prevention program and how to obtain a copy

Reference Attachment No. 2 for a written outline for the employee training program.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program shall be reviewed and updated on at least an annual basis. The employer, with the participation of the authorized employee representative(s), shall also conduct a review of the Workplace Violence Incident Reports, at least annually, to identify trends in the types of incidents in the workplace and review of the effectiveness of the mitigating actions taken.

DISCLOSURE

Nothing in this plan or Code Rule 800.6 shall require the disclosure of information otherwise kept confidential for security reasons. Such information may include information which, if disclosed:

- Would interfere with law enforcement investigations or judicial proceedings;
- Would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication;
- Would identify a confidential source or disclose confidential information relating to a criminal investigation;
- Would reveal criminal investigative techniques or procedures, except routine techniques and procedures; or
- Would endanger the life or safety of any person.

## **ATTACHMENT NO. 1**

### **LIST OF RISKS AND MITIGATION EFFORTS**



## LIST OF RISK FACTORS AND CONTROL MEASURES

Risks Identified through Record Review and/or Risk Evaluation	Methods and Means by which the Risk is Being Addressed
<p><b>Violations Against Persons</b> (Assault, Harassment, Hazing, Weapons Possession, Incitement of Violence, Altercations, Reckless Endangerment)</p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> The district has created, and enforces, a detailed Code of Conduct to describe the expected behavior of students, staff and visitors to school buildings and the disciplinary actions resulting for violations of the code. Use of Agency phones in each classroom/office space as well as distributed two-way radios for immediate communication and notification for crisis response and/or emergency services.</p>
<p><b>Bomb Threats</b></p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> The district has created a District Wide School Safety Plan that addresses bomb threats. All District administrators have familiarized themselves with the Bomb Threat Standards outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan so that appropriate decisions may be made depending on the exact nature of the situation.</p>
<p><b>Intrusions</b></p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> The district has created a District Wide School Safety Plan that addresses intrusions. The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan hazard specific procedures will be followed in the event of an intrusion.</p> <p><b>Engineering Controls:</b> The district has Building Access Control Systems and Emergency Notification Systems. In addition, administrators in each building have the RAVE App on their phones to report emergencies.</p>
<p><b>Hostage Taking</b></p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> The district has created a District Wide School Safety Plan that addresses hostage taking. All District administrators have familiarized themselves with the procedures that will be followed in the event of a hostage situation.</p>
<p><b>Building Access</b></p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> Students must enter an entrance where trained and certified security personnel are present. Staff are required to enter through the front entrance where security personnel are present. Visitors are required to sign in at the security desk where security personnel are present. Visitors are required to wear visitor passes.</p> <p><b>Engineering Controls:</b> Students must wear and present ID Cards with pictures at the Middle School and High School. Staff must wear and scan in with ID Cards with pictures at all school buildings. The district uses visitor screening software.</p>

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN**

<p><b>Harassment/Sexual Harassment</b></p>	<p><b>Workplace Controls:</b> If harassment rises to the level of workplace violence, the procedures in the District Policy Against Workplace Discrimination and Harassment will be followed. If sexual harassment rises to the level of workplace violence, the procedures in the District Policy Against Workplace Sexual Harassment will be followed. Staff receive sexual harassment training annually at the beginning of each year.</p>
<p><b>Altercations</b> (Staff injured when intervening in student altercations)</p>	<p><b>Workplace Controls:</b> The district has in place, and enforces, a Policy for School Conduct and Discipline which addresses students fighting or engaging in violent behavior.</p>
<p><b>Violent Behavior</b></p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> The district has created a District Wide School Safety Plan that addresses the Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behavior. The District Wide School Safety Team will make recommendations for appropriate annual training for students and staff in violence prevention and mental health. Training to increase employee awareness of the signs/effects of workplace violence, the importance of swift reporting of workplace violence incidents and injuries. Establishing and implementing reporting systems for incidents of workplace violence. Employee training on school conduct, child abuse, DASA, emergency intervention/crisis response, school violence prevention, emergency response protocol, CPI training, etc.</p>
<p><b>Building and Grounds Lighting</b></p>	<p><b>Work Practice Controls:</b> Making high-risk areas more visible to more people. Installing sufficient external lighting.</p>
<p><b>Surveillance Camera Coverage</b></p>	<p><b>Engineering Controls:</b> Consistent monitoring of surveillance cameras districtwide to ensure they are always operating. Ensuring adequate security camera coverage in public spaces (corridors, stairwells, entrances, exterior parking lots).</p>

## **ATTACHMENT NO. 2**

### **WRITTEN OUTLINE FOR TRAINING PROGRAM**

## Annual Workplace Violence Prevention Program Training Outline

Please see the memo that came out from the Human Resources department regarding training. This memo will be sent annually.

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### PATCHOGUE-MEDFORD SCHOOLS

Office for Human Resources

241 South Ocean Avenue Patchogue, NY 11772-3787

(631) 687-6340

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TO: Staff

FROM: Joey J. Cohen, Ed.D.

DATE: March 8, 2024

RE: Workplace Violence in Schools – NY Mandated Training

Please be advised that on September 6, 2023, Governor Hochul signed into law Chapter 351 of the Laws of 2023, amending the Workplace Violence Prevention Law to extend coverage to School Districts. There are several components to the law, one of which includes annual mandated training for all employees. As part of the law, all employees must be trained by May 3, 2024, to be in compliance with the mandate. We will be using GCN to assist with the training requirement. **All employees must log into Global Compliance Network (GCN) using the directions below to complete the "Workplace Violence in Schools – NY" training module, which is fifteen (15) minutes no later than Wednesday, May 1, 2024.**

Be advised that you may access the GCN Videos by clicking on the links below or visiting [www.pmschools.org](http://www.pmschools.org), and click on staff resources, then select GCN Training. Once there, click on the green, "Login to View Training" bar. **The Organization ID is 85050p and the User ID is your Employee ID preceded by a leading zero for 4-digit ID's or two zeros for 3-digit ID's** (i.e., if Employee ID is 1234, you must enter 01234, if Employee ID is 123, you must enter 00123, etc.).

PMCT members should complete this training using PLC/PDP time no later than Wednesday, May 1, 2024. All other employees should complete this training during their regular shift hours using either the computer on their desk (if available) or the computers accessible in the buildings, given reasonable release time if necessary. Hourly employees who **may** require additional shift time should speak with their immediate supervisor for assistance. All employees must complete the training by Wednesday, May 1, 2024. There is no need to print GCN certificates as my office will run a report to ensure staff compliance.

Additional information regarding this law will be forthcoming from Nicole Ciminello, Assistant to the Superintendent and John Ahern, Director of Security. We appreciate your cooperation and diligence to comply with this mandate.

cc: D. Jones  
Assistant Superintendents