



Workplace Violence Prevention Program Training

April 2026

Introduction

Employees have a right to a safe and secure workplace.

The DFSD is committed to creating and sustaining a safe, affirming, and welcoming environment for everyone in our community: staff, students, families, and visitors. To do this well, we must have systems and structures in place to prevent and respond to violence.

The following training details the development and implementation of a **Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP)** in compliance with NYS Labor Law Section 27-b and the recent amendment to the law pertaining to public school districts.

Background

To help prevent workplace violence in public schools, on September 6, 2023, NYS Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation amending the Workplace Violence Prevention Law (Section 27-b of Labor Law), **extending coverage** to elementary and secondary public education institutions.

Previously, public schools and BOCES were exempt because of the Safety Plan requirement already in place.

[This legislation](#) requires public employers, including the Dobbs Ferry School District, to develop and implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Program.

Program Requirements

- Identify existing hazards that might contribute to workplace violence;
- Reduce the probability of threats or acts of violence in the workplace;
- Providing a method for responding to and reporting incidents of workplace violence; and
- Provide training opportunities to reduce the chance of workplace violence.

Program Requirements - Continued

- Development of a workplace violence policy statement;
- Perform a risk evaluation and determining workplace violence risk factors;
- Development of a written workplace violence prevention program; and
- Perform an annual review of the workplace violence incident reports.

Definition of Workplace Violence

The term “workplace violence” is defined as any **physical assault** or **acts of aggressive behavior** occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of their employment.

This includes...

Definition of Workplace Violence

- An attempt or threat, whether **verbal or physical**, to inflict physical injury upon the employee;
- Any intentional **display of force** that would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm; and/or
- Intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person **without their consent** that entails some injury;
- **Possession of a weapon** while on district property or while engaged in district business; and
- Stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the **physical safety and health** of the employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment

Types of Workplace Violence

Some examples of workplace violence in the school setting include:

- Violent acts by criminals who have no other connection to the workplace, but enter to commit a robbery or other crime;
- Violence directed at employees by students, faculty, staff, parents, visitors or any others for whom the school district provides services;
- Violence against coworkers, supervisors, or administrators by a current or former employee;
- Violence committed in the workplace by someone who has a personal relationship with an employee, such as a spouse, domestic partner, boyfriend or girlfriend.

Types of Workplace Violence

In summary, workplace violence in schools refers to any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other disruptive behavior that occurs within the school setting.

Workplace Issues that Might Trigger Violence

- A negative performance review
- An unwelcome change in role due to performance or reorganization in the workplace
- An unwelcome change in work schedule
- Criticism of an employee's performance
- A conflict with coworker or supervisor
- Personal stress outside the workplace
- Increased workload or pressure

Workplace Issues that Might Trigger Violence - Continued

- No clearly defined rules of conduct
- A lack of employee training
- Inadequate hiring practices or screening of potential employees
- Insufficient supervision of employees
- A lack of discipline or inconsistent discipline in the workplace
- A lack of or inadequate support systems
- Employer failure to address incidents as they occur

Statement on Workplace Violence

In accordance with the new legislation, the Board of Education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District adopted [Employer Policy 8130.2](#) (Workplace Violence Prevention) on January 23, 2024.

- Access under [Board Policies](#)
- Access on the website under [Staff Resources](#)
- Attached to this presentation

A statement on the WVP Program will be posted in each building.

Location of the WVPP

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program and its related documents can be found on the District website under [Staff Resources](#).

Scope of the Program

All DFSD employees are required to comply with this program. In addition, visitors of DFSD-owned property and facilities are required to conduct themselves in a non-violent manner in conformity with [Policy 5300.70, Public Conduct on School Property](#) and existing law.

Employees who observe or experience visitors of DFSD property engaging in violent behavior should follow the procedures for the reporting of such behavior as stated in our policy.

Program Review Plan

The DFSD, including our employee association leaders and representatives, had the opportunity to help develop this program to meet the requirements of the law and further our safety goals through meaningful engagement.

The DFSD in collaboration with association leaders will review and update this program on an annual basis. Such review and update shall set forth any mitigating steps taken in response to any incident of workplace violence.

WVPP Members

- Frank Ferri, Dobbs Ferry United Teachers
- Patrick Mussolini, Dobbs Ferry Administrators Association
- Dawn Buttinelli, CSEA Clerical, Teaching Assistant/Teacher Aide Association
- William K. Gelardi, CSEA Custodial and Security Personnel Association
- Michael Nemeth, Safety and Security Coordinator
- Denis Brazil, Director of Facilities II
- Lisa Raymond, Asst. Supt Finance, Facilities & Operations
- Elizabeth Saperstein, Assistant to Superintendent/District Clerk/Personnel Management and Development

Workplace Risk Evaluation and Methods to Prevent Incidents

On **March 10, 2026**, the District and employee association representatives reviewed the issues identified during the physical walk-through of Springhurst Elementary School, Dobbs Ferry Middle School, and Dobbs Ferry High School in the prior report.

The team reviewed of occupational injury and illness logs and incident reports for violence-related injuries for the 2025 calendar year. The records examination and risk evaluations conducted and the methods and means by which the hazards are being addressed on the following slides.

Workplace Risk Evaluation and Methods to Prevent Incidents

Some settings or factors that may pose a greater risk of workplace violence occurring for Dobbs Ferry School District employees include:

- Working in public settings
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Not securing documents containing personal information
- Not securing windows and doors
- Working with students that may become deregulated

Hierarchy of Controls

NYS DOL regulations require our Workplace Violence Prevention Program to adhere to a *hierarchy of controls measures* or safeguards.

- ***Engineering controls*** eliminate or reduce the risk of workplace violence through physical changes to the workplace.
- ***Work practice controls*** eliminate or reduce the risk of workplace violence through changes to organizational policies, procedures, and work practices.
- ***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*** is generally considered the least effective control measure but may be needed to enhance other control measure or minimize potential injury severity when other control measures fail.

Risks Identified Through Evaluation of Physical Environment

Egress to courtyard off High School Gym lobby blocked by athletic bags	Review options for storage of athletic bags with AD
Emergency phone numbers and/or QR codes posted by phones	Review posting of emergency phone numbers
Cracks in sidewalks at Springhurst front walkway, cracks in blacktop by tennis courts/playground	Schedule for facilities repair
Egress locations by cafeteria and library at Springhurst	Review options for door alarm, fencing
Staff working late and/or early morning hours; Staff working alone or during the summer.	See Exhibit F
Open windows classrooms, fire escapes	Building admin to send periodic reminders
Workplace Accident Reporting Procedure	Develop Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the reporting and notification of workplace accidents

Records Examination 2025 Calendar Year

Record Examination	Results of the Examination
Log of Work-Related Injuries & Illnesses (NYS DOL Form SH900)	Of the 22 total injuries reported, 16 occurred in the special class setting reported by teachers and teaching assistants from student behavior; There were three “slip and falls” resulting in minor injuries; Two employees sustained minor injuries in the course of their job (facilities, student support); One staff member injured their foot on contractor materials during summer work.

Records Examination – 2025 Calendar Year

Record Examination	Results of the Examination
Summary of Work-Related Injuries & Illness (NYS DOL Form SH900.1)	Approximately 274 employees worked approximately 350,000 hours during the 2025 calendar year. There were 22 injuries reported, causing one employee to miss a total of 2 days of work. .
Injury & Illness Incident Report (Internal Form)	A review of the Staff Incident reports showed forms were completed as soon as practicable to the time of the incident; forms were complete; forms were returned to the Business office within 3 business days; forms were signed by school nurse and/or administrator taking in the report. The information collected on the Staff Incident Report conforms with NYS DOL Form SH 900.2 “Injury & Illness Incident Report Form.”

Records Examination 2025 Calendar Year

Record Examination	Results of the Examination
Workplace Violence Incident Reports	One report in violation of Policy 5300.70 Public Conduct on School Property.
Personnel Disciplinary Reports	One report of aversive intervention.

Methods by Which the Risks are Being Addressed

- In cases of student-to-staff physical aggression: see the nurse, complete incident documentation, and follow crisis-plan. If special education student, contact Director of Special Education.
- Ad-hoc trainings during Wednesday professional development. Teaching assistants participate in all-day professional development continuing their work on the topic of addressing challenging behaviors.
- Staff attended RECOVS Restorative Practices Training throughout the year via the Mental Health Grant Consortium.
- Facilities improvements including the installation of security vestibules at the MS and HS; installation of AED devices.
- Consultation with Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OHSA) in 2026-2027 school year. OSHA provides information on employers' training requirements and offers resources and assistance to help employers protect workers against injuries and illnesses.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Guidelines

Workplace violence is a concern that the DFSD takes very seriously.

This guide is intended to assist employees in recognizing, reporting and responding to incidents of workplace violence. **Prompt and accurate** reporting is crucial to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for everyone.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Guidelines

An effective reporting system:

- Protects DFSD employees from harm in the workplace;
- Assists administration in its effort to maintain a safe and productive work environment; and
- Ensures administration the opportunity to investigate and determine the cause(s) and make recommendations to minimize recurrence.

All workplace violence incident reports must be in writing.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Guidelines

Any employee who witnesses or encounters any act of violence should do the following:

Immediate Threats:

- If there is an immediate threat to the safety of individuals, **call 911.**
- Take steps to ensure your safety and the safety of others, such as moving to a secure location.
- Immediately notify your supervisor and/or Human Resources, as appropriate.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Guidelines

Non-Emergency Incidents or Concerns:

- Report the incident to your immediate supervisor as soon as possible.
- Document the details of the incident, including the date, time, location, individuals involved, and a description of the events. Use the “[Workplace Violence Incident Report](#)” found on the website under Staff Resources and in the main office of each building.
- Supervisors who receive a report of workplace violence must take immediate action to address the situation.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Guidelines

A ***supervisor*** is defined as:

- Any person in an employer's organization who has the authority to direct and control the work performance of an employee, **or**
- Any person who has the authority to take corrective action regarding the violation of a law, rule, or regulation that an employee reported.

Supervisors should approach such situations with caution, balancing the need to maintain an orderly workplace with personal safety.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Guidelines

Following notification, DFSD administration will be given **reasonable time** to take corrective action.

- If no such action has been taken, the employee or their representative may inform the Commissioner of Labor of the danger and request that an inspection be conducted.
- Such a request must be in writing and include, with a reasonable level of specificity, the grounds of the notice.

Non-Retaliation Policy

The DFSD is **prohibited** by law from taking any **retaliatory action** against any employee who: (1) has made DFSD administration aware of what the employee deems to be an imminent danger; (2) has requested that the Commissioner of Labor conduct an inspection; or (3) accompanies the Commissioner during an inspection of the DFSD, pursuant to [§27-b.6 of Article 2 of the State Labor Law](#).

Related: [Policy 9645](#) Disclosure of Wrongful Conduct (Whistleblower Policy)

Reporting Workplace Violence: Confidentiality

12 NYCRR Part 800.6(g)(2)(viii)

Nothing in this part 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.
- Deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication.
- Identify a confidential source or disclose confidential information relating to a criminal investigation.
- Reveal criminal investigative techniques or procedures, except routine techniques and procedures; or
- Endanger the life or safety of any person.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Privacy

Where privacy is a concern, the incident report will replace the employee's name with "PRIVACY CONCERN CASE".

The following incidents are to be treated 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 their name not be entered on the report.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Reporting Channels

Human Resources (HR) Involvement

- If the incident involves harassment, discrimination, or threats, the supervisor should involve Human Resources promptly.
- While employees are encouraged to report incidents to their Direct Supervisor first and complete the Workplace Violence Incident Form, if the incident involves a supervisor, or the employee is uncomfortable reporting to their supervisor, they may report directly to HR.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Follow Up Actions

Investigation

Once a report is received, the DFSD will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation, maintaining confidentiality to the extent allowed by law.

The goal is to gather information to determine the appropriate course of action.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Follow Up Actions

Communication

The DFSD will communicate with the involved parties as appropriate and provide updates on the status of the investigation.

Reporting Workplace Violence: Follow Up Actions

Resolution

Based on the findings of the investigation, appropriate actions will be taken to address the workplace violence and prevent its recurrence.

Support Services

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Employees are encouraged to utilize the EAP for counseling and support services. Information for contacting EAP and learning about their services can be found under the [Staff Resources](#) page on the District website.

Support Services

Security Measures

If necessary, the DFSD will implement additional security measures to ensure the safety of employees.

Workplace Violence Prevention: Training

- All employees will be provided with information and training on recognizing, preventing, and reporting workplace violence on an annual basis.
- New Employees will be provided with the training outline and the Workplace Violence Prevention Program at the time of hire.
- Trainings will include a range of topics, developed in partnership with district and association leaders, encompassing strategies for de-escalation, conflict resolution, and fostering a positive school and work culture.

Workplace Violence Prevention: Employee Training Outline

- Learn the **requirements** of the Workplace Violence Prevention Act and Department of Labor regulations;
- Define **workplace violence** and understand the different types;
- Learn the key elements of the District's WVPP;
- Learn where our **policy statement** is posted and to how to obtain a copy of our workplace violence program;
- Learn workplace violence **risk factors** and **prevention efforts**;
- Learn how to **report incidents** of workplace violence - with the DFSD and the DOL

Conclusion

As required by the Act, the DFSD Workplace Violence Prevention Program includes:

- A written Workplace Violence Prevention Program;
- Risk factors identified in the risk evaluation;
- Methods to prevent workplace violence
- Hierarchy of control measures;
- Incident reporting system;
- Employee training outline or lesson plan;
- A plan to review workplace incidents once a year and update our program as needed.

Additional Resources

NYS DOL

<https://dol.ny.gov/workplace-safety>

PEF Health and Safety

<https://www.pef.org/departments/health-safety/>

CSEA Safety and Health

<https://cseany.org/safety>

NYSUT Workplace Safety and Health

<https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/workplace-health-and-safety>