



Workplace Violence Plan

Prevention, Response, and Recovery

December 2021

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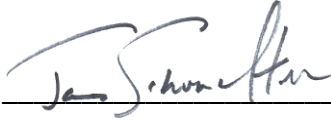
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Plan Approval

This Plan has been reviewed and approved by:



James Schowalter, Commissioner
Minnesota Management and Budget

Record of Revisions

Version	Description	Date
1.0	Plan development	12/10/2021

Data Practices

Three sections of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act may impact data disclosure obligations regarding workplace violence.

1. Minnesota Statutes Section 13.43, Subdivision 15, states that agencies are entitled to disclose private personnel data or confidential investigative data on employees to law enforcement entities for the purpose of reporting a crime or alleged crime committed by an employee, or for the purpose of assisting law enforcement in the investigation of a crime committed or allegedly committed by an employee.
2. Minnesota Statutes Section 13.43, Subdivision 11, states that, in limited circumstances, private personnel data can be disclosed to protect employees or others from harm.
3. Minnesota Statutes Section 13.39, Subdivision 2, states that nonpublic civil investigative data can be disclosed if the agency determines that access will aid the law enforcement process or promote public safety.

Introduction

Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) strives to create and sustain a safe work environment for all employees, customers, vendors, and visitors. We believe in supporting a workplace culture where all employees feel safe, respected, and are free from any form of harassment. The information provided in this plan is a framework for the prevention of, response to, and recovery from incidents of workplace violence.

Definitions

Workplace violence is defined as behavior that results in the actual or reasonably perceived threat of physical or emotional harm to an individual or property.

Workplace is defined as a location where employees perform job duties. The location need not be a permanent location, physical building, or state owned/leased property. It includes employee telework locations.

Workplace violence generally falls into three categories:

1. A violent act or threat by a current or former employee, or someone who has some involvement with a current or former employee, such as an employee's spouse, significant other, relative, or another person.
2. A violent act or threat by a customer, vendor, or visitor.
3. A violent act by someone unrelated to the work environment who intends to commit a criminal act.

Goals and Objectives

MMB has a policy of zero tolerance of workplace violence. It is an agency goal to achieve a work environment that is free from threats and acts of violence. Our objectives are to:

1. Maintain awareness among employees and customers about potential violence in the workplace and its prevention and the agency's violence prevention plan.
2. Provide awareness and educational opportunities for employees at all levels of the organization that include the following information:
 - The workplace violence plan
 - Effects of workplace violence
 - Prevention of workplace violence
 - Supervisory/managerial responsibilities
 - Employee responsibilities
 - Incident response and recovery procedures
3. Maintain procedures to be used when incidents occur.
4. Ensure facility security plans are communicated to appropriate staff.
5. Communicate personal security procedures and avenues for assistance to employees.
6. Continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this plan.

Requirements

Statewide Requirements

Under the Minnesota Freedom from Violence Act (Minn. Stat. § 1.50) the State of Minnesota adopted a policy of zero tolerance of violence. By law (Minn. Stat. § 15.86), state agencies:

- Must adopt a goal of zero tolerance of violence in and around the workplace.
- Are encouraged to develop a plan that describes how they will eliminate the potential for violence in and around the agency workplace. This toolkit is designed to assist in that process.

The following statewide policies are applicable to violence in the workplace:

- [Minnesota Management and Budget HR/LR Policy #1329 Sexual Harassment Prohibited](#)
- [Minnesota Management and Budget HR/LR Policy #1418 Drug and Alcohol Use](#)
- [Minnesota Management and Budget HR/LR Policy #1432 Respectful Workplace](#)
- [Minnesota Management and Budget HR/LR Policy #1436 Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited](#)
- [Minnesota Management and Budget HR/LR Policy #1444 Workplace Violence Prohibited](#)

Employee Policies and Procedures

The following MMB policies are applicable to violence in the workplace:

- [Centennial Office Building Visitor Policy](#)
- [Zero Tolerance of Violence](#)
- [gunsinthe-workplace-2014-2 tcm1059-127818.pdf \(mn.gov\)](#)
- Paper form and web-fillable form maintained by human resources

Customers, Visitors, and Vendors

MMB has procedures to provide a framework for interactions with customers, visitors, and vendors and communicates these to all employees. Procedures define the expectations of behaviors and interactions with customers, visitors, and vendors in the workplace environment. They include:

- Procedures for dealing with customers, visitors, and vendors, especially in difficult or hostile situations.
- Standards of conduct for employees, including procedures for interactions, telephone communications, etc. with customers, visitors, and vendors.
- Standards of conduct for customers, visitors, and vendors.
- Complaint processes for customers, visitors, and vendors.

Coordination with State Agency Partners

Our workplace violence plan can be shared with our state agency partners. The MMB plan and procedures should be coordinated with similar state agency partner plans and procedures. State agency partner employees must report their complaints or concerns using their agency procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees

- Know what to do in an emergency (link to the emergency plans put them in the annex)
- Know how to report a concern or emergency
 - Call 911 if it is an emergency
 - Contact Capitol Security 651-296-2100 for an emergency or 651-296-6741 for a non-emergency event
 - Contact your supervisor or manger
 - Contact HR (put in how you want TM's to contact HR)
- Abide by and promote our policy of zero tolerance of violence in all contacts with coworkers, supervisors, customers, visitors, and vendors.
- Be familiar with and follow workplace violence policies and procedures.
- Be familiar with and adopt the workplace violence prevention practices shared by Human Resources.
- Ensure your personal contact information, emergency contacts, and home address are current in Employee Self Service.
- Participate in training and exercises.
- Be subject to appropriate corrective action up to and including discharge if found to have violated the provisions of policies and the plan.

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors play a critical role in preventing, responding to, and recovering from threats and incidents of workplace violence. Managers and supervisors are expected to set a respectful tone and to reflect behavior important in prevention and de-escalation of interactions among employees. Managers and supervisors also are often the first to know when a threat arises because they are the first line of contact for employees. It is important they know how to fill this important role.

Should you become aware of a situation you should do the following:

- Call 911 if it is an emergency
- Contact your Senior Leader or HR to review the situation.
- Complete the Threat Assessment Report form
- Inform employees of policies, plans, and procedures and enforcing compliance.
- Coordinate policies, plans, and procedures with state agency partners as applicable.

- Promote positive behavior and lead by example through modeling appropriate behavior, by treating employees and customers with respect and dignity.
- Emphasize creating a workplace where established standards of conduct are clear, communicated, and consistently enforced, and where corrective action, including discipline, is used fairly and appropriately to deal with instances of unacceptable behavior.
- Treat all reports of violence or threats of violence seriously, regardless of the individual or behavior involved.
- Take immediate action to resolve or stabilize violent situations in the workplace and protect people from harm.
- Coordinate the recovery of the services your team provides following an incident.
- Gather suggestions and ideas from employees to keep policies, plans and procedures up-to-date and relevant and provide them to Human Resources.
- Understand that knowingly participating in or tolerating workplace violence or retaliation against employees or customers making a report are subject to discipline up to and including discharge.
- Not be complacent in reporting potential violence or acts of violence regardless of individual or behaviors witnessed.

Senior leadership

- Know and understand the agency workplace violence plan.
- Ensure our agency's plan reflects the values and behaviors that promote respect in the workplace.
- Inform employees of policies, plans, and procedures and enforcing compliance.
- Set the tone for a culture of respect. Model the importance of proactive workplace violence prevention and response.
- Coordinate policies, plans, and procedures with state agency partners as applicable.
- Support human resources, safety, facilities, and others during the regular review and improvement of the plan and procedures.
- Participate in training and exercises.
- Gather suggestions and ideas from employees to keep policies, plans and procedures up-to-date and relevant.
- Know what to do when an incident of workplace violence occurs. Determine the need to activate other MMB emergency plans, including the Centennial Office Building (COB) building emergency operations plan and continuity of operations (COOP) plan.
- Not be complacent in reporting potential violence or acts of violence regardless of individual or behaviors witnessed.

Prevention

Promoting a respectful workplace

Managers and supervisors are key to implementing a workplace culture that treats people professionally and respectfully. They can prevent issues from arising and de-escalate unacceptable behaviors before they become larger concerns.

HR/LR Policy #1432 on Respectful Workplace specifically addresses standards of respectful and professional conduct. Managers and supervisors should be familiar with the policy's objectives and responsibilities regarding the workplace and the public service environment.

In the context of preventing workplace violence by preventing behavior from escalating, managers and supervisors should pay attention to aspects of employee behavior and always help to encourage respect and professionalism. Managers and supervisors should lead by example by:

- Reflecting respectful and professional behavior at all times
- Setting clear standards of conduct for everyone in the workplace
- Promoting positive behavior
- Responding in a timely fashion to issues that arise
- Notifying human resources when behavior may violate a workplace policy, such as harassment or discrimination
- Attempting informal resolution of matters among involved parties when appropriate
- Using effective and non-retaliatory problem-solving techniques
- Making employees aware of options for formal complaint procedures

Workplace design and employee awareness

MMB employees conduct business in a wide variety of settings. Individual business units will work with the MMB Safety Committee and Senior Staff to address specific risk areas for employees such as:

- Access to cash
- Contact with the public
- Type and location of waiting areas
- Whether work areas are shared with other organizations
- Isolated, field, telework, or other off-site work areas

Safety and Security

The MMB Safety Committee meets regularly to assess and seek continual improvement for safety topics impacting the agency. Specific actions MMB takes to promote violence prevention and response for employees include:

- Maintaining a copy of the building emergency plan on MMB GO (the employee intranet)
- Creating and disseminating information to assist supervisors on specific topics such as emergency and evacuation protocols
- Enhancing physical security and access controls to buildings and MMB leased spaces
- Ensuring every employee has a dedicated access badge for controlled areas
- Maintaining communication with Capitol Security for situation awareness and incident response
- Communicating messages to employees to raise awareness and support a general culture of preparedness and resilience across the agency

[building emergency plans, etc. etc.]

Warning signs

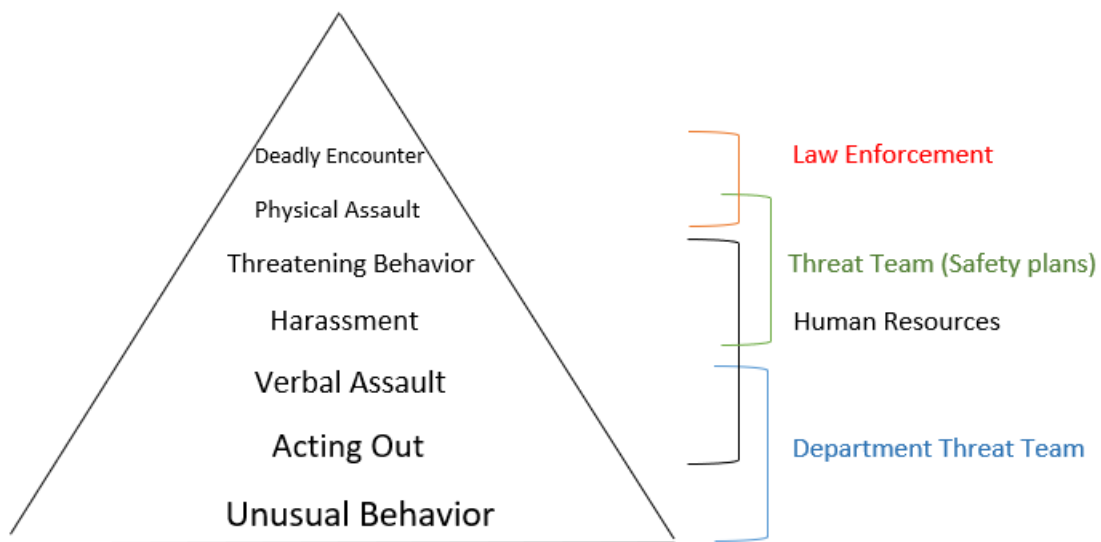
Managers and supervisors must be familiar with warning signs of potential violence by both employees and people outside the agency. Management should be trained and prepared to assist in the response when a threat arises.

Managers and supervisors should consider active involvement through periodic reminders in the form of formalized employee training, emails, and other communication for raising awareness about the importance of escort policies, threat reporting procedures, and key card usage for their area of responsibility.

Training and Resources

- Capital Security Active Shooter training
- Dealing with difficult people training
- Workplace Violence and Prevention training
- De-escalation exercise
- [Homeland Security Active Shooter Training Video](#)

Pyramid of Responsibility



Telework

MMB has a responsibility to address domestic and other types of violence when they intrude upon the telework environment or have the potential to impact the safety and productivity of teleworkers. Increased use of telework because of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the risks of domestic violence. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has classified workplace violence into four types—one of which is “personal relationship” violence where the perpetrator has a harmful relationship with an employee that impacts the work environment. This impact has increased with many more employees working remotely.

On the other hand, in cases where employees are the perpetrators, workplace harassment (and other forms of violence) may continue whether employees are in person, teleworking, or on leave. State and MMB policies prohibit the use of devices to harass others through emails, phone calls, text messages, and video conferencing platforms.

Non-State Owned or Leased Facilities

HR/LR Policy #1422 is applicable to all employees of MMB regardless of work location including leased or non-state owned or leased facilities. Admin’s Workplace Violence Plan is applicable in these spaces. Landlords and other tenants may also have their own violence prevention and incident response plans. In cases where leased spaces occur, Managers and Supervisors should familiarize themselves and conduct training for their staff on building evacuation and emergency procedures.

Notification and Activation

Incident Reporting Procedures

All incidents falling under the definition of violence as stated in the plan should be reported using the Threat Assessment Form Managers/supervisors must also be prepared to report situations of a violent or potentially violent nature, including:

- How to report to Capitol Security at the workplace.
- When to call 911 directly
- What actions an employee or employee(s) could take to get away from a potentially violent situation

Contacting Security or Law Enforcement

In general, employees should contact law enforcement directly and immediately in situations such as a medical emergency or imminent danger that involves a threat to life or property or when criminal activity occurs.. Capitol Security must be contacted immediately after someone contacts law enforcement.

Response

Threat Assessment Teams

Many agencies form threat assessment teams (TAT) to help in the process of planning in order to identify threats, propose safety and security protocols, and develop guidance for employees. Security experts consistently recommend TATs as an approach to institutionalizing workplace violence planning. This is an interdisciplinary and cross-functional effort within the agency. Among other purposes, TATs help:

- Assess apparent threats to individual employees and their workplaces
- Recommend or deliver responses to specific threats
- Develop subject matter expertise to advise agency leadership on security practices
- Provide consistent guidance throughout the organization
- Keep the agency up-to-date on best practices in prevention, response, and recovery

Managers/supervisors must also be prepared to respond to situations of a violent or potentially violent nature, including what actions an employee or employee(s) could take to get away from a potentially violent situation

Incident Command Team

Depending on the scale and impacts of the incident, senior leadership may decide to activate the incident command team to manage the response to and recovery from the incident. MMB will use the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS) as described in the agency Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan.

See the MMB's Emergency Operations Plan.

Responding to hostile behavior

In the event of direct threats and physical assault, **call 911 immediately** and follow MMB's worksite's safety or emergency response plans. Do not physically engage a hostile or threatening person, unless as a last resort. Managers and supervisors should be familiar with general tactics for addressing hostile behavior. Response guidelines include:

- Respond promptly and genuinely when employees alert others to a situation
- Remain calm
- Assess: Determine if the situation is:
 - Contained
 - Ready for de-escalation
 - Threatening
- Consult and/or act if needed
- Refer to resources (threat assessment team, security, human resources, Employee Assistance Program, etc.)
- Alert building safety, security, or other appropriate resources

Responding to violent intruders

Should an individual become violent in the workplace, managers and supervisors should take action immediately by contacting security or law enforcement. It is important to be familiar with MMB's emergency response plan, including contact information and what actions to take immediately. Considerations include:

- Remain as calm as possible and set the example for all employees
- Ensure emergency services are contacted, as needed
- Evacuate staff and visitors via a pre-planned evacuation route to a safe area (if applicable)
- Lock and barricade doors if evacuation is not possible
- Account for staff and visitors

Recovery

Follow-up after an incident

Once the threat of a workplace violence incident has subsided, managers and supervisors should be familiar with general tactics for recovering the workplace after hostile behavior. General guidelines in response include:

- Assess whether any additional threats could arise because of or in conjunction with the incident.
- In consultation with human resources and agency leadership, consider a debriefing session to discuss the incident with employees to help calm anxieties and dispel rumors about the incident
- Check in with affected employee(s) by asking how they are doing and what they need – including connecting them with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), as needed (*see "Employee Care" below*)
- Follow MMB procedures for reporting and filling out forms.
- Evaluate the incident for gaps or deficiencies in emergency response plans.

What should be done to recover after a violent situation or incident, including:

- Employee leave options.
- Employee referral to the Employee Assistance Program.
- Continuity of operations steps to take if the workplace is unavailable, key staff are unable to report to work, etc. following the incident.

After an incident, managers and supervisors should consult with others in the agency for their expertise in returning to normal operations. While the details will vary across incidents and agencies, key disciplines that may be helpful to engage include:

- **Communications:** Both internal and external communications may be impacted by an incident and ongoing communications should be coordinated within MMB (Communications, leadership, HR, legal, etc.), the Governor’s office.
- **Legal:** Witness statements or physical evidence may need to be collected. Legal counsel should be consulted.
- **Facilities:** The Department of Administration or third-party landlords should be involved if the physical workspace is impacted, if there are possible blood borne pathogens or other biohazards that require proper cleaning, and if safety devices or other equipment requires maintenance or replacement.
- **Continuity:** An incident may trigger the activation of MMB’s COOP plan. Consult agency continuity planners and keep the Enterprise Director of Continuity informed (Cathy Hockert or Nathaniel Dempsey).
- **Human resources:** Work with agency human resources to address personnel or labor relations issues.
- **Employee Assistance Program:** If employees need services to address their general well-being, EAP is an excellent resource for options.
- **Safety:** Meet with appropriate staff/teams to discuss the incident and gather lessons learned.
- **ADA Coordinators/Affirmative Action:** Agency ADA coordinator should be involved to provide support to employees.

Continuity of Operations

The impacts of workplace violence can very quickly halt operations. There may be certain types of incidents that are disruptive enough to activate the agency Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan. While this will likely be a sensitive time for employees, critical services must resume in a timely manner. Senior leadership, with managers/supervisors, will need to review the impact of the incident to guide them on recovery actions and timelines.

See MMB’s Continuity of Operations Plan.

Employee care

Once a threat has subsided and immediate safety and health concerns have been addressed, the attention of agency leadership, managers, supervisors, and human resources staff should turn to the well-being of employees. If an incident is severe enough to cause employees to leave the workplace, provide guidance on when and where work will resume. When appropriate, agencies may consider whether to offer paid administrative leave.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a useful resource when communicating with and providing support to employees on a group or individual basis. Individuals respond differently to stressful situations and EAP is available to help navigate these dynamics. EAP and Organizational Health (OH) can help MMB address the

mental and emotional well-being of employees once all physical threats are resolved. EAP/OH's Team Recovery Meetings are facilitated discussions that reduce the likelihood of uncertainty, isolation, and distraction that follow disruptive or shocking events.

Awareness, Training, and Exercises

Human Resources, Communications, and Business Continuity Office, including the Safety Officer, will lead the promotion of awareness of the workplace violence policies, plan, and procedures. Training will include information on responding to and reporting violence-related incidents as well as assistance in maintaining a violence-free workplace.

Methods include:

- Working with other state agency safety officers, the State Employee Assistance Program (EAP), facilities management and physical security staff in developing information for employees related to personal security and violence prevention.
- Sharing information on violence prevention topics, policies, procedures, plans, expectations, resources, and other information to employees to increase their awareness of violence-in-the-workplace issues.
- Designing and conducting exercises to regularly practice responding to potential incidents of workplace violence. In addition to regular emergency notification drills, these could include responding to a threatening client or hostile member of the public, a phone threat, a suspicious package, disputes among employees, suspected domestic violence impacting the workplace (including telework, infrastructure maintenance outside of a state owned/leased facility, etc.), or responding to an armed intruder.

Human Resources will provide advice and counsel including follow-up to ensure incidents are appropriately resolved and future incidents avoided.

Plan Review and Maintenance

After Action Review and Improvement Planning

MMB conducts an After-Action Review and Improvement Planning (AAR/IP) following all tests and exercises. Exercise planners are responsible for initiating and completing the AAR/IP and those participating in the test or exercise will have the opportunity to provide input to the report. The AAR will address the effectiveness of the test or exercise, identify areas for improvement, and document these in an IP. Copies of the AAR/IP are maintained by Human Resources.

MMB also conducts an AAR/IP following an incident resulting in the activation of this plan. The AAR will address the effectiveness of the response and recovery, identify areas for improvement, and document them in an IP. Copies of the AAR/IP are maintained by Human Resources.

Plan Review

Human Resources will coordinate the review and maintenance of this plan. The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. Changes may also be made due to information or guidance received from Minnesota Management and Budget. Changes will be tracked using a record of changes table. Comments or suggestions for improving this plan may be provided to Human Resources.

Threat Assessment Team (TAT)

Threat Assessment Team is comprised of several subject matter experts across the agency that discuss potential threats to the agency as a pro-active means to measure the potential of violent or physical threat to the agency and its employees.

- The TAT shall meet as needed to discuss individual threats and/or escalating tensions amongst employees, vendors, and/or members of the general public to determine de-escalation opportunities to reduce the threat.
- The TAT shall meet on a quarterly basis to discuss identified areas of improvement and potential risk for threats of violence in the workplace.

Members of the TAT should include the following:

- Deputy Commissioner
- Business Operations Continuity Director
- Human Resources Director
- Safety Officer
- Communications Director
- Chief Financial Officer
- General Council
- ADA Coordinator

Ad Hoc Team Members:

- Division Director where potential threat arises
- Capital Security
- Unit/Area Supervisor

Appendix

A) Agency Threat Assessment Form

B) COOP/COG Plan

C) Emergency Operations Plan

D) Training and Development

1. Managing Aggressive Behavior
2. De-escalation exercises
3. Using Empathy as a de-escalation tool
4. Active Shooter