MINNESOTA BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE

Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

Prevention, Response and Recovery

August 2022

Contents

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Plan Approval

This Plan has been reviewed and approved by:

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Christina Bourland, MHA, OTR/L 3314Executive Director
Minnesota Board of Occupational Therapy Practice

Record of Revisions

Version	Description	Date
1.0	Plan development	12/10/2021
1.2	Plan review	9/09/2022

Data Practices

There may be data disclosure obligations regarding workplace violence prevention per the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, three sections have been identified below.

1. Minnesota Statutes Section 13.43, Subdivision 15, states that agencies are entitled to disclose private personnel data or confidential investigative data on team members to law enforcement entities for the purpose of reporting a crime or alleged crime committed by a team member, or for the purpose of assisting law enforcement in the investigation of a crime committed or allegedly committed by a team member.
2. Minnesota Statutes Section 13.43, Subdivision 11, states that, in limited circumstances, private personnel data can be disclosed to protect team members 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

The Minnesota Board of Occupational Therapy Practice (BOTP)is committed to creating and sustaining a safe work environment for all team members, partners, customers, vendors, and visitors. This commitment means we proactively take steps to create a workplace culture in which all team members feel safe, respected and are free from any form of harassment. This plan provides a framework for the prevention, response, 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 team members perform job duties. The location need not be a permanent location, physical building, or state owned/leased property. It includes team member telework locations.

Workplace violence generally falls into three categories:

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

Goals and Objectives

The State of Minnesota has a statewide policy of zero tolerance of workplace violence. The goal is to achieve a work environment that is free from threats and acts of violence. Objectives are:

1. Creating awareness of BOTP's Workplace Violence Prevention Plan by Providing information, education, and training opportunities for employees at all organizational levels.
2. Highlighting the effects of workplace violence.
3. Outlining supervisory/managerial responsibilities.
4. Outlining team member responsibilities.
5. Establishing procedures to be followed for incident reporting, response, and recovery ensuring facility security plans are communicated to appropriate team members.
6. Identifying and sharing personal security procedures that team members can use.
7. Continual monitoring and evaluation of 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 and adopted by Admin:

- 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

Team member Policies and Procedures

The following BOTP policies and procedures are applicable to addressing the issue of violence in the workplace:

- Contact Board executive DirectoE
- Contact Admin HR to report a threat or incident of violence; see Reporting Procedures at the end of this document in Appendix A and B.
  - HR Main line 651-259-3700.
  - HR Services email, HR.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us
- Zero Tolerance of Violence.

Customers, Visitors, and Vendors

BOTP has procedures to provide a framework for interactions with customers, visitors, and vendors and communicates these to all team members. 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 team members, including procedures for interactions, telephone communications, in all forms of communications as needed with customers, visitors, and vendors.
- Standards of conduct for customers, visitors, and vendors.

Minnesota Board of Occupational Therapy Practice Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

- Complaint processes for customers, visitors, and vendors.

Coordination with State Agency Partners

Our workplace violence and prevention plan can be shared with our state agency partners. BOTP's plan and procedures will be coordinated with similar state agency partner plans and procedures. State agency partners and team members must report their complaints or concerns using their agency procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Team Members

- Know how to apply BOTP emergency plans when responding to an emergency (located on the shared drive in the folder: Operations→Space).
- Know how to report a concern or emergency.
  - o Physical safety or imminent danger to self/others or physical property.
    - Call 9-1-1
    - Contact Building Security If available at:
      - Desk Phone: 651-201-2871
      - Cell Phone: 763-442-8270
  - o Threatening behavior or other concerns.
    - Contact your Executive Director
    - Contact Building Security
    - Contact Admin Human Resources.
      - HR Main line 651-259-3700.
      - HR Services email, hr.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us.
- Follow our policy of zero tolerance of violence in all contacts with coworkers, supervisors, customers, partners, visitors, and vendors.
- Be familiar with and adopt the workplace violence prevention practices shared by Human Resources.
- Participate in training exercises as appropriate.
- Ensure your personal contact information, emergency contacts, and home address are current in Team member Self Service. If you experience an emergency during the workday, Admin-HR or agency personnel may need to reach your emergency contacts or direct first responders to your home address if you are teleworking.
- BOTP will use your contact information in an emergency to alert you. Be on the alert for messages sent from the Board Executive Director:
  - o Text from 612-306-7029
  - o Phone call from 612-306-7029 or 612-548-2180 or 612-548-2179

Managers and Supervisors

BOTP recognizes the role that managers and supervisors play in leading teams, performance management, performing required steps for supervision, and cultivating environments of safety and inclusion. This policy is one component of a broader commitment to provide a safe work environment. Managers and supervisors are often the first to know when a threat arises because they are the first line of contact for team members.

- Should you become aware of a situation you should do the following: Take immediate action to protect yourself from harm.
    - Physical safety or imminent danger to self/others or physical property.
        - Call 9-1-1.
    - Threatening behavior or other concerns.
        - Contact your Executive Director or the Admin Human Resources Department to review the situation.
        - Contact Admin Human Resources.
            - HR Main line 651-259-3700.
            - HR Services email, hr.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us.
- Complete the team member Threat Assessment Report form. Appendix B.
- Inform team members of policies, plans, and procedures, and enforce compliance.
- Coordinate policies, plans, and procedures with state agency partners as applicable.
- Promote positive behavior and lead by example through modeling appropriate behavior and by treating team members and customers with respect and dignity.
- Contribute to 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.
- Coordinate the recovery of the services your team provides following an incident.
- Team members can provide feedback and ideas to keep policies, plans, and procedures up-to-date and relevant and provide them to Admin Human Resources.
- Understand that individuals participating in or tolerating workplace violence or retaliation are subject to discipline up to and including discharge.
- Report all potential violence or acts of violence regardless of individual or behaviors witnessed on agency workplace violence to HR.

Senior Leadership

- Actively participate in the development and implementation of the agency workplace violence plan.
- Ensure our agency's plan reflects the values and behaviors that promote respect in the workplace.
- Inform team members of policies, plans, and procedures and compliance.
- Model the importance of proactive workplace violence prevention and response work.
- 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 team members to keep policies, plans, and procedures up-to-date and relevant, sharing this information with human resources.
- Know how to apply Admin emergency plans in responding to an emergency.
- Determine the need to activate other Admin emergency plans, including the emergency operations plan and continuity of operations plan.
- Report all potential violence or acts of violence regardless of individual or behaviors witnessed on agency workplace violence WPV threat assessment form. Appendix B.

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 team member behavior and always help to encourage respect and professionalism. Managers and supervisors should lead by example by:

- Reflecting respectful and professional behavior.
- Setting clear standards of conduct for everyone in the workplace.
- Promoting positive behavior.
- Respond as soon as possible in a timely fashion to issues that arise.
- Notify Admin 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.
- Training team members of the options for formal complaint procedures.

Workplace Design and Team Member Awareness

Minnesota state agencies conduct business in a wide variety of settings. It is important for management at each agency, as well as at each worksite, to thoroughly examine the needs of team members and customers. Consult with appropriate team members in Admin's Facilities Management Division regarding state-owned facilities and each Division regarding leased facilities.

Variables that can influence safety include:

- Access to cash.
- Contact with the public.
- Type and location of waiting/reception areas.
- Work areas that are shared with other organizations.
- Remote, isolated, or off-site work areas.
- If in a leased space, contact Admin's RECS Division for assistance

Safety

Building Emergency Plans are designed to provide information and guidelines for responding to emergencies impacted the workplace. Remember, not all emergencies fall within the parameters of a defined plan; sometimes individual judgment will be your best guide. Your preparedness, awareness and self-discipline are the keys to an orderly and safe emergency response.

Warning Signs

Managers and supervisors must be familiar with warning signs of potential violence by both team members and people outside the agency. Management should be trained and prepared to assist in the response when a threat arises. Find information on identifying the warning signs of potentially violent behavior or suicide at Appendix C.

Managers and supervisors should consider active involvement through periodic reminders in the form of formalized team member 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-Under Development

- Dealing with Difficult People training.
- Workplace Violence and Prevention training.
- De-escalation exercise.
- Homeland Security Active Shooter Training Video.

Telework

BOTP has a responsibility to plan for violence when it intrudes upon the telework environment or have the potential to impact the safety and productivity of teleworkers or onsite workers. 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 a team member that impacts the work environment. This impact has increased with many more team members working remotely.

In cases where team members are the perpetrators, workplace harassment (and other forms of violence) are prohibited regardless of where the team members are working (in person, teleworking, or on leave). State and Admin 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 team members of BOTP regardless of work location including leased or non-state owned or leased facilities. BOTP Workplace Violence and Prevention Plan is applicable in these spaces. Landlords and other tenants may also have their own violence prevention and incident response plans. In cases of leased space, 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 agency Threat Assessment Form. Appendix B.

Managers/supervisors must also be prepared to report situations of a violent or potentially violent nature, including:

- How to report to facility security personnel at the workplace.
- When to call 9-1-1 or local law enforcement.
- What actions a team member or team member(s) could take to get away from a potentially violent situation.

Contacting Security or Law Enforcement

In general, team members should immediately contact law enforcement directly in situations such as a medical emergency or imminent danger that involves a threat to life or property, when criminal activity occurs, or when a workplace violence incident occurs. Capitol Security or facility security personnel must be contacted immediately after someone contacts law enforcement, once team members are away and safe from danger.

Response

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.

Contact Admin's Continuity Manager for more information on the command team.

Responding to Hostile Behavior

In the event of direct threats and physical assault, **call 9-1-1 immediately** and follow Admin's worksite safety or emergency response plans. Do not physically engage a hostile or threatening person, unless as a last resort. Response guidelines include:

- Respond promptly and genuinely when team members alert others to a situation.
- Remain calm.
- Assess whether the situation is:
    - Contained.
    - Ready for de-escalation.
    - Threatening.
- Consult and/or act if needed.
- Refer to resources (threat assessment team, security, human resources, Team member Employee Assistance Program (EAP), 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 calling 9-1-1, then contacting security. It is important to be versed in BOTP'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 team members.
- 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 the Admin Human Resources Department and BOTP leadership, consider a debriefing session to discuss the incident with team members to help calm anxieties and dispel rumors about the incident.
- Check in with affected team member(s) by asking how they are doing and what they need – including connecting them with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), as needed.
- Follow Admin Human Resources and any agency 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:

- Team member leave options.
- Team member referral to the EAP.
- Continuity of operations – Manage response 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 senior leadership and other leaders 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 Admin (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**: Admin's Real-estate and Construction Services Division and Facilities Management Division (FMD) or third-party landlords should be involved if the physical workspace is impacted, if there are possible bloodborne pathogens or other biohazards that require proper cleaning, and if safety devices or other equipment requires maintenance or replacement. FMD will determine appropriate course of action based upon the situation.
- **Continuity**: An incident may trigger the activation of BOTP and the Health Regulatory Boards Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) plan. Consult agency continuity planners and keep the director of continuity informed.
- **Human Resources**: Work with Admin's Human Resources Department to address personnel or labor relations issues.
- **Team member Assistance Program:** If team members 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 team members.

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 COOP. While this will likely be a sensitive time for team members, critical services must resume in a timely manner. Senior leadership and managers/supervisors will need to review the impact of the incident to guide them on recovery actions and timelines.

For COOP questions please contact Admin's COOP Manager.

Team Member Care

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

The [Employee Assistance Program](#) EAP is a useful resource when communicating with and providing support to team members 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 Admin address the mental and emotional well-being of team members 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

Admin Human Resources, Communications, Continuity of Government Office, and 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 EAP, facilities management, and physical security staff in developing information for team members related to personal security and violence prevention.
- Sharing information on violence prevention topics, policies, procedures, plans, expectations, resources, and other information to team members 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 team members, suspected domestic violence impacting the workplace (including telework, infrastructure maintenance outside of a state owned/leased facility, etc.), or responding to an armed intruder.

Admin 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

BOTP 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 Admin Human Resources.

BOTP 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 Admin Human Resources.

Plan Review

BOTP and Admin 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 Admin Human Resources.