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# **Workplace Violence Prevention Plan**

Prevention, Response, and Recovery

November 2023

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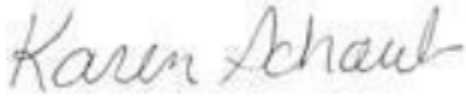
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## Plan Approval

This plan has been reviewed and approved by:



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Karen Schaub, Executive Director  
Minnesota Board of School Administrators

## Record of Revisions

Version	Description	Date
1.0	Plan Development	11/21/2023
1.1	Plan Approval	12/18/2023

## 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 to report alleged crimes committed by a team member or to assist 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 School Administrators is committed to creating and sustaining a safe work environment for all staff, vendors, and visitors. This commitment means we proactively take steps to create a workplace culture in which all staff members feel safe and 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 staff members perform job duties. The location need not be a permanent location, physical building, or state-owned/leased property. It includes staff member telework locations.

Workplace violence generally falls into three categories:

1. A violent act or threat by a current or former staff member or someone who has some involvement with a current or former staff member, such as a staff member's spouse, significant other, relative, or another person.
2. A violent act or threat by a 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 zero tolerance policy for workplace violence. The goal is to achieve a work environment that is free from threats and acts of violence. Objectives are to:

1. Create awareness of the Minnesota Board of School Administrators 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. Outline supervisory/managerial staff's responsibilities.
4. Establish procedures for incident reporting, response, and recovery, ensuring facility security plans are communicated to staff.
5. 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 apply 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](#)

## Staff Policies and Procedures

The following Minnesota Board of School Administrator's policies and procedures apply to address the issue of violence in the workplace:

- Anderson Center Visitor Policy.
- Contact Admin HR to report a threat or incident of violence
  - HR Services email, [HR.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us](mailto:HR.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us)
  - HR Mainline 651-259-3700
- [HR Memo regarding guns in the workplace](#)
- [Anderson Center Emergency Response Procedures](#)

## The Public, Visitors, and Vendors

The Minnesota Board of School Administrators has procedures to provide a framework for interactions with members of the public, visitors, and vendors and communicates these to all staff. Procedures define the expectations of behaviors and interactions with members of the public, visitors, and vendors in the workplace environment. They include:

- Procedures for dealing with the public and visitors, especially in difficult or hostile situations.
- Standards of conduct for staff, including procedures for interactions, telephone communications, and all forms of communication as needed with the public and visitors.
- Complaint processes for the public and visitors.

## **Coordination with The Anderson Center and MDE**

Board of School Administrators offices are in The Anderson Center Building in Arden Hills, Minnesota. Our workplace violence and prevention plans are partnered and shared with The Andersen Center.

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Staff Members

- Know how to apply Minnesota Board of School Administrators emergency plans when responding to an emergency and what to do in an emergency.
- Know how to report a concern or emergency.
  - Physical safety or imminent danger to self/others or physical property.
    - Call 9-1-1
    - Call Anderson Center Security 651-638-6400
  - Threatening behavior or other concerns.
    - Contact the Executive Director of the Minnesota Board of School Administrators
    - Contact Admin Human Resources.
      - HR Mainline 651-259-3700.
      - HR Services email, [HR.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us](mailto:HR.Services.Admin-MMB@state.mn.us).
- Follow our policy of zero tolerance of violence in all contacts with coworkers, supervisors, visitors, and vendors.
- Be familiar with and adopt the workplace violence prevention practices shared by Human Resources.
- Participate in training exercises as appropriate.
- Staff is responsible for updating their contact information in Self-Services.
- Be on the alert for messages sent via the emergency mass notification system from Anderson Center Security, MDE, or local law enforcement.
- Promote positive behavior and lead by example by modeling appropriate behavior and treating staff members 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 staff provides following an incident.
- Staff 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.



## 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 respectful and professional conduct standards. Managers and supervisors should be familiar with the policy's objectives and responsibilities regarding the workplace and the public service environment.

To prevent workplace violence by preventing behavior from escalating, managers and supervisors should pay attention to aspects of staff member behavior and always help to encourage respect and professionalism. Staff 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 staff members on the options for formal complaint procedures.

### Workplace Design and Staff Awareness

Minnesota state agencies conduct business in various settings. It is important for management at each agency, as well as at each worksite, to thoroughly examine the needs of staff members and members of the public. Consult with appropriate staff 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.

## Safety

Building Emergency Plans are designed to provide information and guidelines for responding to emergencies impacted the workplace. The Minnesota Board of School Administrators will follow The Anderson Center's emergency plan. Individual judgment will be your best guide. Your preparedness,

awareness, and self-discipline are the keys to an orderly and safe emergency response.

## **Telework**

The Minnesota Board of School Administrators have a responsibility to plan for violence when it intrudes upon the telework environment or has 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 staff member that impacts the work environment. This impact has increased with many working remotely.

In cases where staff members are the perpetrators, workplace harassment (and other forms of violence) is prohibited regardless of where the staff members work (in person, teleworking, or on leave). State and Admin policies prohibit using devices to harass others through emails, phone calls, text messages, and video conferencing platforms.

## **Non-State Owned or Leased Facilities**

HR/LR Policy #1422 applies to all staff - regardless of work location, including leased or non-state owned or leased facilities. The Minnesota Board of School Administrators’ Workplace Violence and Prevention Plan is applicable in these spaces. Landlords and other tenants may also have 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 stated in the plan should be reported using the agency [Threat Assessment Form](#).

Staff must be prepared to report situations of a violent or potentially violent situations, including:

- How to report to facility security personnel at the Anderson Center.
- When to call 9-1-1 or local law enforcement.
- What actions could a staff member take to escape a potentially violent situation?

### Contacting Security or Law Enforcement

In general, staff 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. Facility security personnel must be contacted immediately after someone contacts law enforcement once staff members are away and safe from danger.

### 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 staff members alert others to a situation.
- Remain calm.
- Assess whether the situation is:
  - o Contained. Ready for de-escalation.
  - o Threatening.
- Consult and/or act if needed.
- Refer to resources (threat assessment team, security, human resources, staff 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, staff should take action immediately by calling 9-1-1 and then contacting building security. It is important to be versed in the Minnesota Board of School Administrators emergency response plan, including contact information and what actions to take immediately. Considerations include:

- Remain as calm as possible and set an example for all staff.

- 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 Minnesota Board of School Administrators leadership, consider a debriefing session to discuss the incident with staff members to help calm anxieties and dispel rumors about the incident.
- Check in with affected staff 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:

- Staff member leave options.
- Staff 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 the appropriate course of action based on the situation.
- **Human Resources:** Work with Admin’s Human Resources Department to address personnel or labor relations issues.
- **Staff Member Assistance Program:** If staff members need services to address their general

well-being, EAP is an excellent resource for options.

- **Safety:** Meet with appropriate staff to discuss the incident and gather lessons learned.

## Staff Member Care

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

The [Employee Assistance Program](#) EAP is a valuable resource when communicating with and supporting staff 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 staff member's mental and emotional well-being once all physical threats are resolved. EAP/OH's Staff Recovery Meetings are facilitated discussions that reduce the likelihood of uncertainty, isolation, and distraction that follow disruptive or shocking events.

## **Plan Review and Maintenance**

### **After-Action Review and Improvement Planning**

The Minnesota Board of School Administrators 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 can 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.

The Minnesota Board of School Administrators 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.

### **Plan Review**

The Minnesota Board of School Administrators 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.