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Resource Mary Roxer: Vice President Total Rewards and HR Operations
Policy Area Human Resources
Applicability Valley Health System - System Wide

Workplace Anti-Violence, HR527

PURPOSE:

To provide a safe and secure workplace and an environment free from physical violence, threats and intimidation.

POLICY:

Valley Health (VHS) is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace and an environment free from physical violence, threats and intimidation. VHS has zero tolerance for workplace violence from any individual, including but not limited to: employees, contractors, patients, visitors or providers. Employees are expected to report to work to perform their jobs in a nonviolent manner. VHS believes that violence is a form of serious misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Conduct and behaviors of physical violence, threats or intimidation by an employee may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

VHS will not permit employment-based retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, brings a complaint of workplace violence or who speaks as a witness in the investigation of a complaint of workplace violence.

DEFINITIONS:

Workplace Violence: is any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbally abusive remark that is made in the workplace and/or may affect the workplace behavior of an employee, which includes but is not limited to:

1. **Verbal Abuse:** Any verbal expression issued by an individual or individuals that clearly know or any reasonable person would know has the intent to create fear or intimidation in another individual, or group of individuals, or verbal remarks or comments expressed in a loud, harsh or threatening tone of voice or in a joking manner within the workplace. Where cursing is involved, cursing that is not directed at another individual is not considered workplace violence for the purpose of this policy. It may fall under the definition of hostile work environment.
2. **Physical Abuse:** Any intentional movement of the body, which may include touching, gestures, pushing, striking, stalking, swinging objects, spitting on or at another individual, or any unwanted intrusion of "reasonable space" of an employee, contractor patient, visitor or provider. Any intentional use of any object toward an individual or damaging hospital property, equipment or supplies..
3. **Creating A Hostile Work Environment:** Any intentional action or behavior or written, verbal or physical threat that can be considered intimidating or harassing and creates an environment that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance care, or where behaviors create a hostile or threatening environment.
4. **Zero Tolerance:** Any volitional violence whether intended or not and actions, threats or behaviors by any employee, contractor, patient, visitor, or provider, whether joking or serious will not be tolerated on Valley Health property. Any such incident will be taken seriously by Valley Health Administration and responded to according to this and other policies referenced herein.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. All Valley Health employees, contractors and providers provide a safe work environment by:
 - a. Notifying facility Public Safety Department of all workplace violence incidents
 - b. Completing a Risk Report
 - c. Completing Employee Injury Report if employee injury occurs
 - d. Actively participating in any investigation into the incident, including meetings and process debriefs
 - e. Participating in workplace violence drills held in their unit or department
2. **Management:** Management will foster an environment that is safe and free from workplace violence and will take action immediately to reduce the effects of workplace violence and/or verbal or physical abuse. Management will contact Human Resources for direction regarding the management of workplace violence incidents.
Workplace violence that affects the safety or quality of patient care should be reported via the risk reporting system.
3. **Employee:** Employees will conduct themselves in such a way to reduce the possibility of any conflicts or acts that would create a violent, abusive or unsafe workplace environment for themselves or others. Employees will notify management of workplace violence incidents, which have occurred on or off-site that has the potential of impacting the work environment. Employees will remove themselves from any situation that may result in workplace violence. This means that if confronted with a potential situation involving workplace violence, an employee must make a serious attempt to retreat from the situation and report to

management.

4. **Human Resources:** A Human Resources Representative will provide policy guidance to supervisors and managers regarding potential workplace violence situations. The Human Resource Representative is to be contacted after a workplace violence situation has been reported and will advise management, based on information provided, if EAP should be contacted for employee assessment.
5. **Public Safety:** Public Safety analyzes and disseminates information from the Workplace Violence Incident Report regarding incidents of Workplace Violence to appropriate sources, i.e., management representatives, OSHA representatives, TJC representatives, etc. Public Safety will also provide consultation and assistance to the management of the department where the potential workplace violence situation has occurred. Public Safety will dispatch personnel as appropriate and/or as requested by management. This office will assist in conducting the initial investigation with department management and complete reports and documentation as necessary. The office will provide escort support as necessary and will coordinate with local law enforcement agencies when appropriate.
6. **Risk Management:** Risk Management provides review and interpretation of all applicable laws, i.e., discrimination, defamation, invasion of privacy and any other applicable law or laws. Assistance and advice will be provided to Human Resources, Public Safety and management as well as providing a legal representation to the assessment team for the purpose of assessing risk and providing legal advice.
7. **Employee Occupational Health Services:** Employee Occupational Health Services evaluates any employee injured at the work site or injured while performing an assigned job function. Following [Impairment/Fitness for Duty Examination, HR 602](#) policy, EH may order tests for unauthorized use of controlled substances and alcohol, as requested by management and communicates test results to management, EAP and Human Resources as appropriate.

PROCEDURES:

I. EMPLOYEE EXHIBITING THREATENING BEHAVIORS

If an employee is observed exhibiting threatening behaviors on the job, the following procedure should be followed:

1. It is required that Management or the Administrator on Call (AOC) be contacted within 30 minutes of the incident. Management or the AOC must contact the employee within 30 minutes of notification of the incident and procedurally suspend the employee pending the outcome of the investigation. Management or the AOC must investigate the allegations of workplace violence. The investigation should answer the questions: Who was involved? What occurred? When did the incident occur? How did the incident occur? If possible, why did the incident occur?
2. Document the workplace violence event using the Workplace Violence Incident Report form. Information and forms are located on the VH Intranet under non-clinical forms.
 - a. When the situation is evaluated and necessary precautions have been taken, contact Human Resources or the AOC to explain the situation and to seek guidance on how to proceed.

- b. If warranted, follow the existing HR602 – Fitness for Duty Examination policy as outlined in the Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual located on the VH Intranet.
- c. Complete the Workplace Violence Incident Report immediately and fax copies to Public Safety office at fax: 540-536-8615. Public Safety will inform Human Resources and the AOC when appropriate.
- d. The manager of the offending employee may make an EAP Management Referral when appropriate by contacting the EAP directly. Refer to [Employee Assistance Program, HR 313](#).

II. PROVIDER EXHIBITING THREATENING BEHAVIORS

- a. Concerns should be escalated as soon as possible in accordance to the Chain of Command Policy.
- b. Behavior inconsistent with the Medical Staff Professionalism Policy should be escalated to Medical Staff Affairs for review and resolution.

III. EMPLOYEE EXPOSED TO A WORKPLACE VIOLENCE INCIDENT ON THE JOB

If an employee is exposed to a workplace violence incident on the job, the following procedure should occur, the employee should:

1. Inform their manager/supervisor of the workplace violence incident, which occurred on or off-site, involving another individual, which may impact the workplace. The employee may also contact the Human Resources Representative at their facility.
2. Provide their manager or supervisor with a complete description of the workplace violence behavior or actions, the name of the employee(s) and the department of the threatening individual, if known, as well as any other identifying information.
3. Employees that experience workplace violence from a non-employee should contact Public Safety or the local police department.
4. Employees experiencing workplace violence from their supervisor should contact their facility Human Resources Representative or AOC who will determine the next step in the process.
5. Employees injured on the job need to follow the policy [Injury Reporting/Workers' Compensation, HR 600](#) for reporting an injury to EH and obtaining medical care as appropriate.

FOR WORKPLACE VIOLENCE NOT INVOLVING AN EMPLOYEE, THE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE SHOULD BE CONTACTED IMMEDIATELY AT x71234. LOCAL POLICE MAY ALSO BE CONTACTED.

All Revision Dates

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Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Elizabeth Savage: CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	02/2022
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