

County of Yolo Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual

TITLE: Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

TYPE: Policy

DATE: August 27, 2024

A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Yolo County is committed to ensuring a workplace environment free from threats and acts of violence. Threats of violence or violent acts in the workplace will not be tolerated. The primary purpose of this Workplace Violence Prevention Plan is to protect employees from workplace violence by providing a reporting mechanism, response procedure, and corrective action plan for threats of violence and workplace violence. Employees are directed to report threats of violence and incidents of workplace violence pursuant to this policy.

This policy does not apply to the Yolo County Sheriff's Office, Yolo County Probation Department, or the Yolo County District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

B. DEFINITIONS

Emergency - Unanticipated circumstances that can be life threatening or pose a risk of significant injuries to employees or other persons.

Plan - This workplace violence prevention plan required by Labor Code Section 6401.9.

Threat of violence - Any verbal or written statement, including but not limited to, texts, electronic messages, social media messages, or other online posts, or any behavioral or physical conduct, that conveys an intent, or that is reasonably perceived to convey an intent, to cause physical harm or to place someone in fear of physical harm, and that serves no legitimate purpose.

Violent incident log - The violent incident log required by Labor Code Section 6401.9. This log will be maintained by the Safety Committee.

Workplace violence - Any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs in a place of employment. Workplace violence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The threat or use of physical force against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma, or stress, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.

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- An incident involving a threat or use of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, including the use of common objects as weapons, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.

Workplace violence does not include lawful acts of self-defense or defense of others.

Workplace violence injury - Any physical injury that occurs in a place of employment as a result of workplace violence. A workplace violence injury need not be serious in nature to merit response under this policy. Examples of a workplace violence injury may include, but is not limited to, bruising, abrasions, swelling, loss of consciousness, concussion, bone fracture, protracted loss or impairment of function of any bodily member or organ, and serious disfigurement.

C. RESPONSIBILITY

The Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (“WVPP”) Administrator, Human Resources Director and Risk Manager, has the authority and responsibility for implementing the provisions of this plan for Yolo County (“County”).

Position / Phone #	WVPP Responsibilities
Human Resources Director (530) 666-8149	The Human Resources Director will approve the final plan and any changes made thereafter, subject to final approval from the Yolo County Board of Supervisors.
Risk Manager (530) 666-8062	The Risk Manager conducts safety inspections, coordinates emergency response procedures, communicates with other employees about the plan, organizes Safety Committee meetings, develops, and updates training materials, and handles any reports of workplace violence.

All managers, supervisors, and Safety Committee Members are responsible for implementing and maintaining the WVPP in their work areas, and for answering employee questions about the WVPP.

D. EMPLOYEE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

The County implements the following standards to obtain active involvement of employees and authorized employee representatives in the WVPP.

The County will work with and allow employees and authorized employee representatives to participate in the following:

1. **Identifying, evaluating, and determining corrective measures to prevent workplace violence.** It shall be the policy of the County to provide ongoing training opportunities and to facilitate access to educational resources for the identification and prevention of workplace violence. The County shall ensure that this WVPP and other key policies and

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procedures (e.g., Whistleblower Protection, Code of Ethics-Standards of Ethical Conduct, Workplace Civility, Equal Employment Opportunity, Equal Employment Opportunity and Harassment), and training mandated by law or statute (e.g., Sexual Harassment Prevention and job classification, profession, or role specific safety training) is accomplished in compliance with the applicable mandate.

The Risk Manager conducts monthly countywide safety meetings with department representatives to discuss identification of workplace hazards and potential violence in the workplace. The Safety Committee then evaluates identified concerns and how to correct them in a timely manner. These meetings also involve discussions of recent accidents a review of relevant County safety procedures, when appropriate.

2. **Designing and implementing training.** Employees may request to participate in designing and implementing WVPP training . Supervisors are encouraged to allow employees reasonable opportunities to participate, where participation adds value to the employee's current or prospective job duties, or where time away from job duties is feasible and funds, if applicable, are available.

The County shall, through the operation of the Yolo Training Academy (YTA) learning management system, offer an ongoing catalogue of courses designed to do the following:

- Prepare employees for their specific job responsibilities.
- Increase employees' level of technical, behavioral, or managerial competence.
- Allow development of new skills that may lead to beneficial job changes, promotions, and/or increased responsibilities.
- Prepare employees to meet the challenges brought about by organizational, technological, or workplace environment changes.
- Assure compliance with and current knowledge of local, state, and federal regulations that impact the workplace.
- Comply with training mandates from local, state, or federal government.

Responsibility for the catalogue content shall rest with Human Resources, who from time to time shall survey employees, managers, and department heads to determine topics for training and development.

3. **Reporting and investigating workplace violence incidents.** The County is committed to ensuring a workplace environment free from threats and acts of violence. Threats of violence or violent acts in the workplace will not be tolerated. Any threats or incidents of violence must be reported promptly. The County will take all reasonable and necessary steps to prevent violence in the workplace, in accordance with the type of incident (LEVEL 1, LEVEL 2, or LEVEL 3) defined with action steps in the table below.

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LEVEL 1 - IMMEDIATE PHYSICAL THREAT TO PERSON OR PROPERTY

Examples: Bomb threat; employee assaulted in parking lot; prosecutor assaulted by defendant; citizen in county building brandishing a weapon; any instance in which an employee is subjected to a workplace violence injury, and/or employee threatens another employee or citizen with immediate harm or damage to property.

ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
Call for emergency responders “911” (Relate the specifics of the incident to ensure appropriate personnel are dispatched.)	Employee
Call the Safety Committee Member assigned to the specific department involved. A roster of members is available on the County’s employee intranet, Inside Yolo >> Risk Management .	Employee
Notify Supervisor or Manager and Department Head	Department Safety Committee Member
Notify Risk Manager	Department Safety Committee Member
Notify Human Resources Director	Risk Manager
Determination of countywide notification of incident	Human Resources Director, Risk Manager, County Administrator

LEVEL 2 - SERIOUS, BUT NOT IMMEDIATE, THREAT TO PERSON OR PROPERTY

Examples: Verbal threat to commit physical harm or property damage in the near future; an employee receives threat of damage to personal or county vehicle; threats associated with domestic issues or domestic violence.

ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
Notify Supervisor or Manager	Employee
Notify Department Head and Human Resources Director	Supervisor or Manager
Notify Risk Manager	Human Resources Director
Notify Law Enforcement and Department Safety Committee Member	Human Resources Director or Risk Manager, Department Head
Assess and implement preventive security measures	Risk Manager, Safety Committee, Department Head

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LEVEL 3 - NONPHYSICAL THREAT

Examples: Verbal harassment without a threat of physical harm to persons or property.

ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
Notify Supervisor or Manager	Employee
Notify Department Head and Human Resources Director	Supervisor or Manager
Notify Risk Manager	Human Resources Director
Notify Department Safety Committee Member	Risk Manager
Attempt to resolve	Risk Manager, Safety Committee, Department Head

Employees are encouraged to report disputes in which there is a **high potential** of violence being brought into the workplace. Once reported, the WVPP Administrator can then assist in taking steps to protect the employee and co-workers. To that end, the Board of Supervisors delegates joint authority to the County Counsel and any County manager or supervisor, following consultation with the County Administrative Officer or a designee, to seek a restraining order on behalf of the County.

4. Yolo County also provides a number of ways to report workplace issues. Employees may report harassment or violence by:
 - Talking with their Supervisor, Manager, or Department Head;
 - Contacting the Human Resources Department at (530) 666-8055 and/or hr@yolocounty.gov;
 - Contacting the confidential Yolo County Fraud Waste & Abuse and Whistleblower hotline, 1-833-416-6434 (toll-free) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - Sending a confidential message to Human Resources through the Yolo County Fraud Waste & Abuse and Whistleblower online reporting portal provided by NAVEX third-party software, <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/87014/index.html>; and
 - Reporting to riskmgmt@yolocounty.gov.

Nothing in this section prohibits employees from discussing concerns with their authorized representative, including their bargaining unit representative.

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E. EMPLOYEE COMPLIANCE

The County's system to ensure that employees comply with the rules and work practices designed to make the workplace more secure, and that they do not engage in threats or physical actions which create a safety or security hazard for others in the workplace, includes at a minimum:

1. Training employees, supervisors, and managers in the provisions of the WVPP.
2. Effective procedures to ensure that supervisory and nonsupervisory employees comply with the WVPP. The County will ensure compliance by the following:
 - Maintaining open communication with its employees;
 - Consistently applying policies throughout the organization;
 - Providing training resources for managers and supervisors;
 - Ongoing communication through monthly Safety Committee meetings;
 - Setting clear expectations of acceptable workplace behaviors;
 - Providing retraining to employees whose safety performance and/or workplace behavior is not aligned with the WVPP;
 - Recognizing employees who demonstrate work practices that promote the WVPP in the workplace by issuing memos, emails, or certificates of recognition, when appropriate;
 - The WVPP Administrator will ensure that all workplace violence policies and procedures within this written plan are clearly communicated and understood by all employees. Managers and supervisors will enforce the rules fairly and uniformly. All employees will follow all workplace violence prevention plan directives, policies, and procedures, and assist in maintaining a safe work environment; and
 - Issuing employee discipline if an employee fails to comply with the WVPP pursuant to Article 14 of the Yolo County disciplinary procedures and the applicable Memorandums of Understanding.

F. COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYEES

Two-way communication between management and staff about workplace violence issues is essential to a safe and productive workplace. The following communication system is designed to facilitate a continuous flow of workplace violence prevention information throughout the organization in a form that is readily understandable by all employees, and consists of one or more of the following:

1. New employee orientation including workplace violence prevention policies and procedures.

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2. Workplace violence prevention training programs.
3. Regularly scheduled Safety Committee meetings that address safety issues and potential workplace violence hazards.
4. Effective communication between employees and supervisors about workplace violence prevention and violence concerns. Communications between employees and supervisors regarding workplace violence will be accomplished by:
 - One on one conversations between supervisor and employee (without fear of reprisal/ retaliation);
 - Use of the secure intranet mailbox to report workplace violence concerns;
 - Discussions with the Department Safety Committee Member;
 - Job-specific training;
 - Departmental "tailgate" meetings (e.g., brief safety meetings designed to inform workers about the hazards associated with specific tasks);
 - Evaluating the WVPP communications process on an annual basis;
 - Use of any of the reporting methods available through the County's AVENUES To Report Workplace Issues process detailed on the Inside Yolo employee intranet (<https://yolocountyorg.sharepoint.com/sites/IY-HRS/SitePages/Report-Workplace-Issues.aspx>); and
 - Use of the confidential Yolo County Fraud Waste & Abuse and Whistleblower Fraud hotline (1-833-416-6434) or online reporting portal (<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/87014/index.html>) provided through by NAVEX third-party software.
5. Posted or distributed workplace violence prevention information.

Employees will not be prevented from accessing their mobile or other communication devices to seek emergency assistance, assess the safety of a situation, or communicate with a person to verify their safety. The use of cellular telephones can be a valuable tool during the time of an emergency, e.g., active shooter situations and natural disasters. Yolo County will weigh the safety needs of the organization and employees on a situational basis and develop/ revise policies that address phone use during an emergency. Employee concerns will be investigated in a timely manner, and they will be informed of the results of the investigation and any corrective actions to be taken.

G. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE

Yolo County will implement effective procedures to ensure that threats or acts of workplace violence are reported. This will be accomplished by any of the methods articulated in previous sections, and specifically, Section D. Employee Active Involvement and Section F.

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Communication with Employees. If necessary, incidents may be reported directly to the WVPP Administrator.

Employees who report harmful, discriminatory, or unethical behaviors will be protected from retaliation. Employees will not suffer retaliation or other adverse job actions for making a good-faith report of actual or potential workplace violence. The goal is to prevent victimization and other retaliatory behaviors towards the employee. Employees should not be afraid to speak up about these issues and it is in Yolo County's best interests to resolve them promptly. In all cases, the County will strive to maintain legality and uphold government ethics. Anti-retaliation applies to all prospective, current, or former employees of Yolo County.

H. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

The County has in place the following specific measures to handle actual or potential workplace violence emergencies:

1. Effective means to alert employees of the presence, location, and nature of workplace violence emergencies by the following: alarm systems and email announcements.
2. In accordance with OSHA Standard (29 CFR 1910.38) Yolo County will provide training on countywide evacuation and sheltering plans.
3. In the event of an emergency, including a Workplace Violence Emergency, follow the action steps referenced in Section D. Employee Active Involvement.

I. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

The following inspections are established and required to be conducted by the County to ensure that workplace violence hazards are identified and evaluated.

1. **General Inspections.** Inspections shall be conducted when the WVPP is first established, after a workplace violence incident occurs, and whenever the employer is made aware of a new or previously unrecognized hazard. The Safety Committee will review all submitted/reported concerns of potential hazards.
2. **Periodic Inspections.** Periodic inspections of workplace violence hazards will identify unsafe conditions and work practices. This may require assessment for more than one type of workplace violence. Periodic inspections shall be conducted quarterly or when a potential workplace hazard is reported. Periodic inspections to identify and evaluate workplace violence and hazards will be performed by the Safety Committee. Each Safety Committee Member will perform periodic inspections within their own assigned Department. A roster of Safety Committee Members is maintained by the Risk Manager on the County's employee intranet, [Inside Yolo >> Risk Management](#).

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Inspections for workplace violence hazards may include assessing:

- Lack of security patrol during normal business hour;
- Vagrancy;
- Lack of situational awareness;
- Absence of safety training;
- Procedures for reporting suspicious persons or activities;
- Malfunctioning equipment, e.g., emergency buttons and alarms;
- Inadequate signage directing employees to safe areas;
- The availability of employee escape routes; and
- Failure to act on potential threats.

J. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE HAZARD CORRECTION

Workplace violence hazards will be evaluated and corrected in a timely manner. Yolo County will implement the following effective procedures to correct workplace violence hazards that are identified:

1. If an imminent workplace violence hazard exists that cannot be immediately abated without endangering employee(s), all exposed employee(s) will be removed from the situation except those necessary to correct the existing condition. Employees required to correct the hazardous condition will be provided with the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. The County Safety Committee and the associated Department Safety Committee Member will serve as a point of contact for LEVEL 1, 2, and 3 incident correction.

K. PROCEDURES FOR POST INCIDENT RESPONSE AND INVESTIGATION

After a workplace incident, the Risk Manager, the Department Head, and the Department Safety Committee Member will visit the scene of an incident as soon as it is safe and practical. The WVPP Administrator or their designee will implement the following post-incident procedures:

1. Interview involved parties, such as employees, witnesses, law enforcement, and/or security personnel.
2. Review security footage of existing security cameras if applicable.
3. Examine the workplace for security risk factors associated with the incident, including any previous reports of inappropriate behavior by the perpetrator.
4. Determine the cause of the incident.

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5. Take corrective action to prevent similar incidents from occurring.
6. Obtain any reports completed by law enforcement.
7. Record the findings in the Violent Incident Log and ensuring corrective actions are taken. The violent incident log will be used for every workplace violence incident and will include information, such as:
 - The date, time, and location of the incident.
 - The workplace violence type or types involved in the incident.
 - A detailed description of the incident.
 - A classification of who committed the violence, including whether the perpetrator was a client or customer, family or friend of a client or customer, stranger with criminal intent, coworker, supervisor or manager, partner or spouse, parent or relative, or another perpetrator.
 - A classification of circumstances at the time of the incident, including but not limited to, whether the employee was completing usual job duties, working in poorly lit areas, rushed, working during a low staffing level, isolated or alone, unable to get help or assistance, working in a community setting, or working in an unfamiliar or new location.
 - A classification of where the incident occurred, such as in the workplace, parking lot or other area outside the workplace, or other area.
 - The type of incident (LEVEL 1, LEVEL 2, or LEVEL 3), including but not limited to, whether it involved any of the following:
 - Physical attack without a weapon, including but not limited to, biting, choking, grabbing, hair pulling, kicking, punching, slapping, pushing, pulling, scratching, or spitting.
 - Attack with a weapon or object, including but not limited to, a firearm, knife, or other object.
 - Threat of physical force or threat of the use of a weapon or other object.
 - Sexual assault or threat, including but not limited to, rape, attempted rape, physical display, or unwanted verbal or physical sexual contact.
 - Animal attack.
 - Other relevant information regarding type of violence.
 - Consequences of the incident, including but not limited to:
 - Whether security or law enforcement was contacted and their response.

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- Actions taken to protect employees from a continuing threat or from any other hazards identified as a result of the incident.
 - Information about the person completing the log, including their name, job title, and the date completed.
8. Reviewing all previous Violent Incident Log incidences.
 9. Ensure that no personal identifying information is recorded or documented in the Violent Incident Log. This includes information which would reveal identification of any person involved in a violent incident, such as the person's name, address, electronic mail address, telephone number, social security number, or other information that, alone or in combination with other publicly available information, reveals the person's identity.

L. TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

All employees, including managers and supervisors, will have training and instruction on general and job-specific workplace violence practices. These sessions could involve presentations, discussions, and practical exercises. Training and instruction will be provided as follows:

- When the WVPP is first established;
- Upon hire and recurring annually to ensure all employees understand and comply with the plan;
- Whenever a new or previously unrecognized workplace violence hazard has been identified and when changes are made to the plan. The additional training may be limited to addressing the new workplace violence hazard or changes to the plan.

The County will provide its employees with training and instruction on the definitions found on page 1 of this plan and the requirements listed below:

- The County's WVPP, how to obtain a copy of the WVPP at no cost, and how to participate in development and implementation of the WVPP.
- How to report workplace violence incidents or concerns to the County or law enforcement without fear of reprisal.
- Workplace violence hazards specific to employees' jobs, the corrective measures the County has implemented, how to seek assistance to prevent or respond to violence, and strategies to avoid physical harm.
- The Violent Incident Log and how to obtain copies of the log and/or records pertaining to hazard identification, evaluation and correction, and training records.
- Opportunities the County has for interactive questions and answers with a person knowledgeable about the WVPP.
- Strategies to avoid/prevent workplace violence and physical harm, such as:

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- How to recognize workplace violence hazards including the risk factors associated with workplace violence.
- Ways to defuse hostile or threatening situations.
- How to recognize alerts, alarms, or other warnings about emergency conditions and how to use identified escape routes or locations for sheltering.
- Employee routes of escape.
- Post-event trauma counseling for employees desiring such assistance.

M. EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO THE WVPP

The County ensures that the WVPP plan shall be in writing and shall always be available and easily accessible to employees, authorized employee representatives, and representatives of Cal/OSHA. This will be accomplished by:

1. Providing a printed copy of the WVPP upon request from an employee or designated representative. An electronic copy of the WVPP may be provided if agreed to by the employee or designated representative.
2. Providing unobstructed access through a company server or website, which allows an employee to review, print, and email the current version of the written WVPP. Unobstructed access means that the employee, as part of their regular work duties, predictably and routinely uses the electronic means to communicate with management or co-employees.

N. RECORDKEEPING

The County will:

1. Create and maintain records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation, and correction, for a minimum of five (5) years.
2. Create and maintain training records for a minimum of one (1) year and include the following:
 - Training dates.
 - Contents or a summary of the training sessions.
 - Names and qualifications of persons conducting the training.
 - Names and job titles of all persons attending the training sessions.
3. Maintain violent incident logs for minimum of five (5) years.

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4. Maintain records of workplace violence incident investigations for a minimum of five (5) years. The records shall not contain medical information per subdivision (j) of Section 56.05 of the Civil Code.

All records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation, and correction; training, incident logs and workplace violence incident investigations required by Labor Code Section 6401.9(f), shall be made available to Cal/OSHA upon request for examination and copying.

O. ACCESS TO RECORDS

The following records shall be made available to employees and their representatives, upon request and without cost, for examination and copying within **15 calendar days of a request**:

1. Records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation, and correction.
2. Training records.
3. Violent incident logs.

P. REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE WVPP

The County WVPP will be reviewed for effectiveness:

1. When a deficiency is observed or becomes apparent.
2. After a workplace violence incident.
3. As needed.

Review of the County's WVPP should include, but is not limited to:

1. Review of incident investigations and the violent incident log.
2. Assessment of the effectiveness of security systems, including alarms, emergency response, and security personnel availability (if applicable).
3. Review that violence risks are being properly identified, evaluated, and corrected.

Any necessary revisions are made promptly and communicated to all employees.

Q. EMPLOYER REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

As required by California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 8, Section 342(a) Reporting Work-Connected Fatalities and Serious Injuries, Yolo County will immediately report to Cal/OSHA any serious injury or illness (as defined by CCR, Title 8, Section 330(h)), or death (including any due to Workplace Violence) of an employee occurring in a place of employment or in connection with any employment. "Immediately" means as soon as practically possible but not longer than 8 hours after the employer knows or with diligent inquiry would have known of the death or

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serious injury or illness. If the employer can demonstrate that exigent circumstances exist, the time frame for the report may be made no longer than 24 hours after the incident.