



# Central Louisiana Human Services District

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<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	85.1	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Workplace Violence	
<b>CONTENT:</b>	CLHSD Policy for Maintaining a Violence-Free Workplace	
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<b>Approved by Rebecca I. Craig, CLHSD Executive Director</b> (approval received via email)		<b>Date</b> 11/7/2024



## I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Central Louisiana Human Services District (CLHSD) is committed to achieving and maintaining a violence-free workplace for its employees, contractors, and those visiting or conducting business at its worksites. CLHSD will take reasonable steps to create a safe and secure work environment free of violence, aggressive acts, verbal and non-verbal threatening behavior and harassment toward or by its employees or others, including domestic violence that may affect the workplace. Any employee or contractor who commits an act of workplace violence, makes a credible threat, or engages in assault or battery on another person shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Matters concerning clients shall be addressed in accordance with the CLHSD Abuse and Neglect Policy. Education and training regarding workplace violence shall be provided upon hire and at least annually to all CLHSD employees and contractors.

## II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all CLHSD employees and contractors.

## III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Assault:** an attempt to commit a battery, or the intentional placing of another in reasonable apprehension of receiving a battery.
- B. **Battery:** the intentional use of physical force or violence upon another; or the intentional administration of a poison or other noxious substance to another.
- C. **Credible Threat:** a statement or action that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their physical safety or that of another person and does, in fact, cause such fear.
- D. **Violence:** the commission of an assault or battery or the making of a credible threat. In this context, acts of violence include unwarranted exertions of force or power, such as any intentional actions or words that result in physical or emotional injury to another person or any verbal, physical, or psychological threat or assault on an individual intended to cause, or actually resulting in physical and/or psychological damage.
- E. **Workplace (or worksite):** any site where an employee is placed for the purpose of completing job assignments, inclusive of surrounding CLHSD properties and parking garages.
- F. **Workplace violence:** violence that takes place in or at the workplace.
- G. **Domestic Violence**, also known as **domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence, and intimate partner violence (IPV)**, is a pattern of behavior that involves the abuse by one partner against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, dating or within the family, home life or household affairs. Domestic violence can take many forms, including physical aggression or assault (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects, battery), or threats thereof; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; controlling or domineering; intimidation; stalking; passive/covert abuse (e.g., neglect); and economic deprivation.
- H. **Appointing Authority:** An officer or employee authorized by statute or by lawfully delegated authority to make appointments to positions in the State Service.

## IV. POLICY PROVISIONS

### A. Reporting the Incident:

All reports of acts or threats of workplace violence shall be taken seriously. Unreported workplace violence can increase the risk of harm to others.

- 1. An employee who witnesses workplace violence where someone is physically injured must take immediate action to prevent further deterioration of the situation, including calling for law enforcement, appropriate medical assistance, or emergency assistance. Any violence needs to be reported at a minimum to a supervisor.



# Central Louisiana Human Services District

- a. To report workplace violence to law enforcement, you can:
  - i. Call 911 or other emergency contacts (i.e. security guard(s)) for the facility for immediate assistance).
  - ii. Contact your supervisor and let them know what is happening
  - iii. Secure your own safety: Make sure you are safe, and if necessary, leave the area.
  - iv. Cooperate with law enforcement: when law enforcement arrives, follow their instructions.
2. An employee who has been threatened or assaulted by another person at the workplace or who witnesses such acts shall immediately report the situation to their immediate supervisor or other manager in their chain of command.
  - a. If an instance of workplace violence at a CLHSD location results in injury, involves the use of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, or presents an urgent or emergency threat to the welfare, health, or safety of CLHSD personnel, this incident shall be reported to the proper authority within 24 hours.
3. The supervisor or manager receiving a report of workplace violence shall report the incident to the Appointing Authority or designee and Human Resources (HR) by providing a description of the incident, the location of the incident, the names of any potential witnesses, and any other available documentation.
4. The Appointing Authority or designee receiving a report of workplace violence shall ensure that the individuals involved are separated and isolated until they are interviewed during the investigation conducted by HR.

## B. Investigating the Incident:

1. **HR** will investigate the incident in accordance with this policy. The investigation will be conducted expeditiously, professionally, and with due regard for the rights of all involved. To the extent allowed by law, the investigation will be conducted in a confidential manner.

To preserve the integrity of the investigative process, employees will be instructed that all information provided during employee interviews is to remain confidential. Employees are prohibited from obstructing or interfering with the investigation, which includes questioning or confronting any employee who is a part of or participating in the investigation.

**Note:** There may be instances where staff other than HR are assigned to investigate reported incidents of workplace violence. If so, the assigned investigator(s) must follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

2. **Preliminary assessment** - HR, in consultation with CLHSD Legal, shall conduct a preliminary assessment of the information provided to determine whether action should be taken to prevent further incidents. For example, it may be appropriate to authorize leave or temporarily reassign personnel. The appropriate appointing authority will be apprised of any preliminary action to be taken with the utmost confidentiality.
3. **Interviews** - The investigation may begin with interviews of employees who will be required to provide details to facilitate the investigative process, such as the acts they witnessed, the date, time, and location of the occurrence, the identity of other witnesses, and any writings, records, logs, recordings, pictures, or other documentation of the incident.
4. **Participant responsibilities** - All employees called upon to participate in the investigation are required to fully cooperate and provide truthful responses. Employees do not have the option of remaining silent or declining to get involved. Those questioned may be required to prepare a written



# Central Louisiana Human Services District

statement or provide a recorded statement. Employees are hereby informed that polygraph examinations may be employed as an investigative tool.

5. **Report and recommendations** - Upon completion of the investigation, HR, in consultation with CLHSD Legal, will report whether the report of workplace violence is substantiated or unsubstantiated to the appropriate appointing authority and provide recommendations for resolution.
6. **Management decision** - Complainants may be assured that any employee found, after investigation, to have engaged in workplace violence will be subject to corrective action or disciplinary action. Corrective actions may include counseling and/or reprimand. Disciplinary actions include suspension, reduction in pay, demotion, or dismissal.

In conjunction with the corrective or disciplinary action, other appropriate measures, including additional training, relocation, reassignment, job restructuring, etc., may also be utilized to protect against the recurrence of inappropriate behavior.

7. **Unsubstantiated good-faith complaints** - Employees must understand that despite the best efforts and thoroughness of the investigative process, not all complaints can be substantiated. This does not indicate, however, that the complaint was contrived or made in bad faith. As such, employees are encouraged to file good-faith complaints without regard for the ultimate outcome.

## V. RETALIATION STRICTLY PROHIBITED

CLHSD maintains an affirmative duty to protect its employees from harassment, reprisal, or retaliation. This protection extends to any employee making a good faith complaint of workplace violence, as well as those employees providing information or participating in the investigative process. If a complaint of retaliation is made and an investigation reveals that harassment, retaliation, or reprisal has occurred, the offender shall receive either corrective action or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## VI. POSTING REQUIREMENTS

- A. **HR** is responsible for posting the Workplace Violence Policy to the CLHSD Website.
- B. **Area Managers** are responsible for posting the local law enforcement and building security telephone numbers in the area(s) they are assigned to.

## VII. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ORDERS

Domestic protective orders and other court orders concerning documented or potential acts of violence not arising out of the workplace setting (domestic or family violence issues, e.g.), shall be communicated to an employee's supervisor, whether the employee is the person for whose protection the order was issued or is the person against whom the order was issued.

The employee's supervisor shall maintain the confidentiality of that communication except to notify HR. HR shall notify the Appointing Authority and security detail. In settings where building security is provided, the security detail shall be the highest level of that security detail.

Each employee so affected is under a continuing obligation to notify, as previously set forth, of any changes or modifications or extinguishment of any such order, etc.

## VIII. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.