

# Family Partnerships of Central Florida

## PROCEDURE

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**Series:** Human Resources **COA:** ASE 6.01  
**CFOP:**

**Procedure Name:** Employee Safety Procedure  
**Procedure Number:** HR2808  
**Reviewed Date:** 4/16/2024  
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**Effective Date:** 4/6/18

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**Applicable to:** All Family Partnerships of Central Florida (FPoCF) staff

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**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this procedure is to outline the FPoCF procedure for maintaining a safe workplace. The personal safety of each employee of the FPoCF is of primary importance. To the greatest degree possible, FPoCF management provides necessary procedures and training for the personal safety of all employees to promote a safe and healthy culture throughout the organization. This procedure also ensures that the needed resources are provided to achieve the goals of this safety procedure and to set a high standard for safety practices. This procedure outlines the protocols and steps taken by the FPoCF staff to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and families referred and prompt quality access for families to the services.

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### References

### Definitions

It is essential to the employees of the FPoCF and to the families served that a safe and healthy workplace is maintained at all times. The management staff ensures the outlined procedures are adhered to and implemented by all employees. While it is the intent of the FPoCF to provide a safe environment for employees, it is the responsibility of all staff to make a concerted effort to contribute towards and maintain a safe work environment. It is also the intent of FPoCF to properly manage any incidents that may occur to minimize impact to staff and other forms of loss. It is the expectation that each and every staff member becomes familiar with and adheres to the procedure as well as be an active participant in the workforce safety procedure.

Staff members are required to report any unsafe condition or threats received immediately to their immediate supervisor. Unsafe conditions or threat are also responded to law enforcement. Employee threats can be defined as (but are not limited to) those situations in which the employee's well-being or safety is threatened by any act that includes a physical assault, threat (verbal or written), any behaviors or action which could be interpreted by a reasonable person as harmful, any act which harms or endangers the safety of others, and any act which results in aggression towards, the destruction or damage of any property; (company, personal or otherwise.) It is the responsibility of every FPoCF employee to report acts of threats or violence to the proper authorities and take these threats seriously.

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Any employee that observes any suspicious or criminal behavior on property, must promptly report this information to appropriate personnel and law enforcement. Any employee that is a victim or a witness to a crime, must avoid safety risks and try to be observant to detail for later reporting.

## **Some Warning Signs of Potential Violence**

- Covert or overt threats of harm;
- Actions of others that are intimidating or instill fears in others;
- Presenting as delusional, disoriented or unreasonable, or the perception that the entire world is working against the individual's goals and objectives;
- Not taking criticism well, holding a grudge (especially against someone in an authority role);
- Having a history of violent and explosive behavior;
- Having an extreme interest in, or obsession with weapons or carrying a concealed weapon without having the legal authority and permit to do so;
- Criminal history or charges associated with violence, and
- Concerns themselves with or affiliates with known gang members or criminals.

## **Intruder Alert:**

From time to time, organizations have been faced with the threat of unauthorized individuals entering the facility. An intruder can be defined as any visitor who, through act or deed, poses a perceived threat to the safety and welfare of the clients and employees. If an intruder enters the building:

- Assess the situation
- Speak to the individual in a non-confrontational manner with the assistance of another staff member
- Ask the individual who they are and how you can assist
- If you are uneasy or suspicious call or have someone call 911
- Utilize duress buttons at the front desk
- If a weapon is present, DO NOT CONFRONT

## **Enhancing FPoCF Staff Safety during an Active Shooter Event:**

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, management should be prepared to:

- Take immediate action
- Remain calm
- Lock and barricade doors
- Evacuate staff and clients via preplanned evacuation route to a safe area

FPoCF has adapted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommended practices for coping with an active shooter situation.

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1. Run: If there is an accessible escape path, staff should attempt to evacuate the premises. Be sure to:
  - Have an escape route and plan in mind
  - Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
  - Leave belongings behind
  - Help others escape, if possible
  - Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be
  - Keep hands visible
  - Follow the instructions of any police officers
  - Do not attempt to move wounded people
  - Call 911 when safe
  
2. Hide: If evacuation is not possible, staff should find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find them.
  - a) The hiding place should:
    - Be out of the active shooter's view
    - Provide protection if shots are fired in the staff member direction (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door)
    - Not trap them or restrict their options for movement
  - b) To prevent an active shooter from entering the hiding place;
    - Lock the door
    - Blockage the door with heavy furniture
  - c) If an active shooter is nearby:
    - Lock the door
    - Silence cell phones
    - Turn off any sources of noise
    - Hide behind large items
    - Remain quiet
  - d) If evacuation and hiding out are not possible:
    - Remain calm
    - Dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter's location
    - If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen
  
3. Fight: As a last resort, and only when a staff member's life is in imminent danger, they should attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:
  - Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
  - Throwing items and improvising weapons
  - Yelling
  - Committing to their actions

When law enforcement arrives, their purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard. When law enforcement arrives staff should:

- Remain calm, and follow the officers' instructions
- Put down any items in their hands
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers

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- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises

When possible, staff should provide the following information to law enforcement or the 911 operator:

Location of the active shooter

- Number of shooters, if more than one
- Physical description of shooter/s
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
- Number of potential victims at the location

Once staff have reached a safe location or an assembly point, they will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Staff should not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed them to do so.

An active shooter in the workplace may be a current or former staff member, or an acquaintance of a current or former staff member. Intuitive managers and coworkers may notice characteristics of potentially violent behaviors in an employee. Staff should alert the President and CEO and Human Resources if they believe an employee or coworker exhibits potentially violent behavior.

## **Hostage Situation:**

In the unlikely situation you are taken hostage, below are suggested guidelines:

- Be calm and patient. Avoid distraction.
- The initial timeframe is the most dangerous. Follow instructions, be alert and stay alive.
- The captor is often emotionally unstable. Don't make mistakes that could jeopardize your well-being.
- Do not speak unless spoken to and then only when necessary.
- Avoid arguments and speculation
- Be observant. You may be released or have an opportunity to escape and the personal safety of others may depend on your memory.

Staff typically display indicators of potentially violent behavior over time. If these behaviors are recognized, they can often be managed and treated. Potentially violent behaviors by a staff member may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism; vague physical complaints
- Noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and hygiene
- Depression/withdrawal

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- Resistance and overreaction to changes in policy and procedures
- Repeated violations of company policies
- Increased severe mood swings
- Noticeably unstable, emotional responses
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
- Suicidal; comments about “putting things in order”
- Behavior which is suspect of paranoia
- Increasingly talks of problems at home
- Escalation of domestic problems into the workplace; talk of severe financial problems
- Talk of previous incidents of violence
- Empathy with individuals committing violence
- Increase in unsolicited comments about firearms, other dangerous weapons and violent crimes.

## **Employee and Management Responsibility:**

It is the responsibility of each FPoCF employee to alert their immediate supervisor of any potential safety concerns on the date that the said occurrence takes place. If there are extenuating circumstances that render this step not possible, the employee shall notify the immediate supervisor at the next earliest time available of the safety concern.

It is the responsibility of FPoCF management and leadership team to provide follow up and communication across the FPoCF of the danger threat to ensure all parties are aware. It is the responsibility of the FPoCF management and leadership team to provide intervention for any employee safety issue that has been brought to the attention of management to the extent that the said employee has been provided with resolution. Intervention may include safety checks by law enforcement, reassigning the impacted employee to another work site, a temporary reassignment of duties and/or transfer of case to another worker, unit, or service center.

## **Safety Check Practices**

Each FPoCF employee is required to sign in and out upon entrance and exit from the building via the Employee Sign in Log. All visitors are required to sign in and out upon entrance and exit from the building.

All staff are required to update their calendars daily, with scheduled appointments, in the agency database/electronic calendar that includes the family name and meeting place. The assigned supervisor and/or manager may randomly check staff whereabouts and cross references this information with documentation in the agency database/electronic calendar and on employee travel logs.

Also based on the severity of a safety concern and at the discretion of the FPoCF management, staff may be required to notify their immediate supervisor upon entrance and exit from a home/appointment to ensure staff safety. This is implemented as another safety measure in the event that the employee or supervisor believes the situation may pose additional risk. If at any time that the employee is not comfortable proceeding with a scheduled or unscheduled family meeting due to a safety issue, the employee must notify the immediate supervisor to determine the next action steps. Whenever necessary, the management staff will consult with the FPoCF Executive teams for the appropriate course of action.

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## Documentation of safety concern

It is the policy of FPoCF that a Critical Incident Report be executed for all details related to the incident to serve as documentation of an occurrence impacting the safety of an employee, to assess liability, to identify action steps and to provide necessary intervention. The assigned staff member is required to follow all additional procedures as outlined in OP 1144. If an employee witnesses or directly experiences an incident of theft, burglary, accident, altercation (physical or verbal) injury or other crime on company time or when the employee is engaged in a work related activity, the employee must report the incident to their direct supervisor and Law Enforcement Agency. The employee is required to obtain a copy of the police report summarizing the incident. Employee safety is of paramount concern to FPoCF and if an emergency situation arises, the employee *must call 911 as a first response during emergency situations to resolve the immediate issue and then a follow up notification can be made to the direct supervisor.*

## Abuse of Client:

If at any point while services are being provided a client discloses that he or she has been abused by a staff member, the incident will be immediately reported to law enforcement for an investigation to be commenced. During the investigation process, the assigned staff person that the allegation was made against will be removed from assignment to the family. Upon completion of the investigation, whether the allegation of abuse on the part of the staff member is verified or unsubstantiated, the staff member in question will no longer be assigned to the particular family or client that brought forth the allegation of abuse.

## Risk Management Subcommittee

The FPoCF Executive team or assigned staff member can request a review of any safety concern through the agency's Risk Management Sub Committee on an ongoing basis.

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:



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PHILIP J. SCARPELLI  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Family Partnerships of Central Florida

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