

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Prevention Program

The Poughkeepsie Public Library is committed to the safety and security of our employees. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to our staff.

Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment including but not limited to:

- an attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee;
- any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm;
- intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without his or her consent that entails some injury; or
- stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

Acts of violence against any of our employees where any work-related duty is performed will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including involving law enforcement authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for: (a) helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other and for visitors; (b) following all policies, procedures and practices; and (c) for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to immediately upon notification. All personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

Contact: Tom Lawrence, Library Director

Retaliation against an employee who makes a good faith report of violence or other disruptive behavior is strictly prohibited and shall be subject to appropriate corrective or disciplinary measures.

The Library shall work alongside authorized employee representatives in developing and implementing the Workplace Violence Prevention Program, which at a minimum, shall include:

- evaluating the physical environment;
- developing the Workplace Violence Prevention Program; and
- reviewing workplace violence incident reports at least annually to identify trends in the types of incidents reported, if any, and reviewing the effectiveness of the mitigating actions taken.

No one in the Library District shall have in their possession a firearm or other dangerous weapon, instrument or material that can be used to inflict bodily harm on an individual or damage to Library property without specific written authorization from the Library Director, or

his/her designee, regardless of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or weapon.

Additional Library policies related to workplace violence include the Policy #1101 A – Patron Code of Conduct and Policy #4110 - Sexual Harassment Prevention.

Workplace Violence Prevention Program

Risk Evaluation and Determination

The Library District shall conduct a Risk Evaluation and Determination pursuant to the requirements of New York State Labor Law § 27-b and 12 NYCRR § 800.6. The Risk Evaluation and Determination shall consist of the following phases:

1. **Record Examination (see Appendix 1-A):** The Library shall examine any relevant records in its possession, including records compiled in the previous year under New York State Labor Law 27a, concerning workplace violence incidents to identify patterns in the type and cause of injuries. The examination shall look to identify patterns of injuries in particular areas of the workplace or incidents which involve specific operations or specific individuals.
2. **Administrative Risk Factors (see Appendix 1-B):** The Library shall assess relevant policies, workplace practices, and work procedures that may impact the risk of workplace violence.
3. **Risk and Mitigation Efforts Worksheet (see Appendix 1-C):** The Library District shall review risks identified and record mitigation efforts taken or recommended.
4. **Evaluation of Physical Environment (see Appendix 2):** The Library shall evaluate the workplace to determine the presence of factors that may place employees at risk of workplace violence.

Risk Factors Identified in the Workplace

In accordance with New York State Labor Law § 27-b and 12 NYCRR § 800.6 and pursuant to the Risk Evaluation and Determination conducted by the Library, the following risks have been identified:

- Working in public settings;
- Working late night or early morning hours;
- Exchanging money with the public; and
- Working in small numbers.

Control Methods the Library Uses to Offset and Prevent Workplace Violence Incidents

There are three main types of control measures that will be implemented as part of the safety program to protect employees from recognized hazards, including workplace violence. These measures are referred to as the “hierarchy of control measures” and consist of the following:

- **Engineering controls** – eliminate or reduce hazards through substitution or design (e.g., increased lighting, designing secure building access, security hardware, eliminating isolated work areas, and eliminating excessive “cash on hand”).
- **Work Practice Controls** – eliminate or reduce the hazards by changing organizational policies and procedures (e.g., employment of security personnel, developing building access control procedures, other safety provisions, training).
- **Personal Protective Equipment** – eliminate or reduce environmental hazards.

The Library also maintains a Safety and Security Manual which outlines how to reduce threats and handle certain situations that may arise within the Library District.

Reporting Workplace Violence Incidents

Any employee or their authorized employee representative who believes that a serious violation of the employer's workplace violence protection program exists, or that a workplace violence imminent danger exists, shall report such matter to the Library Director in the form of a written notice using the online Incident Report Form made available of the Staff Page and shall afford the employer a reasonable opportunity to correct such activity, policy or practice.

Such written notice is not required where imminent danger exists to the safety of a specific employee and the employee reasonably believes in good faith that reporting to a supervisor would not result in corrective action.

Retaliation against an employee who makes a good faith report of violence or other disruptive behavior is strictly prohibited and shall be subject to appropriate corrective or disciplinary measures.

Post-Incident Response

The Library's post-incident response for incidents of workplace violence shall include:

- Assuring that injured employees receive prompt and appropriate medical care, if needed (this includes, but is not limited to, providing transportation of the injured to medical care. Prompt first aid and emergency transportation can minimize the harmful consequences of a violent incident.);
- Reporting the incident to the appropriate authorities as required by applicable laws and regulations;
- Securing the premises to safeguard evidence and reduce distractions during the post incident response process;
- Preparing an accident report immediately after the incident, noting details that might be forgotten over time;
- Addressing the need for appropriate treatment for victimized employees (in addition to physical injuries, victims and witnesses may suffer psychological trauma, fear of returning to work, feelings of incompetence, guilt, powerlessness, and fear of criticism by supervisors); and
- Preparing an incident report after the incident and submit to the building administration or direct supervisor.

In the event that critical incident management or crisis counseling following a workplace violence incident in the Library is needed, arrangements will be made through Administration.

Recordkeeping Requirements

The recordkeeping requirements outlined in 12 NYCRR Part 801, Recording and Reporting Public Employees' Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, must be used to document recordable injuries sustained during violent workplace incidents.

In addition to Part 801, all incidents will be investigated and documented to ensure that all threats and workplace violence incidents are reported to management. These reports will provide written notification when a violence incident occurs so that management can develop an

appropriate response. The Incident Report will also create a historical record that can be used in the annual risk assessment and program evaluation

For more information on recordkeeping requirements, the NYS DOL Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH) bureau may be contacted at 120 Bloomingdale Road, Room 250, White Plains, NY 10605; 914-997-9514; Fax: 914-997-9528.

If the case is a “privacy concern case” (as defined below), the Library will still develop a Workplace Violence Incident report. However, before sharing a copy of that report with any party other than the Commissioner of Labor, the Library will remove the name of the employee who was the victim of the workplace violence and shall instead enter “Privacy Concern Case” in the space normally used for the employee’s name.

A “Privacy Concern Case” includes cases involving:

- Injury or illness to an intimate body part or the reproductive system;
- Injury to illness resulting from a sexual assault;
- Mental illness;
- HIV infection;
- Needle stick injuries and cuts from sharp objects that are or may be contaminated with another person’s blood or other potentially infectious material; and
- Other injuries and illnesses, if the employee independently and voluntarily requests that his or her name not be entered on the report.

Employee Training

The Library shall provide training to each employee on the risks of workplace violence in their workplace or workplaces at the time of the employee’s initial assignment and at least annually thereafter.

Such training shall, at a minimum, include the following information:

- Overview of Requirements of the Workplace Violence Regulations;
- Other policies in place that may be relevant;
- Risk factors specified to the workplace that were identified in the risk evaluation; and
- Privacy Concerns.

Please refer to Appendix 4 for additional information on these training topics.

Annual Review of Workplace Violence Prevention Program

The Library shall conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program on an annual basis. The evaluation shall consider, among other things, the effectiveness of control measures, record keeping, and reporting of workplace violence.

Access to this Program

The most current version of this plan will be made available to employees, their authorized representatives, and representatives of the NYS Department of Labor, by contacting the Library Director.

Appendix 1-A: Record Examination

Date of Examination: _____

Participants in Examination: _____

Instructions: Examine records below from the previous year to identify patterns, if any, of injuries in particular areas of the workplace or incidents which involve specific operations or specific individuals. Record the results in the column to the right.	
Record Examination	Results of Examination
Workplace Violence Incident/Accident Reports	
Relevant Personnel Disciplinary Reports	
Summary of Relevant Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses	

Appendix 1-B: Administrative Risk Factors

Date of Evaluation: _____

Participants in Evaluation: _____

Instructions: Assess policies, work practices, and procedures that may impact the risk of workplace violence	
Item Assessed	Record of Assessment and Noted Risks
<p>Examples of relevant policies: Code of Conduct Vulnerable Children and Adults Sexual Harassment</p> <p>Examples of work practices and procedures: Desks clear of objects which may become weapons (might be relevant in situations where dealing with the public) I.D. Badges used Periodic check-in procedures Procedure on de-escalation Location of panic buttons reviewed Limit visible clues of carrying money/valuables Partnering arrangements, if necessary</p>	

APPENDIX 1-C: List of Risks and Mitigation Efforts

Date of Evaluation: _____

Participants in Evaluation: _____

Risks Identified through Record Review and/or Risk Evaluation	Methods and means by which the risk is being addressed
Identified Risk #____	
Identified Risk #____	
Identified Risk #____	
Identified Risk #____	
Identified Risk #____	
Identified Risk #____	

Appendix 2: Evaluation of Physical Environment

Date of Evaluation: _____

Participants in Evaluation: _____

Location:
Person(s) conducting the evaluation:
Date of assessment:
Instructions: All sections below refer to present conditions. Select "NA" for any items you do not consider applicable to the space being evaluated. This form requires the participation of authorized employee representative(s).

1. Security Features	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Reception Area Available				
Barriers to Separate Clients from Work Area				
Emergency Numbers Posted by Phones				
Multiple Exits				
Unobstructed Office Exits				
Door Control(s) i.e., locks, remote buzzer, panic bars				
Door Detector(s) door alarm				
Adequate lighting in and around the workplace				
Parking lot well lighted				
Panic Button(s)				
Video Monitor(s)				
Landscaping to provide unobstructed view of the workplace				
Limiting the posting of signs on windows				
Other:				

Notes:

Appendix 2: Evaluation of Physical Environment

2. Risk Factors	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Work in public settings				
Work late night or early morning hours				
Exchange money with the Public				
Work alone or in small numbers				
Work in a location with uncontrolled public access				
Areas of previous security concerns				
Other:				

Notes:

Appendix 2: Evaluation of Physical Environment

3. Security Guards	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Comments
Are security guards present at the location				
Are guards posted at entrance(s)				
Do they patrol the building				
Are they provided with communication? If yes, indicate what type in Notes/Comments.				
Any other relevant information				

Notes:

Appendix 2: Evaluation of Physical Environment

4. Description of the Building: Using the information from Sections 1-3 and your working knowledge of the building describe in Section 4 the building (number of entrances and exits, number of employees, access to the building, security features, areas of concern related to security).

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Appendix 2: Evaluation of Physical Environment

5. Specific Hazards: Using the information from Sections 1 - 4, list the specific hazards identified in this evaluation.

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Appendix 3

Workplace Violence Incident and Accident Reports

Incidents and accidents are reported using the Library District's online Incident Report and Accident Report forms found on the Staff Webpage.

Appendix 4

Workplace Violence Prevention Training Outline

Information and training for all employees:

- I. Overview of Requirements of the Workplace Violence Regulations
 - a. Develop a written policy statement – employers must develop a written policy statement about the employer's workplace violence prevention program goals and objectives and provide for full employee participation through an authorized employee representative. The policy statement must be posted where notices to employees are normally posted.
 - b. Conduct a risk evaluation – employers must examine their workplace to determine if existing or potential hazards exist that might place employees at risk of occupational assaults or homicides.
 - c. Develop a workplace violence prevention program – employers must develop a program, with input from employees or an authorized employee representative, that, among other things, includes the following: risk factors identified through the risk evaluation; how the identified risks will be addressed; the methods that will be used to try to prevent workplace violence incidents; a system to report and record any workplace violence incidents that occur in the workplace; a written outline or lesson plan for employee program trainings; and a plan to review and update the program at least once a year.
 - d. Provide training and information for employees – employers must provide each employee with information and training on the risks of workplace violence in their workplace(s) at least once a year and any time significant changes are made to the workplace violence prevention program.
- II. Other policies in place that may be relevant
 - a. Domestic Violence
 - b. Firearms
- III. Risk factors specific to the workplace that were identified in the risk evaluation
 - a. Measures that employees can take to protect themselves from the identified risks including specific procedures that the employer has implemented such as:
 - Incident alert and notification procedures
 - Appropriate work practices
 - Emergency procedures
 - Use of security alarms and other devices
 - b. Procedures to report incidents of workplace violence
 - c. Location of the written workplace violence prevention program and how to obtain a copy (only employers with 20 or more full-time permanent employees are required to maintain a program in writing.)

- IV. Privacy Concerns: How will sensitive information be handled: Information otherwise kept confidential for security reasons does not have to be disclosed to all employees. Examples of confidential information include but are not limited to information that would interfere with law enforcement investigations or judicial proceedings, would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial, would identify a confidential source or disclose confidential information relating to a criminal investigation, would reveal criminal investigative techniques or procedures except routine techniques and procedures, or would endanger the life or safety of any person.