

Tammy Howard
Workbook Chapter 6

1. Have any employees in your practicum agency been threatened or harmed by clients or consumers? If yes, describe the circumstances that gave rise to the incident? Yes, I was told that several years ago, a worker within the agency was threatened with a knife as she proceeded to remove children from a parent.

2. What precautions, if any, might have prevented the above incidents or reduced their seriousness? Perhaps by placing metal detectors at the doors would help to keep things like this incident from occurring. In addition, DCS has implemented new policies geared towards safety. Workplace violence prevention guideline TCA 37-5-105, 37-5-106, 39.17-1350, & 39-17-1359

3. What agency policies and procedures are in place to ensure personal safety and reduce risk to agency employees and clients?

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 4.29

Workplace Violence Prevention Guidelines

TCA 37-5-105, 37-5-106, 39-17-1350, 39-17-1359

4. What training is provided in your agency to help workers prevent and deal with threatening or violent clients or situations? There is no special training for such incidences

5. Do agency workers carry defensive devices such as mace or pepper spray? What are the pros and cons of doing so? I have spoken to a few co-workers who state that they carry pepper spray on their person. I think the pro to this is that it may actually be needed one day for protection. I think that a con could possibly be that the device may not work properly as some have been known to do or it could backfire. In addition, I think that if the spray did have to be used on a client, it could cause some negative publicity for the agency but I will gladly take that any day or the alternative.

6. What kinds of high-risk clients or situations are you likely to encounter in your practicum? How will you prepare yourself to deal with them? Within the field of practice I am in, we are confused with CPS on a regular basis (the agency that is responsible for the actual removal of children). People tend to become very angry and aggressive when they think you may have had something to do with the removal of their children which can cause them to lash out at you.

We can call before we go out to the home, explain why we are coming and reduce any stress that might be present before we ever sit down with them.

7. Given the area served by your agency, what specific locations or neighborhoods are known to be especially dangerous? You always hear certain things about certain areas

for example; a lot of African American workers will not go to Meigs County without a partner because that area is known for disliking minorities. On the other side, some Caucasian workers might be scared to go into the housing projects without a partner. Me personally, I do not fear either of these place but I would be a little Leary of going at night by myself. I think that bad things can happen just about in any neighborhood so you should actually be aware of your surroundings at all times.

8. What services does your agency provide to workers who are threatened, injured, or traumatized by threats or violence (e.g., counseling, critical incident stress debriefing, or support groups)? Employee assistance plan

9. Does your agency have an incident reporting system for documenting threats and violence toward workers?

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 4.29

Workplace Violence Prevention Guidelines

TCA 37-5-105, 37-5-106, 39-17-1350, 39-17-1359

The Department of Children's Services (DCS) shall provide and maintain a workplace environment that is safe, secure and free of harassment, threats, intimidation and violence.

Purpose

To provide guidelines to ensure the safety of DCS employees and persons and to recognize that potential workplace violence is a growing problem that must be addressed to prevent workplace violence from occurring to the fullest extent possible and set forth guidelines when such violence has occurred.

1. Each employee of DCS and every person on state property must report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he or she is aware to his or her immediate supervisor.

3. If a workplace violence situation involves an injury that requires immediate medical attention, appropriate emergency responders must be alerted as outlined in the applicable office/facility **Safety Plan, Emergency Response Preparedness Plan or YDC/Group Home Contingency Plans**. All appropriate DCS notifications will be made as outlined in each plan.

4. Incident Reporting – **All** incidents must be reported as follows:

a) DCS Regional and Field staff and contract providers (as applicable) will report all incidences of threats or acts of violence on the **Serious Incident Reporting (SIR)** web-based application (or on form **CS-0496, Serious Incident Report** when the web-based application is in-operable).

b) Youth Development Centers and DCS Group Homes will report all incidences of threats or acts of violence in the **Critical Incident Reporting Web Application** as outlined in the **Incident Reporting Manual: Youth Development Centers and DCS Group Homes** (or on form **CS-0311, Incident Report** when the web-based application is in-operable).

c) Appropriate local law enforcement, security provider, or emergency services agency; and

d) The local DCS Human Resources office staff will be responsible for reporting all incidences to the central office Human Resources Division, as applicable.

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 29.12

TCA 37-5-106

Each Department of Children's Services Central Office Division, Regional Office, Field Office and DCS Facility shall develop a written Emergency Response Preparedness Plan (ERPP) to manage safety and emergency situations, limit operational disruption and resume operations in a reasonable time period

Purpose

To ensure that ERPP's are developed that provides guidelines for safety and information to survive emergency situations and enable re-establishment of normal business operations. The key objectives of the ERPP are to:

- ◆ Provide for the safety and well-being of people and employees at the time of an emergency or disaster;
- ◆ Identify critical lines of business and supporting functions;
- ◆ Establish management succession;
- ◆ Coordinate services and share information;
- ◆ Minimize the duration of a serious emergency;
- ◆ Minimize immediate damage and losses;
- ◆ Facilitate effective coordination of recovery tasks; and
- ◆ Be able to continue critical/essential business operations during the emergency;

and the OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM PLAN

10. Does your agency have a formal, written agreement with the police detailing when they are to be called for assistance? Call security first, then either they call the police, or if it is uncontrolled by security and the situation is threatening, then whomever sees the issue can call.

11. Are there any clients or situations that frighten you? If so, how can you deal with your fears? Preparation is the key to any situation, rather it be one that causes fear or pleasure.

12. If your practicum is in a hospital or health care setting, what precautions are you to take in order to protect yourself and your vulnerable clients from infectious diseases or biohazards? N/A