



Administrative Policy No. 18.67

Title: Workplace and Domestic Violence

Applies To: All Department of Social and Health Services Employees

Authorizing Sources: [Executive Order 96-05](#)
[RCW 9A.46.110](#)

Information Contact: Human Resources Division

Effective Date: July 1, 2005

Revised July 1, 2011 – Housekeeping 5/23/12ⁱ

Approved By: original signed by Glen G. Christopherson
Senior Director, DSHS Human Resources

Purpose:

This policy provides guidance to Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) staff regarding workplace violence and domestic violence affecting the workplace. It promotes a safe and secure workplace environment for all agency employees and clients.

Scope:

This policy applies to all DSHS employees, volunteers, and service providers conducting agency business internally and with visitors and clients.

Definitions:

Domestic violence: Abusive and/or harassing behavior that is physical, sexual and/or psychological, and is intended to establish and maintain control by a family or household member over another current or former family or household member. “Family or household member” means spouses, former spouses, persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they have been married or have lived together at any time, adult persons related by blood or marriage, adult persons who are presently residing together or who have resided together in the past, persons sixteen years of age or older who are presently residing together or who have resided together in the past and who have or have had a dating relationship, persons sixteen years of age or older with whom a person sixteen years of age or older has or has had a dating relationship, and persons who have a biological or legal parent-child relationship, including stepparents and stepchildren and grandparents and grandchildren. (RCW 10.99.020(1))

Workplace: Any location, permanent or temporary, where an employee performs work-related duties. This includes, but is not limited to, buildings and surrounding perimeters, including parking lots, field locations, home and community activities, alternate work locations, agency vehicles, and travel to, from, and during work assignments.

Workplace violence: Verbal or physical assault or threatening behavior which occurs in or arises from the workplace and which is committed toward or by DSHS employees, clients, or customers.

Policy:

DSHS is committed to providing a work environment in which employees feel safe from harm and high levels of productivity are fostered. All staff must take the problem of domestic violence and workplace violence and its effect in the workplace seriously. DSHS will take all reasonable steps to foster a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and clients.

DSHS is committed to providing support and assistance to employees who are victims of domestic violence. This may include confidentiality when coming forward for help, resource and referral information, work schedule adjustments, relocation of work assignments, leave as needed to get assistance or obtain safety, and other assistance as appropriate.

DSHS will take steps to prevent violence from occurring in the workplace. Managers and supervisors will work with employees who are victims of domestic violence to prevent abuse, stalking and harassment from occurring in the workplace.

A. Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Committing workplace violence, domestic violence, or threatening such violence while using state resources, conducting state business, or while in a state facility or vehicle.
2. Physical assault, including sexual assault of any person, or engaging in any act, which comprises custodial assault or client abuse under [Administrative Policy 8.02 – Client Abuse Reporting](#).
3. Injuring or threatening to injure another person physically.
4. Engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person.
5. Engaging in behavior that subjects another person to extreme emotional distress.
6. Possessing, brandishing, or using a weapon that is not required by the individual's position while on state premises or engaged in state business.
7. Intentionally damaging property or threatening to damage property of an employee, client, or resident.

8. Retaliating against any employee who, in good faith, reports a violation of this policy.

B. Training

1. DSHS will provide training to employees concerning workplace violence and domestic violence. Training should include identifying early signs of potentially abusive or violent behavior, suggestions to defuse volatile situations, and reporting procedures. The information should include:
 - a. conducting state business off-site
 - b. traveling
 - c. safety in areas such as parking lots
2. Domestic violence training includes available resources for victims and perpetrators, and options if an employee believes a co-worker is a victim or perpetrator of domestic violence.
3. Staff working in DSHS facilities and working with DSHS clients in home and community settings will receive additional training specific to custodial assault, client/staff boundaries, client abuse, and custodial misconduct.

C. Actions to be taken agency-wide

1. All employees must report acts or threats of violence they experience or witness in the workplace or while performing work functions.
2. The appointing authority, designee, or immediate supervisor shall investigate reports of violence and take appropriate action to:
 - a. Address the safety and security of potential victims and others.
 - b. Provide support and assistance to any victim.
3. DSHS is further committed to providing information for assistance to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence in order to break the cycle of violence. The following will provide information regarding local assistance and resources:
 - a. The employee's organization
 - b. DSHS Human Resources
 - c. The Department of Enterprise Services Employee Assistance Program
4. Requests for information or assistance will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

5. The appointing authority or designee, and immediate supervisor shall provide appropriate support and assistance to any victim of workplace violence or domestic violence.
6. No DSHS employee will be penalized or disciplined solely because he or she is, or has been, a victim of domestic violence.
7. DSHS employees violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Additionally, an employee who has been arrested, charged, convicted or has a court order issued because of workplace or domestic violence may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
8. Victims of workplace violence or domestic violence may use paid leave or authorized leave without pay under [WAC 357-31](#).

D. Additional Resources

- 24 Hour Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-562-6025 (V/TTY)
- Office of Crime Victims Advocacy
1-800-822-1067
www.ocva.wa.gov
- Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
(360) 586-1022
www.wscady.org
- Washington's Violence Against Women Network
www.wavawnet.org
- Address Confidentiality Program
Washington State Secretary of State
[Address Confidentiality Program](#)

ⁱ Updated to reflect the changes in names from Department of Personnel to the Department of Enterprise Services and the Office of the State Human Resource Director.