



**Onondaga**  
Central Schools

# **Violence Prevention Program**

**April 8, 2024**

# PROGRAM REVIEW

OCS will review and update its Workplace Violence Prevention Program on an annual basis with the Authorized Employee Representative(s). The review will include an assessment of the program's effectiveness and any necessary modifications.

# APPLICATION

This program applies to all employees of OCS, including teachers, administrators, support staff, and contractors.

# PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this program is to prevent and minimize the hazards of workplace violence to employees of OCS and enables the district to evaluate the risk of potential violence, then design and implement protection programs to address those risks.

# WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where an OCS employee performs any work-related duty in the course of their 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 their consent that entails some injury;
- 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.

# EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

OCS employee involvement in the “Program”: Association Officers, Administrators, & District and Building Safety Teams.

- Employee & BOE Policy Statement
  - BOE Policy Committee and School Attorney
- Meetings with Association Leadership
- Workplace Risk Assessment (Google Forms/Survey)
- Building Committees
  - Employees are encouraged to report any potential workplace violence hazards to their supervisor or another designated person as more specifically set forth below.
- Workplace Violence Program
- Workplace Violence Prevention Training
- Full Compliance

# DEFINITIONS

The terms below have the following meanings for the purposes of this program:

- “Employee:” Any person employed by OCS, including teachers, administrators, support staff, and contractors.
- “Authorized Employee Representative:” An employee authorized by the employees or the designated representative of an employee organization recognized or certified to represent the employees pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law.
- “Supervisor:” Any person within the school district who has the authority to direct and control the work performance of an employee, or who has the authority to take corrective action regarding the violation of a law, rule or regulation to which an employee submits written notice.

# DEFINITIONS

The terms below have the following meanings for the purposes of this program:

- “Workplace:” Any location away from an employee's domicile, permanent or temporary, where an employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment by the school district.
- “Imminent danger:” Any conditions or practices in any place of employment which are such that a danger exists which could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm immediately or before the imminence of such danger can be eliminated.
- “Serious physical harm:” Physical injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes death or serious and protracted disfigurement, protracted impairment of health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ or a sexual offense as defined in Article 130 of the New York State Penal Law.

# WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

This OCS Workplace Violence Prevention Program includes the following elements:

- The District Workplace Violence Prevention Policy Statement which will be posted where notices to employees are normally posted.
- Risk Evaluation and Determination: OCS will conduct a risk evaluation to identify potential workplace violence hazards. The risk evaluation includes an examination of records, an assessment of relevant policies and work practices, and an evaluation of the physical environment.

# PREVENTION METHODS

OCS will implement a number of prevention methods to reduce the risk of workplace violence, including:

- A workplace violence policy statement that is posted throughout the district and communicated to all employees;
- Employee training on workplace violence prevention;
- Security measures at all school facilities; and
- A system for reporting and investigating workplace violence incidents.

# RISK EVALUATION AND DETERMINATION

On an annual basis OCS Building and District Safety Teams:

1. Examine records including those compiled in the previous year that concern workplace violence incidents to identify patterns in the type and cause of injuries. Examples of records to be used:
  - Injury and illness documentation
  - Workplace violence incident reports; and/or
  - Workers' compensation reports and disciplinary reports.
2. Assess policies, practices, and procedures that may impact the risk of workplace violence.

# RISK EVALUATION AND DETERMINATION

Examples of what may be assessed:

- Policies regarding sexual harassment;
- Firearms policies; and/or
- Work practices requiring work in public settings, including exchanging money with the public, working alone or in small numbers, and working with potentially violent clients.

3. Evaluate the physical work environment for the presence of factors which may place employees at risk of workplace violence, with the participation of the Authorized Employee Representative(s).

# RESPONSE PLANS

OCS has a response plan in place to address workplace violence incidents and other related incidents. The response plan includes procedures for:

- Evacuating employees and students from a dangerous area;
- Notifying law enforcement and emergency medical services;
- Providing support to victims of workplace violence.

OCS maintains safety plans/emergency response plans that include considerations for safety and health that meet all applicable federal, state, local laws, regulations and ordinances. These can be found within the required notifications on our website.

# REPORTING

OCS has created a reporting system that allows employees to report any workplace violence incidents that occur in the workplace. These reports will be in writing and will be maintained for the annual program review with the Authorized Employee Representative(s).

- Workplace location where incident occurred;
- Time of day/shift when incident occurred;
- A detailed description of the incident, including events leading up to the incident and how the incident ended;
- Names and job titles of involved employees;
- Name or other identifier of other individual(s) involved;
- Nature and extent of injuries arising from the incident; and
- Names of witnesses.

# REPORTING

Any employee or their Authorized Employee Representative who believes a serious violation of the employer's workplace violence protection program exists, or that a workplace violence Imminent Danger exists, shall bring such matter to the attention of their supervisor and report the incident via the school district's Workplace Violence Incident Reporting Form.

The school district shall have a reasonable opportunity to correct such activity, policy, or practice.

# REPORTING

Any employee or their Authorized Employee Representative are encouraged to report any incident or circumstance they believe to be in violation of the Workplace Violence Plan, as such, they are protected from retaliation, threat or undue influence. Likewise, employees who pressure or coerce an individual to not report an incident or circumstance may be found to be in violation of this plan.

Written notice is not required when Workplace Violence 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.

# CONFIDENTIALITY

The school district shall consider safety and security before considering disclosure of information related to workplace violence prevention. Examples of circumstances in which safety and security may preclude disclosure includes, but is not limited to, disclosure that would:

- interfere with law enforcement investigations or judicial proceedings;
- deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication;
- identify a confidential source or disclose confidential information relating to a criminal investigation;
- reveal criminal investigative techniques or procedures, except routine techniques and procedures; or
- endanger the life or safety of any person.

# Privacy Concern Case

If a report is deemed a “privacy concern case,” by the school district, the school district shall remove the name of the employee who was the victim of the workplace violence and enter “PRIVACY CONCERN CASE” in the space normally used for the employee's name.

PRIVACY CONCERN CASE may include cases involving:

- Injury or illness to an intimate body part or the reproductive system;
- Injury or 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 or illnesses, if the employee independently and voluntarily requests that his or her name not be entered on the report.

# Utica National

## Violence Prevention Training Video

### Workplace Violence: Awareness and Prevention

The goal of this course is to provide employees and supervisors with basic information about awareness and prevention of violence in the workplace. [More](#)



# PROTECTIVE MEASURES

1. **Awareness and Vigilance:** Stay alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. Recognize potential warning signs of aggression or violence, such as escalating arguments, threatening behavior, or sudden changes in demeanor. Trust your instincts and avoid situations or individuals that make you feel uncomfortable or threatened.
2. **Effective Communication:** Practice effective communication techniques to de-escalate tense situations and resolve conflicts peacefully. Remain calm, maintain a respectful tone, and actively listen to the concerns of others. Use non-confrontational language and avoid escalating the situation with aggressive or inflammatory remarks. If necessary, seek assistance from authorities or trained professionals to mediate disputes and ensure everyone's safety.
3. **Personal Safety Measures:** Take proactive steps to enhance your personal safety and security. This may include:
  - a. Avoiding isolated or poorly lit areas, especially at night.
  - b. Walking with a trusted friend or colleague, especially in unfamiliar or high-risk environments.
  - c. Carrying a personal safety device such as a whistle, or personal alarm for emergencies.
  - d. Knowing how to defend yourself physically or seeking self-defense training from qualified instructors.
  - e. Having a plan in place for escaping or seeking help in the event of an emergency.
  - f. Utilizing workplace safety resources and reporting any concerns about potential violence to your employer or designated security personnel.

By following these safety procedures and remaining vigilant, individuals can reduce the risk of being involved in violent incidents and help create a safer environment for themselves and others.

# General Safety Recommendations

- Familiarize Yourself with Safety Protocols: Understand the safety protocols and procedures established by your employer.
- Attend any training sessions provided to ensure you are aware of potential risks and how to mitigate them.
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Always wear appropriate PPE for your job tasks. This might include gloves, goggles, helmets, or masks, depending on the nature of the work.
- Report Hazards: Promptly report any hazards or unsafe conditions to your supervisor or the designated safety officer. This includes faulty equipment, potential fire hazards, or any other unsafe situations.
- Follow Safe Work Practices: Adhere to established safety guidelines and best practices while performing your duties. This might involve proper lifting techniques, machine operation procedures, or chemical handling protocols.
- Stay Informed: Stay informed about emergency procedures, including evacuation routes, assembly points, and emergency contact information. Regularly review and participate in emergency drills organized by your employer.
- Maintain Clean and Organized Workspaces: Keep your work area clean and organized to minimize tripping hazards, reduce clutter, and ensure easy access to emergency exits and safety equipment.
- Utilize Safety Equipment: Familiarize yourself with the location and proper use of safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and emergency eyewash stations.
- Participate in Safety Meetings: Attend safety meetings and actively participate in discussions about workplace safety. This provides an opportunity to voice concerns, share experiences, and contribute to improving safety measures.

# CONCLUSION

The OCS Workplace Violence Prevention Program is designed to create a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. The program is based on the understanding that workplace violence is a serious problem that can be prevented. By working together, OCS and its employees can create a workplace where everyone feels safe and respected.

# QUESTIONS