

## Threat Assessment Team Guide

Publication 108

March 2007  
Transmittal Letter 4

- A. Purpose.** Under federal law (the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970), the Postal Service has an obligation to provide its employees with a safe and healthful place to work. Among the ways the Postal Service proactively meets its obligation is by implementing strategies and tools for reducing workplace violence. One such tool is Publication 108, *Threat Assessment Team Guide*, which provides guidance to Postal Service management in responding to and assessing the seriousness of violent and potentially violent situations. Maintaining a safe and healthful workplace is a key part of the Transformation Plan strategy of enhancing our performance-based culture.
- B. Explanation.** This revision incorporates the realignment of the Workplace Improvement Analyst as a Core Team Member, establishes the role of the Human Resources Manager as compulsory to the Core Team Membership, and details compliance requisites.
- C. Distribution**
- 1. Initial.** Copies will be sent to each district for distribution to appropriate offices and plants.
  - 2. Additional Copies.** Order PUB108 (PSN 7610-04-000-0991) from the Material Distribution Center. Use touch tone order entry (TTOE). Call 800-273-1509.  
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  - 3. Online.** This handbook is available on the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site: <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim>.

**D. Rescission.** This document supersedes the December 2002 edition and the March 2005 online revision of Publication 108. Recycle all previous editions.

**E. Comments.** Submit questions and suggestions in writing to:

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT  
US POSTAL SERVICE  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20260-9520

**F. Effective Date.** This handbook is effective upon receipt.



*Doug A. Tulino*  
*Vice President*  
*Labor Relations*

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# 1

## Workplace Violence Prevention

### 1-1 Workplace Violence Prevention Program

#### 1-1.1 Introduction

Every business organization, whether it is a federal or state program, in the private or nonprofit sectors, large or small, is susceptible to workplace violence. Workplace violence was not identified or recognized as a workplace issue until the mid-1980s.<sup>1</sup> Since that time, we have seen broad-based attention to workplace violence research and prevention. Local, state, and federal governments, as well as industry, labor, and academic organizations have all invested efforts to develop prevention measures.

The United States Postal Service remains dedicated to violence prevention through carefully developed policies and programs. A major component of the Postal Service's workplace violence prevention program is the district Threat Assessment Team (TAT).

The most effective way to respond to the problem of workplace violence is to develop strategies to prevent it. An established workplace violence prevention program provides the foundation for achieving a violence-free workplace. This program depends on a universal *zero tolerance policy statement* and a consistently implemented *zero tolerance action plan* for the management of threats, assaults, and inappropriate workplace behavior.

This publication sets forth requisites and guidelines to ensure consistency throughout the organization and to enhance the development of Threat Assessment Teams.

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<sup>1</sup> Watson, Eleanor Lynn (2006). Active inaction-symbolic politics, agenda denial or incubation period: twenty years of U.S. workplace violence research and prevention activity. Dissertation, West Virginia University.

The Postal Service has been an image that rests in the literature and review of the history of workplace violence. Workplace violence literature views the tragedy of Edmond, Oklahoma, on August 20, 1986, as part of the threshold where violence in the workplace emerged as a specific category of violence. The Edmond tragedy was not the first of its kind for the national workforce or for the Postal Service. However, the magnitude of the loss was a mark in time and raised public awareness.

Commitment to a violence-free workplace is a priority for the Postal Service. We remember not only the Edmond tragedy, but every workplace violence fatality — both in homage to our employees who lost their lives and in our determination to prevent further violence and loss of life.

### 1-1.2 **Zero Tolerance Policy and Action Plan**

*Zero tolerance* means that every act or threat of violence, regardless of the initiator, elicits an immediate and firm response. The response could involve discipline: up to, and including, removal of the offender.

The concept of zero tolerance is based on the belief that no employee should have to work in the atmosphere of fear and intimidation that results when threats and inappropriate behavior remain unaddressed. Every employee deserves a safe work environment. Zero tolerance, thus, is the most important feature of a district's commitment and resolve to providing a violence-free workplace.

It is common for the term *zero tolerance* to be interpreted as resulting in a uniform and automatic response of dismissal for all reported incidents. Even though the meaning of zero tolerance is set out correctly in Postal Service policy, many employees focus on an absolutist interpretation without understanding the term in context. Therefore, it is important for Threat Assessment Team members to be prepared to respond to this matter. Threat Assessment Team members can provide understanding to the employee by explaining that the term is to set a standard of workplace behavior (violent and threatening conduct is not acceptable), not a system of discipline.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (2002). Workplace Violence: Issues in Response. Critical Incident Response Group. FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia.



Discipline may be imposed, but it will be based on the nature and severity of the violation.

By implementing a zero tolerance policy statement, the Postal Service reaffirms the objectives of the *Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace*. See exhibits 1-1.2a and 1-1.2b for two sample zero tolerance policy statements.

The issuance of an action plan for Postal Service management to deal with acts of workplace violence is essential. See exhibit 1-1.2c for a sample action plan that can be used as a model for developing local plans.

### 1-1.3 **Violence Prevention Strategies**

The six organizational strategies for reducing workplace violence are the following:

- *Selection*. Hire the right individual for the right job in the first place.
- *Security*. Ensure appropriate safeguards for employees, customers, and property.
- *Communication of policy*. Consistently communicate and enforce Postal Service policy regarding violent and inappropriate behavior.
- *Environment and culture*. Create a work setting and maintain an atmosphere that is perceived to be fair and free from unlawful and inappropriate behavior.
- *Employee support*. Ensure that managers, supervisors, and employees are aware of the resources available to assist them in dealing with the problems of work and daily living.
- *Separation*. When separation is necessary, handle the process professionally, including assessing inappropriate behavior and potentially violent circumstances. See Publication 106, *Guide to Professional Parting*, for details on handling separations.

## 1-2 Threat Assessment Team

A Threat Assessment Team (TAT) uses a cross-functional, multidisciplinary team approach to assist in assessing threatening situations and to develop risk abatement plans that minimize the potential risk for violence. The TAT is one component of the Postal Service's comprehensive Workplace Violence Prevention Program, and each district must set up a TAT.

This document outlines the TAT guidelines that all districts are to implement. This publication was revised in September 2006 to include changes to improve team processes (chapter 3), provide more performance measures (chapter 5), detail the specific actions needed for each Threat Assessment Team to be in compliance with this guide (chapter 7), and comprehensively update the foundation in accordance with advances in workplace violence prevention research.

The Postal Service will continue to make revisions to this Threat Assessment Team Guide as advances in workplace violence prevention are evidenced through research and the experience of our organization's efforts. All the supporting information and training materials associated with this guide have been updated to incorporate the revisions put forth here.

## 1-3 Glossary

- *Assault* (broadly defined). Any willful attempt to inflict injury on another person, coupled with the apparent ability to inflict injury, or any intentional display of force that would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

**Note:** An assault may be committed without touching, striking, or doing bodily harm to another person (e.g., throwing a brick at a person that does not actually strike the person).

- *Credible threat* (as defined by the Inspection Service). A statement or action that has the apparent capability of inflicting harm and is directed in a manner that causes individuals to know that they are the target of the threat and that puts them in fear for their safety or that of their immediate family.

- *Crisis management.* Management with the purpose of delegating specific roles and responsibilities to crisis team members for dealing with violent crises, providing for the care and support of victims and their families, and establishing an orderly return to normal operations. The focus is confined to the management of violent incidents at the crisis and post-crisis stage.
- *Situation or incident.* A difficult or risky state of affairs or a combination of circumstances over time that has led to or could lead to violence.
- *Threat* (broadly defined). A statement or act that carries the intention to inflict harm or injury on any person, or on his or her property. Threats also include words or actions intended to intimidate another person or to interfere with the performance of his or her official duties (e.g., standing in front of a corridor with a menacing posture and not permitting another person access to load a Postal Service vehicle).
- *Threatener.* A person reported to the TAT or later identified by the TAT as a person with a risk of violence toward others or him- or herself or a person who has committed an act of physical violence.
- *Violence* (as defined by the Postal Service). Any verbal or physical threat or assault on a person that has the intention of injuring or results in injury.

**Note:** Violence is not limited to fatalities or physical injuries. Intentional words, acts, or actions meant to provoke another can escalate and result in injury if not immediately and appropriately addressed by management. Threats of suicide are considered acts of violence.

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## 2

# Team Purpose and Objectives

### 2-1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Threat Assessment Team (TAT) is to prevent workplace violence.

### 2-2 Purpose

The TAT assesses the danger or harm that may result from a threat, both to the victim and to others affected, and recommends an appropriate risk abatement plan.

### 2-3 Goals

The goals of the TAT are to:

- Identify individuals who have shown signs of violence toward others in the workplace or toward themselves or who have committed acts of physical violence.
- Assess the risk posed by the overall circumstances of the threats.
- Manage the case to reduce risk to employees, customers, and the organization.
- Contribute toward a safe workplace for every employee.
- Help reduce incidences of inappropriate behavior and resolve conflicts.

## 2-4 Means to Achieve Goals

To achieve these goals, the TAT must be prepared to:

- Respond quickly to incidents that may endanger employees and customers or disrupt the workplace.
- Support management personnel, labor unions, and management organizations in handling difficult situations.
- Act as a resource and offer support, including information and recommendations.
- Act in the best interests of the Postal Service and its employees.
- Follow up on any incident to ensure that the threat is mitigated.
- Identify proactive strategies and mechanisms to maintain a safer workplace.

The TAT addresses issues defined within the scope of the Postal Service definitions of *violence* and *credible threat* (see the glossary at 1-3).

## 2-5 Three Primary Tasks

The three primary tasks of the TAT are to:

- *Identify threateners.* The TAT must identify the threateners and the environmental issues, societal factors, and contributing events in a situation.
- *Assess risk.* The TAT must assess the risk level of a situation or incident.
- *Recommend a risk abatement plan:* The TAT must develop a recommended risk abatement plan for managing an identified situation or incident. The primary focus of the risk abatement plan is to reduce risk and liability.

## 2-6 Paramount Considerations

### 2-6.1 General

TAT members are responsible for being careful and diligent in guarding the individual's civil and legal rights. TAT members must evaluate the workplace environmental issues and risk factors that may indicate a potential for violence. See exhibit 2-6a for risk indicators and exhibit 2-6b for environmental issues, societal factors, and contributing events — additional factors are provided to remind TAT members that *final assessment and planning are not accomplished until all relevant factors and events that contribute to the potential for violence are examined.*

When appropriate, the local TAT alerts the District Emergency Manager to the potential for or serious nature of the incident. For more information consult the Integrated Emergency Management Plan (IEMP), Office of Emergency Preparedness Online Information Center, at <http://blue.usps.gov/emergencypreparedness/>.

### 2-6.2 Domestic Violence and Stalking

Workplace violence includes domestic violence. Domestic violence needs to be an integral part of any workplace violence prevention program. "Every year, according to a Justice Department study, approximately 18,700 violent workplace events are committed by an intimate of the victim: a current or former spouse, lover, partner, or boyfriend/girlfriend."<sup>3</sup> Further, according to a study by the University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center, 5 percent of workplace homicides (that is about one-third of homicides not associated with a robbery or other "stranger" crime) fall into this category."<sup>4</sup> See exhibit 2-6c for behavior that may suggest to a manager that an employee is being victimized in a violent relationship.

A victim may be particularly susceptible in the workplace because the abuser knows the location, and it is easier for a victim to change

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<sup>3</sup> ASIS International (2005). Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Guideline. Alexandria, VA: ASIS.

<sup>4</sup> National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (2002). Workplace violence: issues in response. Critical Incident Response Group. FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia.

residence or phone numbers than to change jobs. Also, a victim may work at the same location as the abuser or the abuser may have access to the work site from another job function.

The domestic violence abuser can exhibit stalking behavior. However, stalking is not always from a prior relationship; it can be a product of a person's desired or imagined relationship with another. Stalking legislation has existed in the United States since 1991. However, few human resources professionals can identify how many stalking cases have been encountered in their organizations over the past decade.

In some cases, the stalking begins in the workplace and follows the victim outside the workplace. In other cases, the stalking begins outside the workplace and follows the victim into the workplace. Regardless of how stalking invades the workplace, organizations should manage reports of stalking similar to traditional workplace threat and violence cases.<sup>5</sup>

It can be a sensitive area to manage the boundary between personal and business issues. The report of a threat emanating from a domestic or personal relationship or a stalker needs to have the same action taken as any threat in order to assess the risk and implement measures to reduce any likelihood of harm to employees, their coworkers, or the workplace at large. The TAT will involve Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services and utilize the EAP consultant as a situational advisor to the assessment. The EAP consultant will also be available to provide information and services to the employee.

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<sup>5</sup> Beatty, D., and Beatty, T. (2002). Bureau of Justice Assistance, South Carolina Department of Public Safety. Workplace Stalking: A Guide for Criminal Justice Professionals. Washington, DC: Justice Solutions.



# 3

## Establishing a Threat Assessment Team

### 3-1 Threat Assessment Team Composition

#### 3-1.1 Core Membership

Core members of the TAT are:

- Human Resources Manager.
- Workplace Improvement Analyst.
- Labor Relations Manager.
- Medical Director or Occupational Health Nurse Administrator.
- District Manager or designee.
- Lead Plant Manager or designee.

#### 3-1.2 Core Member Responsibilities

Core team members of the TAT normally address incidents of extreme or high-priority risk (see the Priority Risk Scale in exhibit 3-1.2). All core members should become subject matter experts in the area of workplace violence because they serve as both specialists and generalists.

All core members must complete Threat Assessment Team Orientation Course number 22203-00. Every district must verify that all TAT core team members have completed the Orientation Course by entering the training date on the “Threat Assessment Team Membership and Meeting Tool” link on the EAP/WEI Web page.

Each fiscal year, Workplace Violence Refresher Course number 21201-71 will be available for all employees who have completed the orientation course. The refresher course is recommended for all core

team members, ad hoc members, and situational advisors. Orientation course number 22203-00 is a prerequisite to the annual refresher course. Refer to section 3-2.1, Workplace Violence Annual Refresher Training, for more course specifics.

The major responsibilities of each core team member are described below. These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive; other responsibilities may be assigned to core team members.

### **Human Resources Manager**

- Coordinating and overseeing the TAT.
- Determining whether or not to convene the TAT.
- Determining whether or not ad hoc resources are to be used.
- Assigning TAT member duties and monitoring core-team assignments.
- Determining what outside resources are needed and who is to contact them.
- Determining who is to prepare and maintain official records for the TAT.

### **Workplace Improvement Analyst**

- Providing guidance on any immediate efforts that may be needed to address issues impacting the workplace where the incident occurred.
- Reviewing history of workplace interventions and climate assessments.
- Meeting with employees, witnesses, and concerned employees as needed and apportioned.
- Providing organizational development recommendations and resources to the core team on abatement strategies.

### **Labor Relations Manager**

- Providing guidance on placing an employee on emergency, off-duty status.
- Serving as a resource to supervisors or managers on administrative and disciplinary actions.

- Reviewing an employee's disciplinary record.
- Communicating to the TAT relevant information regarding contractual issues.

**Medical Director or Occupational Health Nurse Administrator**

- Reviewing an employee's medical records, such as Department of Veterans Affairs medical information, fitness-for-duty examinations, and current medical history.
- Contacting an employee's private treating physician.
- Providing specific employee medical information to the TAT on a need-to-know basis.
- Scheduling fitness-for-duty examinations when warranted.

**Operations Representative (District Manager, Lead Plant Manager, or Designees)**

- Providing knowledge on how to minimize disruption of work-site operations.
- Providing information about security needs.

**3-1.3 Contacting the Inspection Service**

TAT members should contact Postal Inspectors in the situations described below. This list is not all-inclusive and it does not supersede local guidelines established by Postal Service managers or the Inspection Service:

- An emerging situation poses a risk to employees.
- Incidents such as physical assaults or credible threats are occurring at the work site.
- The TAT is planning to conduct a threat assessment or risk abatement analysis.
- The TAT has scheduled a meeting or a training session for team members.

### 3-1.4 **Situational Advisors**

The responsibilities of situational advisors are described below. These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive; other responsibilities may be assigned to situational advisors.

Situational advisors include:

- Postal Inspector.
- Postal Service legal counsel.
- Employee Assistance Program consultant.
- Outside mental health professional.

### 3-1.5 **Situational Advisor Responsibilities**

#### **Postal Inspector**

- Reviewing a current or former employee's military records.
- Contacting Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), state, and local law enforcement agencies for an employee's arrest record.
- Reviewing gun registration records, vehicle identification information, or both.
- Conducting criminal background checks.
- Meeting with a current or former employee.
- Conducting a formal investigation of an incident.
- Preparing an investigative memorandum and submitting it to Postal Service management.
- Preparing a Presentation Letter (Consider for Presentation) of an incident for the United States Attorney or District Attorney.
- Acting as a liaison with other law enforcement agencies.
- Consulting with management about security for affected work sites.

#### **Postal Service Legal Counsel**

- Providing legal guidance in the best interests of the organization.
- Providing legal advice to management.

- Advising on confidentiality and privacy concerns.
- Providing legal developments in the area of workplace violence.
- Providing the latest information on statutes, regulations, and guidelines about violence prevention.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Consultant**

- Providing guidance on how to approach the situation or incident.
- Recommending and assisting, when indicated, the need to refer an employee to the EAP.
- Serving as an information expert on domestic violence to TAT-managed cases where this issue is evidenced.

**Outside Mental Health Professional**

- Providing guidance to defuse a situation or incident.
- Interviewing an employee at the first indication of potentially violent behavior for an initial risk assessment.

**3-1.6 Ad Hoc Resources**

The ad hoc team may include two or more employees. Factors to be considered in assignments are:

- Non-bargaining and bargaining unit representation.
- Diversity of the workplace (i.e., gender, race, and cultural differences).

The coordinator for the ad hoc team is the Human Resources Manager. Ad hoc resources may include:

- Supervisor or Manager (at the site of an incident).
- Union and management organization leaders.\*
- Security Control Officer.
- Diversity Development Specialist.
- Manager, Safety and Health.
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Specialist.
- Human Resources Generalist Principal.

- Manager, Injury Compensation.
- Others as deemed necessary.

\*The use of union and management organization officials is encouraged whenever appropriate to assist the TAT in managing the case. Teams are encouraged to develop a collaborative relationship with unions with respect to workplace violence prevention efforts.

At the highest level of collaboration, the union role could include: (a) supporting the Postal Service's workplace violence and prevention program; (b) participating in designing and carrying out prevention efforts; (c) attending TAT meetings by the team's invitation; and (d) cooperating with and participating in training efforts.<sup>6</sup>

### 3-1.7 **Ad Hoc Resource Responsibilities**

Although the core TAT deals with higher-level incidents of risk, the district may benefit from having these ad hoc resources assist in dealing with lower-level incidents. Ad hoc resources are district employees who may be available to assist the TAT. Such resources offer the organization the opportunity to assess a given situation and intervene at priority risk scale levels 3 and 4 to deal with inappropriate behavior before it escalates further. See exhibit 3-1.2 for the priority risk scale.

Ad hoc resources may visit sites where low-level complaints have been received to gather information for the core TAT. If appropriate, ad hoc resources may also offer intervention services, i.e., conflict resolution or mediation. The Human Resources Manager decides whether or not ad hoc resources should be assigned to those incidents or situations perceived as lower priority.

Districts using this approach have succeeded in preventing further escalation of conflict.

The major responsibilities of ad hoc members are described below. These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive; other responsibilities may be assigned to ad hoc members.

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<sup>6</sup> National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (2002). Workplace violence: issues in response. Critical Incident Response Group. FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia.

**Supervisor or Manager (at the Site of an Incident)**

- Continuing to manage the incident site.
- Determining whether or not security measures are adequate.
- Submitting the employee's work performance history to the TAT.
- Preparing a brief summary of the incident or situation for the TAT.
- Consulting with Labor Relations about administrative and disciplinary actions.

**Manager, Safety and Health**

- Reviewing the employee's safety or accident profile.
- Communicating relevant information to the TAT.
- Preparing a brief summary of the employee's safety record for the TAT.

**Manager, Injury Compensation**

- Reviewing an employee's injury compensation files.
- Noting whether an Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) claim has been controverted based on medical documentation.
- Noting whether an OWCP claim has been accepted, or rejected.
- Communicating relevant information to the TAT.
- Preparing a brief summary of the employee's injury compensation records for the TAT.

**Human Resources Generalist Principal**

- Reviewing an employee's Official Personnel File (OPF).
- Reviewing an employee's work history.
- Determining any history of wage garnishments.
- Preparing a brief summary of the employee's OPF for the TAT.
- Communicating relevant information to the TAT.

### 3-1.8 **Criteria for Selecting Ad Hoc Resources**

Persons identified to assist the TAT must have the knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined in the roles of ad hoc members. Identified ad hoc resources should receive appropriate orientation. Although any single person does not need to meet all of the following criteria, ad hoc team members should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the skills and abilities listed below.

- Knowledge of assessment, intervention, mediation, and communication techniques and procedures.
- Ability to recognize problem situations.
- Ability to analyze problems and complaints by listening to and observing employee behavior.
- Ability to gather, organize, and interpret information.
- Ability to communicate with difficult employees.
- Ability to consult with employees and organizations to develop plans and strategies to alleviate problems.
- Ability to document, prepare, update, and maintain confidential client records.
- Knowledge of Postal Service regulations and policies and laws such as the Privacy Act.
- Ability to listen and communicate orally and in writing to a wide range of audiences, including senior management and union officials.
- Ability to know when they are “in over their heads” (i.e., have the ability to recognize the skill and knowledge limitations of their paraprofessional role and seek consultation when necessary to ensure successful resolution of any situation).
- Ability to work independently.
- Ability to handle crisis communications.
- Knowledge of community resources, such as social services and mental health professionals.
- Ability to make follow-up assessments and recommendations.



- Knowledge of national agreements and labor relations policies sufficient to advise management.
- Ability to demonstrate sensitivity to a wide variety of issues, to be flexible and open, and possess labor-management relationship skills.

Districts are encouraged to use TAT ad hoc members as field investigators to assist the Workplace Improvement Analyst (WIA) in work-climate assessments and other formal workplace interventions. The training and experience of the ad hoc members for the TAT prepares them to be in a support role for the WIA and contribute knowledge of their respective functions.

## **3-2 Threat Assessment Team Orientation**

### **3-2.1 Orientation Course**

The Postal Service has developed TAT Orientation Course number 22203-00 for district TATs. The orientation course must be given by those who have completed TAT Train-the-Trainer Course number 22203-99.

- All core TAT members must attend the orientation course.
- When possible, ad hoc members (i.e., local union and management organization leaders) can attend the orientation course.

When the orientation course is scheduled at a facility, the person scheduling it must notify the respective Division Office of the Inspection Service. The Division Office then identifies the inspectors to attend that scheduled orientation course.

Upon completion of the orientation course, the participants will be aware of:

- The Postal Service's commitment to a strategic plan for reducing violence in the workplace.
- The Postal Service's approach to the TAT process.
- The importance of implementing a local TAT.

Orientation training dates must be entered for each core member on the EAP/WEI Web page.

### 3-2.2 **Workplace Violence Annual Refresher Training**

The Postal Service will offer a series of workplace violence training courses as follow-up to the orientation course. One course in the series will be available annually to districts as a refresher course to the orientation course. The course title is Workplace Violence Refresher Training Course number 21201-71. This refresher course will be a forum to provide an update on the latest statistics on workplace violence. Further, the course will have a main subject area relating to workplace violence. The topics may include areas such as current trends in workplace violence research, case studies of workplace incidents, or domestic violence.

The refresher course is recommended for all core team members, as well as ad hoc members and situational advisors. Orientation course number 22203-00 is a prerequisite to the yearly refresher course.

Every TAT will notify the Division Office of the Inspection Service of the course topic and availability.

# 4

## Team Process

### 4-1 Meetings and Minutes

The TAT must meet *at least twice a quarter* to review team responsibilities and unresolved action items as necessary.

To manage cases, the TAT determines what is to be done, by whom, and when, the time frame for completion, and time frames for reporting updates and completion of objectives to the TAT. The TAT assigns action items related to a specific incident and regularly follows up on an agreed-upon risk abatement plan.

Also, the TAT monitors the incident work site for environmental factors. This additional information helps the TAT to better understand a pattern of behavior and events. See exhibit 2-6b for a list of environmental issues, societal factors, and contributing events.

The biquarterly TAT meetings should have all available core members in attendance, as well as those in designated roles of situational advisors and ad hoc members particular to cases under review or discussion. In addition to having updated information from the management of the site of individual cases, teams are encouraged, when reasonable, to have management representation in attendance at the meeting. Each TAT should foster an environment of involvement and direct communication of individual cases with the management of the work site. Union officials should be considered for invitation at times when there is a clear opportunity for maintaining or advancing risk abatement.

Minutes must be kept of each TAT meeting. Although they should be kept to a minimum, the minutes must include risk assessment findings (including information indicating a situation of extreme (level 1) or high (level 2) priority rating) and risk abatement actions.

Specific risk abatement actions recommended in the TAT document may include:

- Encouraging EAP appointments.
- Assessing the workplace climate.
- Recommending fitness-for-duty examinations.
- Consulting with an expert on workplace violence.
- Resolving labor-management relations issues.
- Monitoring the work site, as appropriate.
- Increasing office security.
- Obtaining restraining orders.

Before the close of each meeting, the TAT assigns responsibilities for implementing all action items. A core TAT member should be identified to monitor individual assignments.

Copies of minutes must be sent to the District Manager and Inspector in Charge. Verification that minutes were disseminated must be logged on the EAP/WEI Web page.

## 4-2 Incident Response

The following action steps provide guidance for addressing an incident or situation:

### 1. Notifying Appropriate Resources:

- Any employee who may be involved in or may be witness to an incident may initiate the notification call to the Human Resources Manager, Workplace Improvement Analyst, Inspection Service, Labor Relations Manager, Medical Director, District Manager, or Lead Plant Manager.
- You may want to direct calls to one centralized TAT hotline number, which must be accessible to *all* employees.
- The Human Resources Manager determines whether the TAT needs to meet or whether the situation can be addressed through other TAT members or ad hoc resources.

**2. Assigning Resources:**

- If a meeting *is* called, refer to the roles of the involved team members.
- If a formal meeting is *not* called, the Human Resources Manager assigns resources to ensure that the incident or situation receives appropriate attention.
- Include the situation or incident in the next official TAT meeting.

**3. Collecting Information:**

- Obtain documentation from employees reporting the situation and from any witnesses.
- Utilize postal inspector in role as situational advisor to obtain relevant background information from family members.
- Arrange for the incident site's supervisor, manager, or postmaster to participate in the TAT meeting to provide the team with additional information and insight. When a management representative is not available to attend, a TAT member should have summary information to present at the meeting.

**4. Making a Background Inquiry:**

Check the following information sources:

- Personnel records.
- Disciplinary records.
- Safety and health records.
- Injury compensation claims.
- Other sources such as the employee's supervisors or managers, coworkers, and former employees, if useful.

Identify and document, if already publicly known, any current psychosocial stressors, such as:

- Job-related difficulties.
- Financial difficulties.
- Legal difficulties.
- Marriage and family difficulties.

- Psychiatric disorders (including substance abuse).

**5. Reviewing and Analyzing the Case:**

- Review and analyze all data.
- Assess the need for further interviews with victims and witnesses.

**6. Documenting the Final Assessment:**

- Keep notes to a minimum.
- Document the incident and the employee's history in the TAT minutes.
- Document the case summary and submit it in the TAT minutes. Include all noted risk indicators and the current assessed level of risk for the incident (see exhibits 2-6a, 2-6b, and 2-6c).
- In the case summary, include all workplace environment issues, societal factors, and potential contributing events that have influenced or may influence the current situation.

**7. Developing a Risk Abatement Plan:**

Recommend a plan to alter or adjust the conditions or situation to reduce the current and future potential for violence (see exhibits 2-6a, 2-6b, 2-6c, and 3-1.2):

- This risk abatement plan is a collaborative effort among the TAT, the incident or situation site supervisor or manager, and the next higher level manager.
- The plan may be communicated formally or informally; some type of record must be kept of the agreed-upon course of action.
- Current plans should take into account all past interventions or actions taken.

**8. Following Up:**

- Assess the impact of the risk abatement plan.
- Monitor the implementation and the results of the risk abatement plan.
- Use the data entry template (see exhibit 5a), local or district tracking procedures, and TAT minutes to track TAT activities.

## 5

## Team Performance Measures

The TAT must measure its performance to gauge whether it is being successful or needs to change its processes. Following is a list of suggested activities to assist in this effort:

**1. Local or District Tracking System:**

The district Human Resources Manager or delegated team member should track each situation or incident reported to the TAT, including information such as date, time, reported by, location, priority risk scale level, and disposition. See exhibit 5a for a suggested data-entry template to assist you in these manual tracking efforts.

**2. Post-Incident Analysis:**

Depending on its seriousness, the TAT should comprehensively review and analyze the incident after final resolution. TAT cases that carry a priority rating of 1 or 2 must include a post-incident analysis. This review should include Postal Service responses and follow-up actions to determine:

- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What could have been done to prevent it?
- What was done to resolve it?

**3. Review of District's Workplace Climate Indicators:**

Districts are encouraged to perform a comprehensive review of the data associated with employee activity within policies or programs relating to concerns about their work environment. Examples of data groups that fall within the scope of actions of employee recourse are:

- EEO complaints for districts.
- Grievances (especially those submitted under Article 2, Nondiscrimination and Civil Rights, and Article 14, Safety and Health, of the national labor agreements).

- Safety incidents.
- Injury compensation claims.
- Absenteeism.
- Inspection Service reports on assaults and threats.
- District EAP referrals.
- Voice of the Employee Survey information.

The frequency and severity of workplace violence incidents should be compared side by side to differing levels of activity as noted above. Identifying trends and patterns that alert concern due to changes or surges in conditions provides information for environmental interventions that become prevention measures.

**4. Postal Inspection Service Caucus:**

Teams are encouraged to schedule a review time with the Inspection Service to exchange information about any trends or patterns each is identifying. It is understood that these dialogues can happen on an impromptu basis. However, a scheduled meeting with an agenda focused on specific issues may be much more effective.

**5. Follow-Up Stakeholder Canvassing:**

Risk abatement plans and follow-up activities can create opportunities to get feedback from management at the site or employees who were affected at the time of an incident. Here are question guidelines to have as a focus in canvassing:

- How would you describe your experience with the TAT members?
- What kind of reaction did you observe from your coworkers?
- What was the most valuable resource or response from the TAT?
- Did you know about the TAT before this response? Did others?
- Aside from the immediate crisis response from the TAT, was there any other positive impact to the work climate that resulted?



The feedback from the canvassing should be brought back to the core team at the next scheduled meeting. These evaluation statements from the stakeholders will provide suggestion and direction for the use of teams, ensure repeat attention to those actions employees felt had the most value, and promulgate awareness of the TAT. Feedback statements and summary reports can be used in communicating about the team through newsletters, service talks, etc. Teams are encouraged to use this feedback method with every response. On-site canvassing is optimum; however, phone contacts are appropriate as well.

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# 6

## Employee Education and Communication

### 6-1 Information Is Prevention

It is vital that all employees be instructed that the Postal Service has a national zero tolerance policy as defined in the 1992 *Joint Statement on Violence in the Workplace*. It is equally important that all employees be made aware of the existence of their local TAT and the local systems and processes put in place to support zero tolerance. In addition, all *new* employees should be introduced to zero tolerance as part of Postal Service employee orientation efforts. This information can be disseminated through a number of field communication methods, such as:

- Area magazines.
- District newsletters.
- Employee Assistance Program newsletters.
- Pay envelope inserts.
- Wall posters.
- Direct mailings.
- New employee orientation sessions.
- Publication 45, *A Violence-Free Workplace*.

### 6-2 Supervisor and Manager Training

Supervisors (including those in 204b status) and managers are required to take the Workplace Violence Awareness training course 21558-00 that includes: (a) assistance in identifying potentially threatening situations and behavioral warning signs of at-risk employees; (b) communication skills; and (c) employee support.

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## 7

## Compliance Measures

It is the responsibility of all districts to have a TAT in place and active in the role of workplace violence prevention. This publication provides guidance and resources to Postal Service management in responding to and assessing the seriousness of violent and potentially violent situations.

The following list sets out tasks and action items for districts to ensure the consistent application of violence prevention measures. All districts must be able to demonstrate their adherence to the following items.

- Core team assembled as described in chapter 3.
- Tracking log established that includes situation, date, time, reported by, location, priority risk scale, and disposition (see template example, exhibit 5a).
- Tracking log cross-referenced with file of incident and risk abatement plan.
- Core team and selected ad hoc team members trained via course 22203-00.
- Core team member training entered on the EAP/WEI Web page.
- Biquarterly meeting dates updated on the EAP/WEI Web page.
- Biquarterly meeting minutes recorded and sent to District Manager and local Postal Inspector.
- TAT policy information issued, at a minimum, annually. This information includes the zero tolerance policy statement and reporting procedures for all employees.
- Post-incident analysis conducted on all cases ranked Priority 1 or Priority 2.

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Exhibit 1-1.2a

**Sample Zero Tolerance Policy Statement 1**

All Employees [district, area, or Headquarters unit name]

The leadership of the [district, area, or Headquarters unit name] has reaffirmed its position on violence and inappropriate behavior in the workplace. Enclosed in this mailing is a copy of the district's policy regarding acts of violence and threats of violence in the workplace. The policy states that there will be zero tolerance of acts or threats of violence in our workplace by anyone, craft and management alike. This is not a new policy. In February of 1992, the Postal Service, with many of the employee organizations, initiated a joint statement on violence and behavior in the workplace in the aftermath of the Royal Oak tragedy:

*We openly acknowledge that in some places or units an unacceptable level of stress exists in the workplace; that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service; and that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone.*

**We will not tolerate acts or threats of violence in our workplace.**

Acts and threats of violence as well as inappropriate behavior in the workplace are some of the most serious and frustrating problems facing the Postal Service today. The incidents of workplace violence in the past have seriously affected the reputation, morale, and credibility of the Postal Service and our employees.

This zero tolerance policy means that each and every act or threat of violence from this day forward, regardless of the persons involved and/or circumstances, will elicit a prompt investigation of facts and an appropriate response to those findings. While certain behaviors can lead to discipline or removal, our emphasis is on providing a safe and healthful workplace environment.

No one should have to work in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. To those of you who question our commitment, judge us not on our words but on our actions. We intend to make our work locations a place where inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

[\_\_name\_\_]  
District Manager

[\_\_name\_\_]  
Lead Plant Manager

Exhibit 1-1.2b

## Sample Zero Tolerance Policy Statement 2

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All Employees [district, area, or Headquarters unit name]

A Postal Service employee has a right to perform his or her assigned duties in an atmosphere free of threats, assaults, and other acts of workplace violence. We are committed in the effort to ensure a safe working environment for all employees.

Threats or assaults made directly or indirectly toward any employee or Postal Service customer, even in jest, will not be tolerated. This misconduct causes very real concern and apprehension on the part of employees and customers to whom this type of action is directed.

This zero tolerance policy places all employees on notice that threats, assaults, or other acts of violence committed against other Postal Service employees or customers will result in severe disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the Postal Service. Any employee who has been subjected to a threat or assault is by this policy instructed to immediately report the incident to a manager or supervisor and to the Inspection Service. Employees should report any unusual situation that has the potential to cause workplace violence. Threats of suicide are considered acts of violence. Reports to the Inspection Service, at the request of the employee who reports the incident, will be handled anonymously.

Below are definitions to help you understand and clarify when a threat, assault, or other acts of workplace violence have occurred:

**threat (broadly defined)** — A statement or act that carries the intention to inflict harm or injury on any person, or on his or her property. Threats also include words or actions intended to intimidate another person or to interfere with the performance of his or her official duties (e.g., standing in front of a corridor with a menacing posture and not permitting another person access to load a Postal Service vehicle).

**assault (broadly defined)** — Any willful attempt to inflict injury upon the person of another, when coupled with an apparent ability to do so, or any intentional display of force that would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm. *Note:* An assault may be committed without touching, striking, or doing bodily harm to another person (e.g., throwing a brick at a person that does not actually strike the person).

Violence is not limited to fatalities or physical injuries. We recognize that any intentional words, acts, or actions meant to provoke another can escalate and result in injury if they are not immediately and appropriately addressed by management.

[\_\_name\_\_]  
District Manager

[\_\_name\_\_]  
Lead Plant Manager



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Exhibit 1-1.2c (p. 1 of 4)

## Sample Action Plan for Threats and Assaults

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DATE:

MEMORANDUM FOR MANAGERS, POSTMASTERS, AND SUPERVISORS

SUBJECT: Action Plan for Threats and Assaults

A Postal Service employee has a right to perform his or her assigned duties in an atmosphere free of threats and assaults. We are committed in the effort to ensure a safe working environment for all employees.

Due to the seriousness of these situations, threats or assaults made directly or indirectly toward any employee or Postal Service customer, even in jest, will not be tolerated. This misconduct causes very real concern and apprehension on the part of employees and customers to whom this type of action is directed.

All threats and assaults are to be taken seriously and reported immediately to the appropriate Postal Service management officials and to the Inspection Service. Also, all unusual situations that have the potential to cause workplace violence should be reported immediately to these officials.

All management personnel must recognize when these circumstances exist and take prompt, appropriate action when necessary to eliminate the possible causes of violence in the workplace. Failure to take the necessary appropriate action, as determined by a thorough investigation, may result in disciplinary action.

In light of the above, the attached Action Plan has been developed to aid you in dealing with potential situations of violence. This plan should be strictly adhered to by all management employees in all Postal Service facilities.

[\_\_name\_\_]  
District Manager

[\_\_name\_\_]  
Lead Plant Manager

Exhibit 1-1.2c (p. 2 of 4)

### **Sample Action Plan for Threats and Assaults**

1. An employee who has been the victim of a threat or assault will immediately report the situation to any manager or supervisor. The manager or supervisor to whom the incident is reported will immediately report the matter to the Postal Inspection Service and the local TAT. In those cases where an employee has been the victim of a threat or assault perpetrated by his or her supervisor, the employee will report the incident to the manager of the supervisor concerned, who will immediately report the incident to the Inspection Service and the local TAT. This reporting requirement must be adhered to without exception for all incidents involving threats and assaults. Upon receiving notification, the Inspection Service will determine the extent to which they will or will not become involved in the matter.
2. Immediately following an incident, all parties to the incident should be interviewed by a TAT member, local supervisor, or Postmaster, as directed by the Manager of Human Resources or the TAT team member tasked to review the incident. Every effort must be made to get witnesses, including the participants, to make a written statement. In most instances of actual physical violence, if possible, and with the employee's permission, the wisest action is to take photographs of the employee's injuries.
3. Any employee found to be responsible for a threat or assault is to be immediately placed in a non-duty, non-pay status pending further investigation of the matter. This should be done in accordance with the appropriate article of the applicable craft national agreement, unless the Inspection Service advises to keep the employee onsite in support of their investigation. A third-party supervisor will be assigned to the employee to address issues such as the employee needing items from his or her locker, or picking up a paycheck, etc. The employee is required to provide a telephone number and address where he or she can be reached during regularly scheduled working hours. If non-bargaining unit employees are involved in inappropriate behavior, refer to *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* 651.3, Emergency Placement in Off-Duty Status. Normally, within 72 hours of the incident, a determination should be made as to the appropriate action to be taken. Be careful to ensure that the parties in an incident are given discipline appropriate to each party's involvement.
4. If the situation does not appear dangerous, take the following actions: (a) separate the employees involved and isolate them until interviewed; (b) interview all employees (individually) who have information concerning the incident immediately while impressions are still fresh in their minds; (c) establish circumstances leading to the incident; (d) obtain written statements from each witness; and (e) do not allow witnesses to discuss what happened with each other before preparing their statements.
5. If the situation appears dangerous, e.g., a likelihood of physical violence, order the employee to leave the facility immediately. If an employee refuses to leave, contact the local police and the Postal Inspection Service. Under no circumstance should a supervisor personally attempt to physically remove an employee from the facility.
6. All incidents of employee altercations are to be reported to the Human Resources manager and to the Labor Relations manager. To ensure that timely action is taken in these instances, requests for disciplinary action, with all supporting documentation, should be sent to the Labor Relations manager from the management where the incident occurred, as soon as possible after the investigation. Additionally, every effort should be made to notify the employee of his or her status within the 72-hour period.
7. Any employee found responsible for a threat or assault on another employee or customer should be encouraged to make an appointment with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by his or her supervisor upon return to duty. Any employee who is found to be a victim in connection with an altercation should also be offered the opportunity to visit with the EAP counselor.

Exhibit 1-1.2c (p. 3 of 4)

## **Sample Action Plan for Threats and Assaults**

Listed below are definitions to help you understand and clarify what is meant by a threat or an assault. The next page contains a checklist of tests to determine whether or not an actual threat has occurred.

**threat (broadly defined)** A statement or act that carries the intention to inflict harm or injury on any person, or on his or her property. Threats also include words or actions intended to intimidate another person or to interfere with the performance of his or her official duties (e.g., standing in front of a corridor with a menacing posture and not permitting another person access to load a Postal Service vehicle).

**assault (broadly defined)** Any willful attempt to inflict injury on the person of another, when coupled with an apparent ability to do so, or any intentional display of force that would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

Exhibit 1-1.2c (p. 4 of 4)

## Sample Action Plan for Threats and Assaults

### Checklist for Threats and Assaults

**If you believe that a *crime* has been committed (persons have been injured or property has been damaged):**

1. Seek first aid and medical treatment for all those injured.
2. Immediately call the local police and the Inspection Service (and/or postal police officers).
3. Preserve the scene; **do not** allow **anyone** to touch anything.
4. Identify witnesses, especially if they cannot or will not remain at the scene.
5. To the extent possible, ensure that information received remains confidential.
6. Seek additional assistance if needed.

**Otherwise, immediately:**

7. Restore order and safety to the work area.
8. Assign involved employees to separate rooms. Instruct or order involved employees to leave the work-room floor, if appropriate. If an employee refuses, call the police.
9. Advise your manager of the incident and notify the TAT.
10. Notify the Human Resources manager and/or Labor Relations manager.
11. Notify the Inspection Service for guidance if necessary.

**Then:**

12. Identify participants and witnesses and obtain statements from them (with concurrence of Inspection Service and/or local police if called).
13. Investigate all observed or reported altercations.
14. Obtain the telephone number and address of each participant.
15. If necessary, place the employee in a non-duty status. When placing an employee in this status, remember to obtain the most current address and telephone number before he or she leaves.
16. Complete the investigation.
17. Notify the Human Resources manager and the Labor Relations manager as well as the appropriate management officials in the chain of command.
18. Normally within 72 hours, the employee's supervisor renders a decision and notifies the employee of his or her duty status. If the decision is not to return the employee to duty, the supervisor must send a request for emergency off-duty placement to Labor Relations within 72 hours.
19. If additional discipline is to be issued, forward a properly completed request with all supporting documentation to Labor Relations within 72 hours.
20. Encourage the employee found responsible for a threat or assault on another employee or customer to make an appointment with the EAP. Offer the other affected party (or parties) the opportunity to have an on-the-clock appointment with an EAP counselor.

*Remember, prompt and appropriate action is essential to reducing and/or eliminating employee altercations. Failure to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation can be detrimental to disciplinary proceedings.*

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Exhibit 2-6a

## Risk Indicators

Risk indicators include the following:

- Past history of violent behavior, e.g., physical assaults on others.
- Having a concealed weapon or flashing a weapon in the workplace.
- Fascination with semiautomatic or automatic weapons and their capability to cause great harm.
- History of mental health problems requiring treatment, especially a history of arrest before hospitalization.
- Altered consciousness (including blackouts and “lost” or unaccounted-for time lapses).
- History of suicide or homicide risk.
- Odd or bizarre beliefs (magical or satanic beliefs, or sexually violent fantasies).
- Fascination with homicidal incidents of workplace violence and empathy for those who commit acts of violence.
- Preoccupation with violent themes (in movies and literature).
- Inspiration of fear in others (this clearly exceeds mere intimidation).
- Romantic obsession with a coworker characterized by harassment, intimidation, and/or stalking.
- Intimidation and harassment of others.
- Current or history of alcohol or drug abuse.
- Obsessive focus on grudge — often quick to perceive unfairness or malice in others, especially supervisor.
- Especially for males, great concerns or emphasis on sexual fidelity of mate.
- Recent stressful events or severe losses.
- Perceived loss of options.
- Direct or veiled threats of bodily harm toward supervisory personnel, coworkers, or customers.
- Physical deterioration (head injuries, cancer, disability, kidney failure, etc.).
- Extreme sense of moral righteousness about things in general as well as believing that the organization does not follow its own policy and procedures.
- History of poor impulse control and poor interpersonal skills.
- Inability to handle constructive criticism well and projecting blame on others.
- Demonstrated disregard for safety of coworkers.
- Tendency to be a loner with little family or social support and often having an excessive investment in the job.

**Note:** Remember, no definite profile exists to determine whether or not a threatener will ultimately commit an act of workplace violence. However, these signs, especially if they are in a cluster, can help to determine risk abatement action(s) relative to the TAT's initial risk assessment of a potentially violent person. Actions, such as a fitness-for-duty examination, may be necessary to assess the risk more adequately. Recommend these actions only after consulting with the performance cluster's or area office's medical director.

Exhibit 2-6b

## **Environmental Issues, Societal Factors, and Contributing Events**

Evaluation of additional information may help the TAT better understand a pattern of behavior and/or events and thereby help the TAT develop preventive measures to moderate risk and liability. The TAT must evaluate workplace climate issues and potential contributing events that may escalate the potential for violence. For example, additional information such as the following environmental and societal factors and contributing events are relevant considerations:

### **Environmental issues (at the work site):**

- Labor-management relations within the district are strained.
- Ineffective communications between and among managers and employees prevent dissemination of information.
- Preferential treatment and inconsistent application of rules and standards are apparent.
- Conflict management mechanisms (e.g., grievances, EEO complaints, and due process) are not understood or used.
- Discipline is perceived as inappropriate, unfair, or ineffective.
- Complement or resources are inadequate for performance expectations.
- Employees feel depersonalized, like a commodity or tool.
- Changes in management behavior or style have occurred.
- The accident rate is up; safety is compromised or is perceived as compromised.

### **Societal factors:**

- The level of violence in the surrounding community or neighborhood of the threatener (assaults, rape, suicide, and homicide rates).
- Local news coverage (both amount and detail) of violent events (e.g., Oklahoma City bombing or World Trade Center or Pentagon terrorist attacks).
- Activity of violent groups in the community (gangs, militant groups, etc.)
- The level of violence on television, in the movies, etc.

### **Contributing events:**

- Pending divorce.
- Pending financial or legal problems.
- Perceived or pending job suspension or termination.
- Loss of a loved one.
- Onset of a serious health problem.
- Alcohol or other drug relapse.
- Discontinuance of medication or medication not working.
- Discontinuance of therapy sessions with psychiatrist or other mental health professional.

**Note:** The above does not constitute an all-inclusive listing. For additional factors, contact the district's Workplace Improvement Analyst.

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Exhibit 2-6c

## **Recognizing the Warning Signs of Domestic Violence at Work**

These behaviors do not actually signify that a relationship is abusive. They are listed here to provide the scope of behaviors that could mean someone was a victim of domestic violence. For those employees that you may have concerns are victims, the manifestation of these behaviors increase the likelihood that they could be, in fact, victims. Managers should ensure that EAP information and contact numbers are posted or available at their facility. For managers to make the approach and broach the issue or handle the discussion once it is disclosed involves sensitivity and attention. Managers should immediately contact the appropriate resource, the EAP if they are seeking more information and the TAT to report a threat.<sup>7</sup>

### **Physical Indications:**

Abusers know where to strike their victims to inflict pain and not leave any evidence. Look for any of the following apparent physical signs that the victim is in pain or hurting:

- Visible injuries or signs of trauma, like bruises or scars.
- Bruises or handprints on wrist or throat.
- Signs of hair being pulled out.
- Excessive make-up.
- Clothing or accessories that might be worn to cover injured area.
- Limping or tenderness in joints or muscles.
- Moving slowly or carefully because of pain or soreness.

### **Behavioral Indications:**

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| ■ Depression | ■ Anger        |
| ■ Guilt      | ■ Sadness      |
| ■ Fear       | ■ Irritability |
| ■ Anxiety    | ■ Fatigue      |
| ■ Withdrawal | ■ Depression   |

### **Job Productivity and Performance:**

- Tardiness.
- Leaving early.
- Increased use of sick benefits.
- Mistakes or forgetfulness.
- Fear or reluctance to answer the phone.
- Fear or anxiety about leaving the building or going to the parking lot.
- Absenteeism.
- Excessive time spent on phone or personal tasks.

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<sup>7</sup> Lee, J. (2005) Addressing domestic violence in the workplace. Amherst, MA: HRD Press.

Exhibit 3-1.2 (p. 1 of 3)  
**Priority Risk Scale**

<b>Priority Rank</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<p><b>Priority 1</b> (Extreme Risk)</p>	<p><b>A clear and immediate threat of violence to an identifiable target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Directly stated threat of violence.</i></li> <li>b. <i>Clearly identified target (person, worksite, or organization), <b>and</b></i></li> <li>c. <i>Specific description of the intended violent act.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 2</b> (High Risk)</p>	<p><b>A threat of violence, usually to an identifiable target, but currently lacking immediacy and/or a specific plan; or a specified plan of violence, but currently lacking a specific target.</b></p>
<p><b>Priority 3</b> (Low or Moderate Risk)</p>	<p><b>A relatively nonspecific threat of violence from a person expressing concerns with personal and/or organizational issues.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>The threatener does not indicate a clear and immediate threat of violence to an identifiable target.</i></li> <li>b. <i>The threatener appears to be insufficiently influenced by current circumstances to engage in a dangerous act.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Such threats frequently arise from a volatile workplace climate, or deterioration of an employee's personal appearance and workplace relationships.</i></p>
<p><b>Priority 4</b> (No Risk)</p>	<p><b>No threat of violence indicated.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>No suggestion of current danger or threat of violence.</i></li> <li>b. <i>Possibility of verbal or other inappropriate communications, which include derogatory comments without specific or implied threats of violence.</i></li> </ul>



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Exhibit 3-1.2 (p. 2 of 3)

## Priority Risk Scale

### Discussion of Priority Risk Scale

#### Priority 1 (Extreme Risk)

**A clear and immediate threat of violence to an identifiable target.**

Priority 1 means that the threatener has:

- Directly stated a threat of violence,
- Clearly identified a target (person, worksite, or organization), **and**
- Appears to have communicated a specific description of the intended violent act, including the means, opportunity, and motivation to carry out the threat.

Priority 1 threats:

- Are specific and credible.
- Have a stated intention by the employee to seriously harm or kill him- or herself and/or others, or may be directed at a specific work site.
- Often have a vindictive, revengeful quality in which retribution plays a role.

At priority 1, the degree of danger increases and credibility is enhanced by:

- Signs that the threatener has specific knowledge of the location, activities, and/or personal life of the target.
- The extent to which the threatened action is realistic or practical in design.
- Repeated, escalating, and increasingly detailed threats.
- A progressive decline in the employee's physical and/or psychological health.
- A person experiencing intolerable levels of frustration or stress, as specified in exhibit 2-6a.

The TAT should give immediate priority to threats at this level, including:

- Continual management of the case.
- Active review of the security for the identified targeted person and/or work site.
- Writing a formal risk abatement plan that includes intervention with the threatener and/or organizational unit.
- Plan immediate action to prevent a violent outcome.

Exhibit 3-1.2 (p. 3 of 3)

## Priority Risk Scale

### Priority 2 (High Risk)

**A threat of violence, usually to an identifiable target, but currently lacking immediacy and/or a specific plan; or a specified plan of violence, but currently lacking a specific target.**

A priority 2 rating indicates a threat that is real and feasible, often with a vengeful, menacing quality, but lacking the level of specificity and credibility of a priority 1 threat.

- The threatener does not know or has not identified a specific target.
- The threatened action may be vaguely defined, unrealistic, or impractical in design.
- A priority 2 threat may also result from a volatile workplace climate or close connection to work sites previously or currently experiencing threats of violence.
- High-risk indicators may be present (see Exhibit 2-6a).

***The TAT's response should include continuing the threat assessment, case monitoring, and intervening at the individual and/or organizational unit as indicated.***

### Priority 3 (Low or Moderate Risk)

**A relatively nonspecific threat of violence from a person expressing concerns with personal and/or organizational issues.**

A priority 3 rating **does not indicate**:

- A clear and immediate threat of violence to an identifiable target.
- That the threatener is sufficiently influenced by current circumstances to perform a violent act.

Priority 3 threats *may* include:

- General expressions of concern or dissatisfaction with personal issues and/or interpersonal relationships.
- General expressions of concern or dissatisfaction with organizational issues that may result from a volatile workplace climate.

***The TAT's response to a Priority 3 risk should include an assessment of the validity of specific complaints or concerns, a reasonable amount of monitoring, and intervention at the individual and/or organizational unit level. Specific concerns include a progressive decline in an employee's physical and/or psychological health and/or worsening of organizational climate.***

### Priority 4 (No Risk)

**No threat of violence indicated.**

Priority 4 means that no current danger or threat of violence exists. The threatener may engage in verbal or nonverbal communication that includes offensive, inappropriate, or derogatory content, or expressions of anger or dissatisfaction without a specific or implied threat of violence.

Exhibit 5a  
**Threat Assessment Data Entry Template**

**District** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>SECTION 1: INCIDENT SUMMARY</b>		<b>Threat Report Date:</b>						
Date of Occurrence:	Reported By:	Injury: Yes	No					
Location (Station/Facility):								
Phone Contact:		Station/Facility Manager Contact:						
Describe Incident:								
<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Priority Risk Scale:</b></td> <td style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Priority 1</b></td> <td style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Priority 2</b></td> <td style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Priority 3</b></td> <td style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Priority 4</b></td> </tr> </table>				<b>Priority Risk Scale:</b>	<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>Priority 4</b>
<b>Priority Risk Scale:</b>	<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>Priority 4</b>				
<b>SECTION 2: EMPLOYEE 1</b>								
Employee 1: Last	First	DOB:	MI:					
Current Position:		Male:	Female:					
Description of Involvement:								
<b>SECTION 3: EMPLOYEE 2</b>								
Employee 1: Last	First	DOB:	MI:					
Current Position:		Male:	Female:					
Description of Involvement:								
<b>SECTION 4: INSPECTION SERVICE OR POLICE ACTION</b>								
Inspection Service Involved: YES	NO	Investigative Memorandum : YES	NO					
Weapons Used: YES	NO	Police Involved: YES	NO [IF YES, COMPLETE NEXT LINE]					
Police Action Taken:		Police Report Number:						
<b>Section 5: TAT Assignments</b>								
TAT Members Assigned:								
Recommendations:								
Actions Taken (check all that apply): Administrative      Legal      Other      N/A								
<b>Section 6: Additional Witness(es)/Employee(s)</b>								
Last Name:	First Name:	MI:						
Current Position:		Contact Information:						
Last Name:	First Name:	MI:						
Current Position:		Contact Information:						
Last Name:	First Name:	MI:						
Current Position:		Contact Information:						
Last Name:	First Name:	MI:						
Current Position:		Contact Information:						
TAT Member Signature		Date						

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