Workplace Violence Prevention: A Guide for Employees

Fifth Edition; Includes Domestic Violence

County of Santa Clara

Donald F. Gage  Supervisor, District 1
Blanca Alvarado  Supervisor, District 2
Pete McHugh  Supervisor, District 3
James T. Beall, Jr.  Supervisor, District 4
Liz Kniss  Supervisor, District 5
Peter Kutra, Jr.  County Executive

Employee Services Agency

Luke Leung  Deputy County Executive
Janet Moody  Director of Risk Management
Tom Rudolph  Manager, Occupational Safety & Environmental Compliance

2310 NORTH FIRST STREET, SUITE 204
SAN JOSE, CA 95131

(408) 441-4280

March 2006

© 1997, 2001, 2004, 2006 County of Santa Clara. By permission, material in this booklet may be used free of charge, but only for materials or publications that are not sold or used in presentations where a fee is involved. If you use any of this material, please cite the source.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Perpetrators</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strangers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Members or Acquaintances</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roles and Responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Executive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Services Agency</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency and Department Heads</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers and Supervisors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Security</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION: A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYEES</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection from Violence</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection through Planning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection through Building Security</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection from Strangers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection from Clients</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is Domestic Violence?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a Co-Worker is Being Abused</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If You Are Being Abused</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Victims of Domestic Abuse</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Stalkers”</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Restraining Orders</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If You are a Batterer in a Domestic Violence Situation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats of Violence</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting Threats</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bomb Threats</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Bombs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats by Clients</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats by Employees</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidents of Violence</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: RESOURCES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Violence Contacts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Contacts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Bibliography</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Resources</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
County of Santa Clara  
Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

This Section Contains the Policy Approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 26, 1995

Introduction

Santa Clara County is committed to serving a wide range of citizens, some of whom can be under severe stress and have nowhere else to turn. Providing services to these and other persons can place County employees in a position of vulnerability to violence or threatening behavior. The County values its employees and clients and, with this Policy, the Board of Supervisors affirms its commitment to providing workplaces and facilities that are free from violence.

Types of Perpetrators

Strangers

To help protect employees from violent strangers in the community, the County will provide crime prevention information to employees and will address security issues involving worksites and facilities.

Clients

Employees in many departments deal with clients who are distressed and who may make threats or commit acts of violence. The County will provide support and guidance to employees so that threats of violence can be recognized and prudently addressed, and so that acts of violence can be prevented if possible.

Client violence may be difficult to control, and employee exposure to such violence may be a result of working with special client/patient populations. The handling of some client violence situations may properly be the primary function of local law enforcement agencies. As a matter of policy, the County of Santa Clara will not tolerate violent acts or threats of violence by clients or other members of the public towards employees.

Family Members or Acquaintances

If the workplace is affected by a violent act or threat of violence by an employee's family member or acquaintance, the County will provide support and guidance for the victim and his or her co-workers.

Employees

The County of Santa Clara will not tolerate violent acts or threats of violence (either verbal or implied) by employees. In such cases, the County endorses immediate and definitive use of the disciplinary process up to and including discharge from County employment, consistent with ensuring the safety of co-workers. Criminal prosecution will be pursued as appropriate. The County also advocates a preventive approach whereby merit system rules and regulations are fairly and consistently administered, and where troubled employees receive guidance and, if necessary, professional help.

Roles and Responsibilities

County Executive

The County Executive shall ensure that this Policy is fully implemented and adapted to unique needs at the agency/department level, and that the County organization maintains an effective support structure for responding to acts and threats of workplace violence.

The Executive's Office of Occupational Safety and Environmental Compliance will include the Policy as part of the County's written Injury and Illness Prevention Program.
Employee Services Agency

The Employee Services Agency has overall responsibility for maintaining this Policy and for identifying resources that agencies and departments can use in developing their training plans and violence prevention measures. The Employee Services Agency will also administer workplace violence prevention measures involving Labor Relations (including compulsory medical or "fitness for duty" examinations) and the Employee Assistance Program, and will coordinate post-incident activities involving employee services and claims management.

Agency and Department Heads

Agency and Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that this Policy is implemented in their respective organizations and that the unique needs of their organizations are addressed through procedures and training. Each agency and/or department must develop a plan for preventing and responding to acts of workplace violence. These plans need not be lengthy, but they shall contain at a minimum a Facility Emergency Plan attachment that includes facility specific procedures (such as alarm buttons and escape routes), notification lists, and a timeline for training designated employees.

Managers and Supervisors

It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors to make safety their highest concern. When made aware of a real or perceived threat of violence, management shall conduct a thorough investigation, provide support for employees, and take specific actions to help prevent acts of violence. Managers and supervisors shall also provide information and training for employees as needed.

Employees

Employees should learn to recognize and respond to behaviors by potential perpetrators that may indicate a risk of violence. Employees shall also place safety as the highest concern, and shall report all acts of violence and threats of violence.

Physical Security

Since the County is a public organization that wishes to remain accessible to its clients to the fullest extent possible, it is not the County's intent to implement a widespread "fortification" of its facilities. The County prefers to train its employees to be the primary means of reducing workplace violence. However, certain facilities, due to the nature of the service provided, may need barriers, cameras, metal detectors, better locks, and the like. Where such structures are necessary, they should be constructed in the least obtrusive way feasible.

Training and Information

Although acts of workplace violence cannot be precisely predicted, knowledge of how to respond to perpetrators can help County employees minimize the risk of violence or injury. The County will provide designated employees with training that will help them take appropriate precautions and respond wisely when confronted with a potentially violent individual. Departments will structure this training to meet the unique needs of each operation.

Since the vast majority of violent acts perpetrated by employees and employee family members are preceded by a number of behaviors that signal an escalating situation, the County will provide employees with written materials that will help them recognize the warning signs of violence, and will recommend professional consultation or initiate intervention measure before a violent act occurs.
Workplace Violence Prevention: A Guide for Employees

Introduction

Workplace violence is a concern of many Santa Clara County employees. Although workplace violence is not a crisis or an epidemic (the rate has remained more or less steady for the last fifteen years), it is important to be prepared. This booklet provides a brief overview of how to deal with threats and acts of violence involving a stranger, a client, a co-worker or a co-worker’s family member or acquaintance.


Protection from Violence

Protection through Planning

Each facility should add a Workplace Violence Prevention section to its Facility Emergency Response Plan. The development of this section should involve the Emergency Response Team Leader(s), Facility Manager, Safety Coordinator, Management, Union Personnel, and facility Safety Committee.

Each section should include the following elements:

- Specific roles and responsibilities.
- Training.
- Protective measures for employees who perform certain tasks.
- Evacuation routes and safe assembly areas.
- Means of communication.
- Liaison with other agencies and organizations.
- Notification of relatives and next of kin in the event of injury or death.
- Counseling resources.
- Media relations.
- Reception desk procedures.

Ask your supervisor about the Plan for your facility.

Protection through Building Security

Since the County's policy is to keep its facilities as accessible as possible to its clients, the County prefers not to rely on physical security measures as the primary means of preventing workplace violence. However, there are certain measures that can be taken, and your supervisor is responsible for working with the Facility Manager to ensure the physical security of your building. These measures can include:

- Installing a central reception area for each facility, with some kind of physical barrier to help control visitor access.
- Providing employee identification badges.
- Providing an escape route for all personnel.
- Making sure that all non-public entrances are kept closed and locked. Check with the County Fire Marshal before locking a door that is not equipped with a "panic bar" on the inside.
- Other facility-related items (exterior lighting, adequately pruned landscaping, buzzers or silent alarms, and signs).

It may be necessary at some facilities to go beyond the minor physical measures listed above. Decisions regarding the installation of such structures as metal detectors, special lock and bulletproof glass will be made at the department head level due to the considerable planning and expense involved. Be aware that such structures, although effective, are not a fail-
safe protection against workplace violence. To be truly effective, any physical security improvements should also be accompanied by continued awareness and caution on the part of all employees. Ask your supervisor if you have concerns in any of these areas.

**Protection from Strangers**

With some types of workplace violence such as armed robbery and assault, the perpetrator is a stranger. This can be someone who comes to your building (but not as a client) or it could be someone you encounter while out on County business. To help protect you from this type of crime, consider the following tips:

- Try to have a co-worker with you, especially at night — the "buddy system".
- If you have to work late in a County building, move your car to a well-lighted area near the exit before it gets dark.
- Walk in well-lighted areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently and at a steady pace. If you think you are being followed, go to a public area or building.
- Face traffic when you walk and avoid bushes, doorways, and other places where someone could hide.
- If possible, do not carry a purse; but if you do, carry it over your shoulder and wear your coat over it to conceal it, or hold it in front of you without the strap on your shoulder or neck, folding your arms over it like a football player.
- Never leave your car with the engine running, and don't leave the keys in the ignition.
- If people ask you for directions, politely, but firmly tell them you do not know — and stay well away from them.
- Keep your car doors locked when parked and when driving. Close all windows tightly.
- To help avoid being abducted, try not to park next to vans, especially ones with no windows.
- As you approach your car, survey the area as you are walking. Have your keys out and ready to use. (You can also use them to defend yourself.) Before you unlock the door, check under the car and in the back seat.
- If your car breaks down, open the hood and tie a white flag to the antenna or display a "Call Police" sign. Stay in the locked car and if people approach, open your window just a crack and ask them to call for help. Do not open your car door.
- Discuss any concerns about work practices (such as cash handling), building security, etc., with your supervisor. Departmental safety committees may be able to help with issues such as building improvements to improve physical security.

**Protection from Clients**

Many County clients are under a great deal of stress, and may be frustrated or angry before they even walk in your door or meet with you in the field. A respectful greeting, a smile, and a listening ear can help calm an inflamed temper. It is always best to use the lowest level of response when dealing with an angry client. For example, avoid raising your voice if they raise theirs. Make an extra effort to understand and be understood. If the person seems distracted, restate the problem to focus his or her mind on the issue at hand.

Stay calm, and try to keep the situation from escalating by expressing empathy for the client's feelings. Don't argue; ask what you can do to help. Restate the client's position to make sure he or she knows you understand the issue. You may want to momentarily distract the client by changing the subject. If you are not successful and have to take other action (such as summoning help by using a phone, an intercom, or a button that sounds a buzzer), do so calmly and quietly. Ask your supervisor about whom to call.

It is unlikely that you will be able to address the major stresses in the client's life, and you may not be able to do much about the issue that may be causing frustration. In other words, there are some clients for whom no amount of gracious treatment will work. But even if the client does not calm down, there can be a great difference between a client who is merely frustrated and one who becomes violent or resorts to threats of violence. The key is to try to recognize when a client is going to become violent.
There are certain danger signs that may precede a violent act. Observe the client's body language, facial expressions and tone of voice to see if he or she is getting more and more agitated. Clenched fists, a flushed face, or a tense posture are signals to be careful. In such situations, think of how to protect yourself. Try to keep a desk or other barrier between you and the client, and make sure that the client does not block your escape route. If the client is directly in front of you, step back so that you are out of striking range.

If you sense that a client is going to commit a violent act any second, don't hesitate to leave immediately. Find an excuse to leave the area, or if necessary, just leave — then get help, from co-workers, Emergency Response Team members, or someone else, depending on the situation. Don't hesitate to call the police at 911 (or 9-911) if necessary. It is better to disrupt a work site than to be injured.

A NOTE ABOUT DIVERSITY

If your work involves clients who are unfamiliar with American customs of greeting and speech, you should be aware that cultures vary in terms of what kinds of body language, eye contact, and verbal expressions are socially acceptable. For example, some people don't like you to gesture broadly with your arms while talking. Eye contact between a man and a woman can carry different connotations to certain cultures. To avoid agitating a client without knowing it, as your supervisor or contact the County's Equal Opportunity Division for specific information about different cultures.

You may also find yourself trying to help someone who struggles with English. Slow your speech down — perhaps way down — and pronounce all consonants clearly; try using alternate or simpler wording. Refrain from raising your voice and avoid using slang, jargon, or idioms.

Domestic Violence

What Is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence occurs when a person in an intimate or familiar relationship is abused by the other person in that relationship. This abuse may be physical, but it can also be verbal, emotional, or sexual. The abuser often seeks to exert power or to isolate and control the victim by cutting off finances, friendships, and other means of support. Domestic violence can involve persons in a variety of relationships:

- Spouse or former spouse.
- Live-in partner or former partner.
- Dating, former dating or engagement relationship.
- A person with whom the victim has had a child.
- An elderly person who is abused by a grown child or other care giver.

Because women are six times more likely than men to be injured by domestic violence, this Guide uses feminine pronouns when referring to domestic violence. However, a victim can also be a male.

If a Co-Worker is Being Abused

If you have reason to believe one of your co-workers may be experiencing domestic violence that is impacting your workplace, discuss your concerns with your supervisor. You might mention that the revised edition of Workplace Violence Prevention: A Guide for Supervisors includes a new section on domestic violence. You might also refer your co-worker to the list of resources at the back of this Guide.

If You Are Being Abused

If you are involved in an abusive relationship that is affecting your work or if you are concerned that a perpetrator may come to the workplace with a violent intent, tell your supervisor or talk to one of the resources listed in Appendix A at the back of this Guide. If you feel uncomfortable doing so, take some time to think about barriers to communication that may be affecting you.

Be honest. You do not have to disclose any details that you don't want to, but it will help your supervisor if you honestly discuss how the situation has been affecting you at work. You should especially let your supervisor know if you are afraid that the perpetrator may come to the workplace and harm you or one of your co-workers.

Keep in mind that your supervisor may need to disclose some information if the safety of the workplace is a concern.
Support for Victims of Domestic Violence

In addition to the support the County will be able to provide you with while at work, you will need support off the job. You may want to call one of the resources listed in Appendix A at the back of this Guide. The resources listed under "Shelters" may be particularly helpful since they have trained staff members who can provide emotional support as well as logistical support. Your Employee Assistance Program or your health care provider may also be able to help.

"Stalkers"

Stalking occurs when a perpetrator "willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows or harasses another person and who makes a credible threat with the intent to place that person in reasonable fear for his or her safety, or the safety of his or her immediate family...". Stalking goes beyond mere harassment in that threats of violence are involved. A stalker will usually focus ("fixate" might be a better word) on a particular individual with whom he has had a real or imagined relationship. A stalker can be an abusive husband pursuing his wife or an anonymous admirer pursuing a fantasy. Stalking is now illegal in California.

If stalkers encounter a strong boundary at the victim's workplace, they may be deterred. If you are concerned that someone may stalk you at work, tell your supervisor immediately.

The best way to prevent stalking is to not let a relationship, even a casual one, develop or continue any farther than you want it to. Since stalkers have never learned to take "no" for an answer, you must be clear and firm. When declining an unwanted invitation, make sure your answer cannot be interpreted in any way to mean "maybe". Don't give a reason or an excuse — that can only provide a challenge in the mind of the initiator — and don't waver: say simply and firmly, "I'm absolutely not interested in a relationship with you." If the person does not accept your firm refusal, take the situation seriously and consult one of the resources listed at the back of this booklet. If the person is a co-worker, the County's sexual harassment policy may be of help to you — call the Equal Opportunity Division.

Temporary Restraining Orders

California law permits an employer to obtain a temporary restraining order against a perpetrator (including a perpetrator who is also an employee) who is threatening or stalking an employee, elected official, volunteer, or independent contractor. If you find yourself in urgent need of protection at any time of the day or night — whether or not the courts are open — you can request an Emergency Protective Order (very short-term) from the law enforcement agency responding to the incident. The danger must be imminent. Call the police department of the city where the incident occurred.

Restraining Orders, whether obtained by you or your employer, can be of value. At the time of this writing, not one of those who obtained a Restraining Order in Santa Clara County has been among the County's domestic violence homicide victims. But experience has shown that these Orders often do not prevent further stalking; instead, they can trigger a violation of the terms of the Order — or a violent act. Restraining Orders should therefore be used with extreme caution, and only after thorough consultation with threat assessment experts and knowledgeable legal counsel.

If You are a Batterer in a Domestic Violence Situation

If you are an abuser in a domestic violence situation, you should be aware that the Employee Assistance Program has a confidential counseling program for batterers. You may also want to consult one of the other resources in Appendix A.

Remember that since County policy prohibits threats by County employees, the use of County time, telephones, or other County resources to convey threatening messages will be dealt with through the progressive discipline process. Since domestic violence is illegal, perpetrators

1 California Penal Code, sec. 646.9
2 Gross, Linden. To Have or to Harm, pg. 216.
3 Ch. 29, Code of Civil Procedure sec. 527.8
4 Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office
can be subject to arrest and prosecution — and separation from County service.

Threats of Violence

Reporting Threats
Threats of violence take many forms. They can be verbal, written, or implied (such as through the use of symbols, objects, or mutilated animals). If you are the subject of a threat of violence at work or if you observe threatening behavior, it is important to document your concerns and report them to your supervisor immediately. As threat assessment expert Dr. Park Dietz said, “You wait at your peril.” Be prepared to provide your supervisor with details, including who made the threat (if known), and how and when the threat was made. Save all evidence of threats, including voice and E-mail messages, notes, and letters.

If, after discussions with your supervisor, you wish to convey your concerns to someone else, report the problem up your department's chain of command. You or your supervisor may not be sure if the threat should be taken seriously. When in doubt, refrain from making hasty judgments, since competent threat assessment requires extensive professional training and experience. If you or your supervisor needs expert consultation, call County Mental Health Director or Mental Health Adult Services.

Bomb Threats
Bomb threats are a unique kind of threat because the stakes are so high. The two most common reasons for bomb threats are:

- The caller knows about a bomb and wants to minimize injury or property damage. (The caller may be the bomber or someone else who has information about the bomb.)
- The caller wants to create an atmosphere of anxiety and panic in order to disrupt normal operations at a County facility.

Most bomb threats are made by phone. Any employee who receives calls directly could receive a bomb threat. Copy the Bomb Threat Checklist on page 10 and keep it under your phone.

The decision to evacuate will be made by the Facility manager based on the amount of information available and whether the call appears to a legitimate threat or a prank. If an evacuation is needed:

- Pay attention to specific evacuation directions.
- Leave doors and windows open to let the blast wave escape.
- Take your brief case, purse, lunch bag, etc. with you to minimize the search.
- The Facility Manager will work with police to keep anyone from re-entering the building.
- Refer to your facility's Emergency Plan.

The search, if required, needs to be done by people who are familiar with the facility. The police will help, but they do not have the resources to do it alone. If you are called upon to help with the search, remember:

- Check your immediate work area and report any suspicious objects to your supervisor or the Facility Manager.
- Do not touch any suspicious object — leave removal and disposal for the Bomb Squad.
- Use normal phones for communication — radios or cellular phones can detonate a bomb.

Letter Bombs
Letter bombs vary in size and shape, and are usually addressed and booby-trapped to reach a specific target.

Be alert for unusual markings:

- Foreign mail or special delivery.
- Excessive postage.
- Handwritten or poorly typed address.
- Addressed to a title only, or the wrong title with a name.
- Unknown or no return address.
- Misspellings of common words.
- Restrictive markings, such as "personal".

Watch for strange packaging:

5 Personal comment during a Violence Seminar, 1994
• Excessive or lopsided weight.
• Rigid, uneven, or sloppy envelope.
• Protruding wires or foil.
• Oil or grease stains; strange odor.
• Excessive tape or string.

If you suspect that a package may be a bomb, do not try to open it. Isolate it, keep everyone back at least 25 feet, open doors and windows, and call 911 (or 9-911).

Threats by Clients
In addition to the irate client in the encounter described above, you may receive a threatening letter or phone call from a client. Such threats may arise from a client's frustration with government in general, or with a function of County government in particular, such as the collection of taxes. It may also have arisen from a specific action, such as a denial of a request or claim. If you receive such a threat, save any evidence (such as voice mail messages) and report the threat immediately to your supervisor.

Threats by Employees
There can be times when a troubled employee becomes a troubling employee. This usually begins when a pattern of behavior escalates to the point where co-workers are afraid of an employee, or it can be a crisis that ultimately leads to a violent act. However, people rarely commit a violent act "out of the blue", and people don't "just snap". A violent act is almost always preceded by a number of warning signs or changes in behavior. Since these changes can be subtle, it is important to observe behavior carefully. Some of these warning signs are listed below.

Use caution when reading this list — it is not intended as an evaluation tool for you to assess the stability of an employee, since a display of one or more of these signs does not necessarily mean that a person will become violent. This list is simply a summary of the kinds of behaviors displayed by individuals who have at times committed violent acts. The purpose of this list is to heighten your awareness and to help you to determine if you have a cause for concern.

Consider these behaviors as a whole, and don't focus on one isolated act.

• Veiled or open threats of violence, e.g., predicting "bad things are going to happen", especially threats that are detailed or appear to be well planned.
• A history of discipline or litigation; reacting poorly to discipline or performance evaluations.
• Irritability, belligerence, hostility.
• Excessive focus on guns, police or the military; subscription to paramilitary magazines such as "Soldier of Fortune" or boasting of weapons collections.
• Changes in behavior, such as a deterioration of work performance or in increase in concentration problems; becoming inappropriately withdrawn, increasingly angry, or agitated, or out of touch with reality. This may also signal a substance abuse problem.
• A resumption or escalation of drug and/or alcohol abuse.
• Reacting with great stress to workplace events such as layoffs, discharges, demotions, reorganizations, labor disputes, or to personal/family problems such as divorce, bankruptcy, etc.
• Blaming others; inability to accept responsibility. Holding a grudge, especially against a supervisor, or a co-worker who is alleged to have received some "favor" such as a promotion at the perpetrator's expense.
• Depression.
• Paranoia — indicated by statements that everyone is against him or her, or by panicking easily.
• An increased propensity to push the limits of normal conduct, with disregard to the safety of self or co-workers.
• Crossing a co-worker's or supervisor's physical boundaries ("getting in their face"), physical posturing or aggressiveness, stalking, excessive phone calls, etc.
• A known personal history of violent, reckless, or anti-social behavior.
• References to or identification with mass murderer and infamous incidents of workplace violence, such as Post Office shootings. Having a fascination with recent
incidents of workplace violence, and expressing approval of the use of violence under similar circumstances.

- An obsessive involvement with the job, which becomes the sole source of identity.
- A "loner", with little or no involvement with co-workers.
- A combination of the use of stimulants, paranoid behavior, and the purchase of weapons can be a particularly risky combination.

The "bottom line" is: Does this person make you or your co-workers uncomfortable or afraid? If you observe an employee displaying these behaviors in a way that frightens you or your co-workers, tell your supervisor immediately. Afterwards you may want to request assistance from the Division of Equal Opportunity or file a complaint with them. The information you provide will be handled discreetly and will not be shared with anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know.

**Incidents of Violence**

If an actual incident of violence occurs in your workplace, how well you and your co-workers respond will depend largely on how well you have prepared. Each incident is different and each response will be different. However, some common actions to take are:

- Call 911 (or 9-911) immediately. If you can't speak freely, just calling and leaving the receiver off the hook may allow a dispatcher to hear noises that will clarify the nature of the incident.
- Remember to use your panic button if one is installed. If you don't have access to a panic button, you may be able to use the phone or an intercom system to alert co-workers.
- Give the perpetrator what he or she wants. Don't try to be a hero by denying a request for such items as money, keys, documents, or equipment. These can be replaced, lives cannot.
- Flee if you can. If you can't, try to find a hiding place.
- Cooperate fully with police officers on the scene. These are the professionals who know how to handle such situations and may be acting on information that you do not have.
- If you witness an act of workplace violence that does not directly involve you, your actions will depend on your assessment of the situation and your judgement. In some cases, your involvement may help a co-worker; other times it may be better to simply slip quietly away and call 911 (or 9-911).

As soon as you can do so, write down all the details of the incident, including who, what, when, how, and where. Give this information to your supervisor.

**Conclusion**

Hopefully, you will never be involved in an incident of workplace violence. But due to the types of services the County provides, and the violent nature of modern society, it is important to understand how to help prevent, prepare for, and respond to such incidents. This booklet has provided a starting point for such an understanding, but you should now work with your supervisor and others in your department to fully address specific training and preparedness needs.
Appendix A: Resources

Workplace Violence Contacts:

- Assistance with difficult clients: Office of Human Relations 792-2300
- Assistance with difficult employees: Office of Equal Opportunity 299-5865
- Building Modifications: Fire Marshal 993-4604; FAF Building Operations 299-3682; FAF Capital Programs 993-4600
- Claims management (in the event of an incident involving injuries or property damage): ESA Risk Management 441-4300
- Counseling: Employee Assistance Program 241-7772
- Counseling (incident recovery): Center for Living With Dying 980-9801
- Cultural guidance: information about the County's Sexual Harassment Policy: Equal Opportunity Division 299-5865
- Hiring guidance: Human Resources 299-6816
- Incident response: Emergency 911 (or 9-911)
- Incident response: Emergency Response Teams (trained County employees). Ask your Facility Manager for the ERT members in your facility; call 441-4343 for program information.
- Landscape pruning: FAF Custodial and Grounds 918-2791
- Legal advice: County Counsel 299-5900
- Media relations: County Executive's Office of Public Affairs 299-5154
- Next of kin notification (in the event of serious injury or death): County Executive's Office 299-5105
- Personal action guidance, including compulsory medical/fitness for duty examinations: Labor Relations 299-5820
- Security Services: County Sheriff's Reserves 808-4570
- Threat assessment: Mental Health Director 885-5782.
- Threat assessment: Mental Health Adult Services 800-704-0900
- San Jose Police Family Violence Center Threat Assessment Unit 277-3700.
- Training videos: Occupational Safety and Environmental Compliance 441-4280

Domestic Violence Contacts:

- Domestic Violence Resources: 24-hour Victim Counseling and Referrals, Battered Women's Shelters, 3-year Protective Orders. Foreign Languages as indicated.
  - Family Violence Center 125 Gish Rd., San Jose (Domestic Violence Assault Unit of the San Jose Police; other on-site resources) 277-3700.
  - Support Network for Battered Women 800-572-2782 (English, Spanish 24 hours, Cantonese/Mandarin weekdays).
  - Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence (Central County) (English, Spanish, Persian). 279-2962 (hotline); 279-7578 (advocate at the Family Violence Center).
  - Community Solutions (So County, Gilroy) 842-7138 (Spanish, English).
  - Asian Women's Home (San Jose) 975-2739 (English, Cambodian, Cantonese, Korean, Lao-Mien, Laotian, Mandarin, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese).
  - MAITRI (San Jose) 888-862-4874 (Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Malayalam, Marathi, Marwari, Oriya, Punjabi, Sindhi, Sinhalese, Tamil, Telgu, and Urdu)
  - Asian Women's Shelter (San Francisco) 415-751-0880
  - NISA (Palo Alto) 888-275-6472 (North-American Islamic)
  - SAVE (Fremont) 510-794-6055.
  - Women's Crisis Support (Santa Cruz) 831-425-4030
  - Woman, Inc. (updated info on shelter vacancies) (Spanish) 415-864-4722.
  - National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233
• **Domestic Violence Batterer's Programs**
  - Bata/Starr Counseling 450-8370
  - Center for Human Development 298-8115
  - Community Solutions 842-3118
  - Lighthouse Counseling 264-5877
  - Domestic Violence Counseling and Intervention 261-5890
  - Turning Point Counseling and Educational Services 739-2171

• **Legal Advice and Attorney Referrals:**
  - Asian Law Alliance 287-9710
  - Santa Clara Bar Association 279-7550
  - Community Solutions (South County) (Spanish) 842-3118
  - East San Jose Community Law Center 254-0444
  - Family Court Clinic 882-2900 x2926
  - Family Violence Counseling Associates 246-1507
  - George & Katherine Alexander Community Law Center 288-7030
  - Legal Aid Society of Santa Clara County 998-5200
  - National Traffic Safety Institute 297-7200
  - Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence (Central County) 501-7550
  - Senior Adults Legal Assistance 295-5991
  - Support Network (North County) Spanish 800-572-2782
  - Support Network Crisis Line for Battered Women 541-6100

• **Spanish, Vietnamese:**
  - Family Children Services (Spanish) 288-6200
  - North County Counseling Associates 737-7047

• **Domestic Violence Websites:**
  - U.S. Dept of Labor: www.dol.gov
  - Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration: www.osha.gov
  - California Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control Branch: http://www.dhs.ca.gov/epic/fdv/default.htm

• **General Information and Referral Lines:**
  - United Way Helpline 248-INFO
  - CONTACT (24 hours) 279-8228

• Employees who plan to leave with their children (applies only to children for whom the abusive partner is the biological or adoptive parent) should call the Child Abduction Investigator at 792-2921 or one of the shelter lines (above) to learn how to file a "Good Cause Report" which can protect them from kidnapping charges.

• Victim/Witness Assistance Center 295-2656

• Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting 299-2071

• Elder Adult Protective/Reporting Center (for those 60 years old & over) in Community 928-3860

• Dependents or Elders in Facilities: Long-term care ombudsman daytime hours 944-0567; after 5 PM 800-231-4024, or call local police

• Parental Stress Hotline 650-327-3333

• Gay & Lesbian Info & Referral 293-4525
Partial Bibliography

If you need help right now:


If you need general information:


- Oregon/OSHA: Guidelines for Preventing Violence in the Workplace. Salem, OR.


Training Resources

- Call to Action: Managing Violence in the Workplace and other videos are available for free loan from the County Supervisors Association of California Excess Insurance Authority. Contact OSEC at 441-4285 for details.

- Videos available from Occupational Safety and Environmental Compliance at 441-4280 include:
  - Conflict Communication Skills
  - Diffusing Hostility Through Customer Service
  - Nonviolent Crisis Intervention: Preventative Techniques
  - Nonviolent Crisis Intervention: Therapeutic Physical Intervention
  - Public Building Safety
  - Reduce Your Risk (vehicle related crime)
  - Workplace Violence
  - Workplace Violence: The First Line of Defense
  - Workplace Violence: The Calm Before the Storm
  - Violence in the Workplace

- The District Attorney’s Office offers Domestic Violence training and has Domestic Violence videos available for loan. 792-2533
# Bomb Threat Checklist

Place this list under your telephone for easy reference.

## Exact Wording of the Threat:

1. Remain calm and keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask to have the message repeated.

2. Ask the caller:

   - There are a lot of people who could be injured. What can you tell me?
   - When is the bomb going to explode?
   - Where is the bomb right now?
   - What kind of bomb is it?
   - What will cause it to explode?
   - Did you place the bomb?
   - Why?
   - What is your address?
   - What is your name?

3. Report the threat immediately to your supervisor, the Facility Manager, and (in some cases) 911 (or 9-911).

Be prepared to describe the threat in as much detail as possible to the police. Record information here.

### Voice characteristics:

- **Sex:**
  - Calm
  - Angry
  - Excited
  - Slow
  - Rapid
  - Soft
- **Age:**
  - Loud
  - Laughter
  - Crying
  - Normal
  - Deep
  - Ragged
- **Other:**
  - Distinct
  - Slurred
  - Lisping
  - Raspy
  - Clearing Throat
  - Deep Breathing
  - Nasal
  - Stuttering
  - Cracking
  - Disguised
  - Accent
  - Familiar

If the voice is familiar, whom does it sound like?

### Background Noises:

- **Street Noises**
- **Restaurant**
- **Factory Machinery**
- **PA System**
- **Office Machinery**
- **Music**
- **Household Noises**
- **Animal Noises**
- **Motor(s)**
- **Voices**
- **Local**
- **Long Distance**
- **Clear**
- **Static**
- **Other**

### Threat Language:

- **Well Spoken**
- **Foul**
- **Incoherent**
- **Taped**
- **Irrational**
- **Message read**

### Other Details:

**Remarks:**

**Time of Threat:**

**Date:**

**Phone # where threat was received:**

**Your Name:**

**Your Position:**