

NEWCASTLE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Workplace Violence Prevention Program

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Policy

Newcastle Fire Protection District is committed to providing a work environment that is free of disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior involving any employee, appointed or elected official, volunteer, contractor, client, or visitor. Our policy is to establish, implement, and maintain an effective program as required by the Violence Prevention in Health Care regulation in the [California Code of Regulations, Title 8 CCR § 3342](#). The regulation requires Newcastle Fire Protection District to have these written procedures in place for our emergency medical services employees.

Our Workplace Violence Prevention Program (Program) is available upon request for examination and copying to our employees, their representatives, and the Chief of Cal/OSHA or his or her designee.

Prohibited Acts

Newcastle Fire Protection District will not ignore, condone, or tolerate *threats of violence* or *workplace violence* by any employee, appointed or elected official, volunteer, contractor, client, or visitor.

- *Threats of violence* means a statement or conduct that causes a person to fear for his or her safety because there is a reasonable possibility the person might be physically injured and that serves no legitimate purpose.
- *Workplace violence* means any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs at the work site. The term workplace violence shall not include lawful acts of self-defense or defense of others. Workplace violence includes the following:
 - The threat or use of physical force against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma, or stress, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury
 - An incident involving the threat or use of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, including the use of common objects as weapons, regardless of whether or the employee sustains an injury

Workplace violence can be categorized into four types:

- Type 1: Workplace violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the work site and includes violent acts by anyone who enters the workplace with the intent to commit a crime
- Type 2: Workplace violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, visitors or other individuals accompanying a patient

- Type 3: Workplace violence against an employee by a present or former employee, supervisor, or manager
- Type 4: Workplace violence committed in the workplace by someone who does not work there but has or is known to have had a personal relationship with an employee

In addition, Newcastle Fire Protection District prohibits all *dangerous weapons* not used for fire suppression, accident and incident response, emergency medical services, the service of law enforcement, or security duties on all Newcastle Fire Protection District property. Any employee or appointed or elected official in possession of prohibited dangerous weapons on Newcastle Fire Protection District property is in violation of this policy and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any volunteer, contractor, client, or visitor in possession of prohibited dangerous weapons will be banned from the premises. *Dangerous weapons* include any instrument capable of inflicting death or serious bodily injury.

Responsibility and Authority

Workplace Violence Program Administrator

The Fire Chief, or an assigned designee, is the designated Workplace Violence Program Administrator (Administrator) and has the authority and responsibility for developing, implementing, and maintaining this Program. The Fire Chief will also be able to answer employee questions concerning this Program.

Chief Officers, Fire Captains, and Supervisors

Responsibilities include:

- Implementing the Program in their work areas;
- Providing input to the Administrator regarding the Program;
- Participating in investigations of workplace violence reports; and
- Answering employee questions concerning this Program.

Employees

Responsibilities include:

- Complying with the Program;
- Maintaining a violence-free work environment;
- Attending all training;
- Following all directives, policies, and procedures; and
- Reporting suspicious persons in the area and alerting the proper authorities when necessary.

Compliance

The Administrator is responsible for ensuring the Program is clearly communicated and understood by all employees. The following techniques are used to ensure all employees understand and comply with the Program:

- Informing all employees of the Program during new employee safety orientation training and ongoing workplace violence prevention training;
- Providing comprehensive workplace violence prevention training to Chiefs, Fire Captains, and Supervisors concerning their roles and responsibilities for Program implementation;
- Evaluating employees to ensure their compliance with the Program; and
- Disciplining employees, appointed or elected officials, and volunteers who engage in threats of violence behaviors up to and including dismissal.

Communication

Chiefs, Fire Captains, and Supervisors are responsible for communicating with employees about workplace violence in a form readily understandable by all employees.

Employees are encouraged to inform their supervisors about any threats of violence or workplace violence. Employees may use the Workplace Violent Incident Log (Appendix A) to assist in their reporting of incidents. No employee will be disciplined for reporting any threats of violence or workplace violence.

Any employee who believes he or she has the potential of violent behavior is encouraged to use Newcastle Fire Protection District's confidential Employee Assistance Program:

MHN

Main Phone Number: 1-800-322-9707

Website: <https://members.mhn.com/external/public/default/homepage>

Employee training on workplace violence will include:

- This Program;
- Workplace violence risks that employees may encounter in their jobs;
- How to recognize the potential for violence and escalating behavior;
- Strategies to de-escalate behaviors and to avoid physical harm;
- Newcastle Fire Protection District alerts, alarms, or systems that are in place to warn of emergencies;
- How to report incidents to law enforcement; and

- Newcastle Fire Protection District's Employee Assistance Program

Employees assigned to respond to alerts, alarms, or systems that are in place to warn others will receive additional training that includes:

- General and personal safety measures;
- Aggression and violence predicting factors;
- The assault cycle;
- Characteristics of aggressive and violent patients and victims;
- Verbal intervention and de-escalation techniques and physical maneuvers to defuse and prevent violent behavior;
- Strategies to prevent physical harm;
- Appropriate and inappropriate use of restraining techniques and medications as chemical restraints in accordance with Title 22; and
- An opportunity to practice the taught maneuvers and techniques, including a debriefing session.

Training will occur:

- When the Program is first established;
- At time of hire or transfer;
- Annually for employees performing patient contact activities and their supervisors;
- Annually for employees assigned to respond to internal alerts, alarms, or systems;
- When new equipment or work practices are introduced; and
- When a new or previously unrecognized workplace violence hazard has been identified;

Employees that receive training in a form other than live will have the opportunity to meet with a person knowledgeable on the Program within one business day of the training for interactive questions to be answered.

Procedures

Emergencies and Reporting a Crime

For immediate assistance in an emergency that is not associated with a service call, contact emergency services or law enforcement by calling 911. For immediate assistance in an emergency associated with a service call in progress, follow internal procedures for requesting immediate back-up assistance by notifying local law enforcement.

Reporting Workplace Violence Concerns

Employees who witness or experience *threats of violence* or *workplace violence* can report the incident through their chain of command or directly to Human Resources. Employees may report anonymously and without fear of reprisal by submitting the incident in writing through interoffice mail.

Restraining Orders

Employees or other personnel affiliated with the Newcastle Fire Protection District who have an active restraining order issued against another person that includes the workplace are encouraged to provide a copy of the restraining order to their supervisor and the Administrator. Supervisors who receive notification of a restraining order that includes the workplace will meet with the Administrator to decide what actions, if any, need to be initiated.

Emergency Medical Services and Medical Transport

When responding to a call, emergency medical services and medical transport employees will communicate with dispatch and receiving facilities/hospitals by mobile phone and/or via radio when they identify *threats of violence* or *workplace violence* so appropriate assistance can be provided. Patient-specific factors may include but are not limited to:

- Patient's mental status and conditions;
- Patient's treatment and medication status, type, and dosage;
- Patient's history of violence; and
- Any disruptive or threatening behavior displayed by patient.

Hazard Assessment

Workplace hazard assessments will include:

- An annual review of the past year's workplace violence incidents; and
- Periodic physical security assessments.

The Workplace Violence Prevention Environmental Hazard Assessment & Control Checklist (Appendix B) can be used to assist with the security assessment. Inspections are performed according to the following schedule:

- Once a year;
- When the Program is implemented;
- When new, previously unidentified workplace violence/security hazards are recognized; and
- When workplace violence injuries or threats of injury occur.

Hazard Correction

Work practice controls will be used to correct unsafe work conditions, practices, or procedures that threaten the security of employees.

Work practice controls are defined as procedures, rules, and staffing that are used to effectively reduce workplace violence hazards. Work practice controls may include, but are not limited to:

- Appropriate staffing levels;
- Provision of dedicated safety personnel (i.e. security guards);
- Employee training on workplace violence prevention methods; and
- Employee training on procedures to follow in the event of a workplace violence incident.

Corrective actions will be implemented in a timely manner based on the severity of the hazard, documented and dated.

Post Incident Response and Investigation

Fire Captains and Supervisors will use the Workplace Violent Incident Log (Attachment A) to assist in documenting incidents and investigations.

The following procedures will occur following an incident:

- Provide immediate medical care or first aid;
- Identify all employees involved in the incident;
- Offer staff individual trauma counseling resources;
- Conduct a debriefing with all affected staff;
- Determine if corrective measures developed under this Program were effectively implemented; solicit feedback from all personnel involved in the incident as to the cause of this incident and if injuries occurred, how injury could have been prevented; and
- Record the incident in the Workplace Violent Incident Log.

Recordkeeping

- Records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation, and correction will be maintained for three years in accordance with the recordkeeping requirements of the Newcastle Fire Protection District's Injury and Illness Prevention Program.
- Training for each employee, including the employee's name, training dates, type of training, and training provider will be maintained for a minimum of three years.
- Records of violent incidents (Workplace Violent Incident Log) will be maintained a minimum of five years.

Annual Review

Newcastle Fire Protection District's Workplace Violence Prevention Program will be reviewed annually and updated as needed considering the following criteria:

- Staffing;
- Sufficiency of security systems;
- Job, equipment, and facility design and risks;
- Modifications or additions to tasks and procedures that affect Program implementation;
- Newly identified hazards;
- Prior year incidents;
- Identified deficiencies; and
- Feedback provided by employees and their representatives.

Appendix A

WORKPLACE VIOLENT INCIDENT LOG

This form must be completed for every record of violence in the workplace for Fire/Emergency Medical Personnel

Incident ID #*:	Date and Time of Incident:	Department:
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Specific Location of Incident:

** Do not identify employee by name, employee #, or SSI. The Incident ID must not reflect the employee's identity)*

Describe Incident (Include additional pages if needed):

Assailant information:

<input type="checkbox"/> Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Client	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer
<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend of Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend of Client	<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend of Customer
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner/Spouse of Victim	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Relative of Victim	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-Worker/Supervisor/Manager
<input type="checkbox"/> Former Partner/Spouse of Victim	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal	<input type="checkbox"/> Person In Custody
<input type="checkbox"/> Robber/Burglar	<input type="checkbox"/> Passenger	<input type="checkbox"/> Stranger
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Circumstances at time of incident:

<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Performing Normal Duties	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Rushed
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Isolated or Alone	<input type="checkbox"/> High Crime Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Low Staffing Level
<input type="checkbox"/> Unable to Get Help or Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Working in a Community Setting	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfamiliar or New Location
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		

Location of Incident:

<input type="checkbox"/> Patient or Client Room	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency or Urgent Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Hallway
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiting Room	<input type="checkbox"/> Restroom or Bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking Lot or Outside Building
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		

Type of Incident (check as many apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Robbery	<input type="checkbox"/> Grabbed	<input type="checkbox"/> Pushed
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Threat or Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Kicked	<input type="checkbox"/> Scratched
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Threat, Harassment, or Assault	<input type="checkbox"/> Hit with an Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Bitten
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Attack	<input type="checkbox"/> Shot (or Attempted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Slapped
<input type="checkbox"/> Threat of Physical Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Bomb Threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Hit with Fist
<input type="checkbox"/> Threat of Use of Weapon or Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism (of Victim's Property)	<input type="checkbox"/> Knifed (or Attempted)
<input type="checkbox"/> Assault With A Weapon or Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism (of Employer's Property)	<input type="checkbox"/> Arson
<input type="checkbox"/> Robbery	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Consequences of incident:

Medical care provided? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Law enforcement called? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	Security contacted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did anyone provide assistance to conclude the event? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Days lost from work (if any) _____
Actions taken by employer to protect employees from a continuing threat? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

Completed by:

Name:	Title:	Date:
Telephone:	Email:	
Signature:	Telephone:	

Appendix B

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT & CONTROL CHECKLIST**

Assessed by:	Title:
Location(s) Assessed:	

This checklist is designed to evaluate the workplace and job tasks to help identify situations that may place employees at risk of workplace violence.

Step 1: Identify risk factors that may increase Newcastle Fire Protection District’s vulnerability to workplace violence events

Step 2: Conduct a workplace assessment to identify physical and process vulnerabilities

Step 3: Develop a corrective action plan with measurable goals and target dates

STEP 1: IDENTIFY RISK FACTORS

Yes	No	Risk Factors	Comments:
		Does staff have contact with the public?	
		Does staff exchange money with the public?	
		Does staff work alone?	
		Is the workplace often understaffed?	
		Is the workplace located in an area with a high crime rate?	
		Does staff enter areas with high crime rates?	
		Does staff have mobile workplaces?	
		Does staff perform public safety functions that might put them in conflict with others?	
		Does staff perform duties that may upset people?	
		Does staff work with people known or suspected to have a history of violence?	
		Do any employees have a history of threats of violence?	

STEP 2: CONDUCT ASSESSMENT

Building Interior

Yes	No		Comments:
		Are employee ID badges required?	
		Are employees notified of past workplace violence events?	
		Are trained security personnel or staff accessible to employees?	
		Are bullet resistant windows or similar barriers used when money is exchanged with the public?	
		Are areas where money is exchanged visible to others?	
		Is a limited amount of cash kept on hand with appropriate signage?	
		Could someone hear an employee who called for help?	
		Do employees have a clear line of sight of visitors in waiting areas?	
		Do areas used for client or visitor interviews allow co-employees to observe problems?	
		Are waiting and work areas free of objects that could be used as weapons?	
		Is furniture in waiting and work areas arranged to prevent employee entrapment?	
		Are clients and visitors clearly informed how to use the department services so they will not become frustrated?	
		Are private, locked restrooms available for employees?	
		Do employees have a secure place to store personal belonging?	

Building Exterior

Yes	No		Comments:
		Do employees feel safe walking to and from the workplace?	
		Are the entrances to the building clearly visible from the street?	
		Is the area surrounding the building free of bushes or other hiding places?	
		Are security personnel provided outside the building?	
		Is video surveillance provided outside the building?	
		Is there enough lighting to see clearly?	
		Are all exterior walkways visible to security personnel?	

Parking Area

Yes	No	Risk Factors	Comments:
		Is there a nearby parking lot reserved for staff?	
		Is the parking lot attended and secure?	
		Is the parking lot free of blind spots and landscape trimmed to prevent hiding places?	
		Is there enough lighting to see clearly?	
		Are security escorts available?	

Security Measures

Yes	No		Comments:
		Is there a response plan for workplace violence emergencies?	
		Are there physical barriers? (between staff and clients)	
		Are there security cameras?	
		Are there panic buttons?	
		Are there alarm systems?	
		Are there metal detectors?	
		Are there X-ray machines?	
		Do doors lock?	
		Does internal telephone system activate emergency assistance?	
		Are telephones with an outside line programed for 911?	
		Are there two-way radios, pagers, or cell phones?	
		Are there security mirrors?	
		Is there a secured entry?	
		Are there personal alarm devices?	
		Are there "drop safes" to limit available cash?	
		Are pharmaceuticals secured?	
		Is there a system to alert staff of the presence, location, and nature of a security threat?	
		Is there a system in place for testing security measures?	

