

Hastings-on-Hudson Workplace Violence Policy

Nothing is more important to the Village than the safety and security of our employees. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on the Village's property will not be tolerated.

Any person who makes threats, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts on the Village's property will be removed from premises as quickly as safety permits and shall remain off the Village' premises pending the outcome an investigation. Hastings-on-Hudson response to incidents of violence may include suspension and/or termination of any business relationship, reassignment of job duties, suspension or termination of employment, and criminal prosecution of those involved.

All Village personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below of any threats the have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received. Personnel should also report behavior they regard as threatening or violent if that behavior is job-related or might be carried out on a Village-controlled site.

An employee who applies for or obtains a protective or restraining order that lists Village locations as protected areas must provide a copy of the petition and declarations used to seek the order and a copy of any temporary or permanent protective or restraining order that was granted. Hastings-on-Hudson has confidentiality procedures that recognize and respect the privacy of the reporting employee(s)

Designated Contact Person:

Name: Mary Beth Murphy

Title: Village Manager

Department: Village Manager

Phone: (914) 478-3400 ext. 617

Location: Village Hall, 7 Maple Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706

What Can Be Done to Prevent Workplace Violence?

Any preventive measure must be based on a thorough understanding of risk factors associated with the various types of workplace violence. And, even though our understanding of the factors which lead to workplace violence is not perfect, sufficient information is available which, if utilized effectively, can reduce the risk of workplace violence. However, strong management commitment, and the day-to-day involvement of department heads, supervisors, employees and labor unions, is required to reduce the risk of workplace violence.

Every employer should establish, implement and maintain a written injury and illness Prevention Safety Program (IIPSP) and a copy must be maintained at each workplace or at a central worksite if the employer has non-fixed worksites. An effective written injury and illness prevention safety program consists of the following eight elements:

- ✓ Responsibility
- ✓ Compliance
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Hazard Assessment
- ✓ Training and Instruction
- ✓ Recordkeeping

If your establishment is known to be a risk for workplace violence, you are required to address workplace security hazards within your existing Safety Program. This program has been prepared to supplement your injury and illness Prevention Safety Program (IIPSP) and is specifically designed to address security in the workplace. You are not required to use this program. However, it does provide general guidance and recommendations for reducing the risk of fatal and non-fatal injuries resulting from violence in the workplace.

TOP 10 WAYS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

There is no single prescription for reducing violence in the workplace. Each organization is unique and operates in a different social and economic environment. When planning workplace safety issues, employers may want to consider the organization's culture, history, size, industry and work force. These 10 suggestions are based on responses from survey participants and recommendations from experts who guided the research. The suggestions should be modified to best accommodate the needs of an organization.

1. **Foster a supportive harmonious work environment:** Creating a culture of mutual respect can help reduce harassment and hostility in the workplace. In such a culture, employers strive to communicate openly, give employees adequate control their work and provide them with support and recognition. Conflict and stress are lower when employees feel empowered to work independently and are motivated to work cooperatively.
2. **Train department heads and employees how to resolve conflicts:** Conflicts on the job can be reduced by developing employee skills in negotiating, communicating effectively, team building, and resolving disputes.
3. **Develop effective policies to protect employees from harassment:** While all employers strive to build a culture free of harassment and discrimination, they can advance this goal by having systems in place to address infractions. The key is a harassment policy that clearly denounces harassment and states unequivocally that it will not be tolerated. A thorough policy defines harassment, specifies how to report it, explains how complaints will be investigated and presents the consequences.
4. **Establish procedures for handling grievances:** Employees need to understand grievance procedures for reporting complaints of unfair treatment, discrimination or harassment; believe that those procedures will be followed; and feel confident that concerns will be addressed promptly and confidentially.
5. **Provide personal counseling through an employee assistance program:** Family, marital, financial, and personal issues can have a profound impact on employees work performance as well as social interactions at work. An employee assistance program (EAP) provides employees with a free, easily-accessible and confidential resource for addressing personal concerns. In addition, supervisory personnel can be trained how to document and address work performance and attitude problems and refer employee for help. If a violent or threatening incident occurs at work, support services can be made available to help employees cope with their fears and concerns.

6. **Implement security programs that protect employees:** Employers have a variety of methods for ensuring workers safety, such as full-time or after-hours security guards, high-tech monitoring systems, emergency warning systems, limited access key cards, strict visitor sign-in policies, new employee background screening, and safety awareness and training. Employers that regularly evaluate their security programs can best determine if they are meeting employer and employee needs. Also, employers need to make sure that employees are aware of an understanding existing security policies and procedures.
7. **Provide employee safety education programs:** In addition to making workers aware of safety policies and employee support services, employers can provide educational materials and seminars about ways to maximize safety at work.
8. **Provide job counseling for employees who have been laid off or fired:** Because a job is often closely tied to one's identity, being laid off can be traumatic. Employee counseling and support services can help workers develop job-seeking skills, learn how to cope with life changes, and personally and financially prepare for the future. These services also help exiting employees feel that the employer cares about them. It is helpful to train supervisory personnel to sensitively communicate layoffs and firings.
9. **Train supervisory personnel on how to recognize signs of a troubled employee:** One way to reduce the potential for workplace violence is to intervene before an incident reaches a flash point. Supervisory personnel can be given training on how to recognize signs and symptoms of a potentially violent employee. Also, supervisory personnel can be instructed on how to be sensitive to signs of possible abuse among employees, such as frequent absences or depression.
10. **Set up a crisis plan:** Employers may want to consider developing a crisis plan for dealing with violent incidents. The plan can include details on how to report the incident, which key internal supervisory personnel and external authorities should be alerted, how to maintain the safety of unaffected workers and security precaution to prevent further trouble. Employer also can arrange to provide individual crisis counseling and support groups for affected employees soon after the incident occurs.