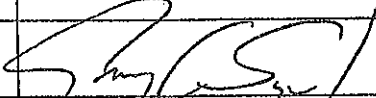


CATHOLIC CHARITIES DISABILITIES SERVICES
Agency Standard and Procedure

Standard Category	Human Resources
Standard Title	Workplace Safety
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Attachments	
Approved by: Gary Siegel	

Standard

Catholic Charities is committed to creating a safe and supportive work environment that includes protection of each staff member, client and volunteer. Catholic Charities will maintain workplace safety procedures that are specific to each agency and program. Employees will receive instruction and guidelines during orientation. Each employee must practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations and reporting unsafe conditions immediately to the administration.

Words and gestures that put others in fear of their safety, or which have the effect of intimidating others or compromising security in the workplace, are an aspect of violent behavior and will be treated as such for disciplinary purposes. Verbal abuse will, therefore, result in appropriate disciplinary action regardless of whether physical violence was actually threatened or intended.

Under no circumstances may an employee, client, volunteer or visitor (with the exception of law enforcement) bring or store a weapon, whether or not licensed and whether legal or illegal, into or within facilities or other agency property owned or occupied by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany and its agencies. Weapons may not be left in employee cars while parked in or near the grounds of a Catholic Charities occupied facility.

All employees have a duty to report incidents that involve or may involve a breach of this standard by anyone, whether it is a fellow employee, client, volunteer or visitor to the facilities occupied by Catholic Charities. Such incidents should be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor, department head, and/or the Executive Director.

Agency Procedure

- A. In general, all agency staff should pay attention to the work environment and report any suspicious activity or conditions.
- B. Staff should approach unfamiliar individuals who may be walking alone in the office and inquire as to whom they are here to see or ask if they need assistance.
- C. Unescorted individuals should follow check-in or escort procedures while on the premises.

- D. Each employee must practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations and reporting unsafe conditions immediately to the administration.
- E. In the event of an incident involving a workplace safety issue, the Executive Director or Associate Executive Director should be notified immediately.
- F. Staff who stay late at the office should consider moving their cars before the end of the day to a parking spot near the door and whenever possible exit together with other staff (more than one).

De-escalating Potentially Violent Situations

In general, there are several actions that should be taken if someone appears to be a threat:

1. Keep your physical distance from the individual as much as possible;
2. In a calm and low voice, ask the person to stop yelling and/or leave the premises;
3. If they refuse to leave, call your supervisor or another available employee to provide back up and support in dealing with the individual.
4. No more than two people should confront an individual at any one time; more people could serve to escalate the situation.
5. Tell the individual that they need to leave or the police will be called;
6. If they do not leave, call 911;
7. If the individual presents a weapon, do not attempt to disarm them. Call 911 or seek assistance as quickly as possible.
8. If the individual refuses to leave and you feel threatened, remove yourself from the premises and wait for the police to arrive.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. Remember to stay calm and talk in a low voice; do not yell back or point at the individual as this may escalate the situation. Follow through on your decision to call the police.