I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish parameters and guidance for safety in the workplace and consistent standards and processes to enable work activities to be carried out safely by removing or reducing the risks to the health, safety and welfare of all employees, contractors and authorized visitors.

II. POLICY

The Department strives to provide the highest level of safety possible for its employees, clients and members of the public by formally integrating safety-based practices into every aspect of our daily operations. All department employees share responsibility in contributing to a safe workplace.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Department Safety Administrator (DSA) - Person designated by the DMSS Director to serve as the lead person in developing and maintaining procedures to implement safe work practices, plans, policies and procedures.

B. Department Safety and Security Committee – A multi-divisional working group consisting of safety champions designated by the Workplace Safety Committees from each major location, the DMSS Safety Administrator, and division representatives designated by the Division’s Director or Deputy Director.

C. Hall Captain – Person(s) designated by on-site division management to ensure compliance with evacuation procedures. Hall captains are responsible for checking their designated area to ensure that staff have vacated the area (as appropriate) and provide assistance (if needed) to individuals with special needs.

D. Emergency Procedures Guide – Procedures tailored to each office location that outline emergency preparedness guidelines and response to safety related events.

E. Safety Champion – Person designated by division management to coordinate development and maintenance of a site safety plan, act as a liaison to management and serve as the designee on the Workplace Safety Committee.

F. Workplace Safety Committee – A working group consisting of department representatives from each building location and each division unit within the building (S:\DSCYF Safety and Security).

IV. PROCEDURES

A. The Department will ensure there are staff designated as Safety Administrator and Workplace Safety Committee members.

   a. By January 1st of each calendar year, the Division of Management Support Services (DMSS) will identify a staff member to serve as the Department Safety Administrator (DSA).

   b. The DSA is responsible for coordinating the formation and activity of the Department’s Safety and Security Committee as well as the workplace safety committees. The DSA will also monitor the strategies the committees may implement to aid in review and response to department safety and security concerns.

   c. By January 1st of each year, the divisions will identify a minimum of one Safety Champion to serve on the workplace safety committees located at each building site in which DSCFYF staff is located. A Safety Champion from each workplace safety committee will be designated as the committee’s chairperson and the representative on the Department Safety and Security Committee.

B. The Department Safety and Security Committee will meet bi-annually to review safety related issues and recommendations received from the workplace safety committees and implement practices that promote safety, reduce the risk of workplace injuries and adhere to the standards set by Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) Workplace Safety Guidelines (http://www.dema.delaware.gov/disprep/workplace.shtml) and the State of Delaware Workplace Violence Policy (http://www.delawarepersonnel.com/policies/documents/workplace-violence.pdf). Any changes made to the Workplace Safety Guide or the DSCFYF Emergency Procedures Guide will be communicated to employees.

C. Workplace safety committees will meet quarterly to discuss and review overall safety/security and address any concerns related to the Workplace Safety Guide or individual staff. Committees are responsible on an annual basis to update the Workplace Safety Guide and complete the following:

   a. Schedule, communicate and implement drill schedules, site safety and security reviews and updates made to the Workplace Safety Guide at the local site and in coordination with the Department Safety Administrator;

   b. Develop and update procedures for admitting or not admitting individuals into DSCFYF offices;

   c. Develop and update protocols for handling person(s) of concern;

   d. Develop and update processes for communicating safety threats to work site staff;
i. Provide department employees with intercom notification system and other alert processes

e. Identify and train hall captains;

f. Maintain an updated list of office assignments and building floor plans;

g. Update and enforce restricted office items and storage requirements; and

h. Report all updates, changes, recommendations and concerns to the Department Safety and Security Committee by way of the Department Safety Administrator;

i. Ensure all safety related documents, communications and activities are documented and stored in the designated folders located on the department S Drive.

D. In the event of an anticipated emergency, the Workplace Safety Committee will convene in advance of the event to assess preparedness and response. Following an actual event, the Workplace Safety Committee will convene to develop recommendations to address gaps and training issues.

V. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Department employees are responsible for:

a. Practicing safe working habits and safety reporting;

b. Taking all reasonable safety related actions appropriate to position, function, location and circumstance;

c. Following evacuation procedures; and

d. Refraining from activities not conducive to workplace safety.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY

DSCYF and/or the Department Safety and Security Committee will implement this policy, the Workplace Safety Guide and the DSCYF Emergency Procedures Guide during the course of normal business activities, including site inspections, execution of evacuation procedures, safety and security meetings and presentations, or other business operations. Initial, new and updated information will be provided to employees as recommended by the Department Safety Administrator.
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SAFETY RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for staff, clients and the public. The goal is to establish broad parameters and guidance for safety and to formally integrate safety into every facet of our daily operation.

Staying healthy and safe at work is important and is the responsibility of every employee. No matter what your job, it is important to know and understand proper workplace procedures, practices and behavior to prevent possible injuries and illnesses and the role you have in ensuring safety.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Practice safe working habits and safety reporting.
- Take all reasonable safety related actions appropriate to position, function, location and circumstance.
- Follow evacuation procedures.
- Refrain from activities not conducive to workplace safety.

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Spot, investigate and report hazards.
- Regularly check in with staff to determine if there are staff concerns related to safety and work with staff to develop strategies to address safety concerns.
- Encourage staff to do safety checks of their work areas in an attempt to avoid accidents/injuries.
- Establish specific safety goals and performance criteria for own staff.
- Work with the safety champions to ensure policies and programs are implemented and that the Department is in compliance with this Safety Program Plan.
- Actively manage safety and injury prevention reviews, routine safety inspections and incident investigations.
- Assure that all safety related records are prepared, maintained and submitted in a timely manner.

SAFETY CHAMPION RESPONSIBILITIES (in conjunction with the supervisor and/or the Workplace Safety Committee)

- Act as the local advocate for a safe working environment.
- Act as the liaison to the divisional manager responsible for overall safety performance.
- Coordinate development of site safety plan.
• Provide technical support in the areas of injury and illness prevention, physical hazard assessment, basic safety training, identification of appropriate personal protective equipment, and safety policy interpretation.
• Participate in site workplace safety committees.
• Participate on Statewide Department Safety and Security Committee.
• Deliver training to agency employees on the basics of safety and injury prevention.
• Review site operating procedures for compliance with the safety and injury prevention program.
• Participate in safety and injury prevention reviews, routine safety inspections, incident investigations, and making appropriate recommendations.

DIVISIONAL MANAGEMENT STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

• Establish overall customer and employee safety goals.
• Establish specific safety goals and performance criteria for own staff.
• Hold their management team accountable for safety.
• Ensure that their management team members receive appropriate safety training.
• Support the safety champions in implementing the agency safety program, organizing training, enforcing policies and overcoming organizational barriers.
• Provide training, guidance, direction and leadership.
SAFETY REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING SAFETY PROBLEMS

Every incident that results in or could have resulted in injury or accident in the workplace is to be reported and investigated by supervisory/management staff.

REPORTING
Any employee who feels that their work environment is unsafe shall immediately report to either their supervisor or a member of management. Management will immediately report the unsafe condition to their onsite safety champion (a list of the current safety champions can be found at S:\DSCYF Safety and Security). If the hazard is easy to correct, do so immediately. If the hazard is not easy to correct, the safety champion shall immediately notify the Department Safety Administrator for guidance and/or assistance. All allegations of safety violation/hazards will be taken seriously. Employees reporting real or perceived safety concerns in good faith will not be subject to reprisal based on their report.

IF AN EMPLOYEE IS INJURED AS A RESULT OF THE SAFETY HAZARD, THEY MUST COMPLETE A REPORT OF INJURY TO BE FILED WITH THE HUMAN RESOURCE UNIT.

TRACKING
Safety champions will be responsible for tracking all safety hazards and will submit reports on a quarterly basis to the Department Safety Administrator. The purpose of the tracking will be to identify the source of the accident and the corrective action taken, to compile statistics to determine if a pattern exists that requires needed changes and to identify additional training needs.
EMPLOYEE SAFETY

Employees are not expected to place their own safety in jeopardy but are to recognize that some degree of risk is inherent in any job involving the delivery of services to children. All staff are responsible for proactively managing their own safety as much as possible. There are several things workers can do to reduce risk to themselves.

- Find out what you can about the client and the setting you will be entering before meeting with the client. This can be done by reviewing existing records or, if authorized, review DELJIS information. If there is a history of violence or criminal behavior, assistance from the police should be sought. In the event that police are not available, consult with a supervisor to authorize a two-person response or other assistance available.
- Have a cell phone in working order when out in the field.
- Make sure that supervisors or others within the unit are aware of where you are going and when you are expected to return. If plans change while in the field, telephone your supervisor before you do an unanticipated visit.
- Do not take personal belongings into a client’s home.
- When it is necessary to remove a child from a home, request assistance. Police presence is preferred, however, if the police are not available, consult with a supervisor to authorize a two-person response or other assistance available.
- Consider doing joint home visits with a case manager in another DSCYF Division and/or other community partners such as Public Health, Probation/Parole, etc.
- If at any time during a home visit or in the office, you feel that your personal safety is in jeopardy, leave the home or area immediately and notify your supervisor.

The following are guidelines for when a two-person response or police assistance may be warranted:

Two-person response may be needed when:
1. Intake notes the possibility of a dangerous situation.
2. The client home is in a high crime or in an isolated area.
3. The initial contact is to be made after dark.
4. There is a known history of domestic violence.
5. There is a history of suicide attempts or mental illness.

Police assistance may be needed when:
1. There are suspected weapon(s) in the home.
2. There are intoxicated person(s) in the home.
3. A person in the home has a violent criminal history.
4. If you suspect that a crime is in progress.
Equipment used for purposes of transportation will only be operated by authorized State of Delaware employees, holding a valid driver’s license. Employees may be subject to a DMV check to ensure license is valid and to review past violations. Employees operating vehicles may not engage in the use of substances that may impair their judgment or driving ability. Each operator and passenger is required to use seat belts at all times during the use of the vehicle. Operators are required to act in a responsible fashion. The State of Delaware will not condone illegal, unsafe or reckless driving practices. Passengers are not permitted to ride in the bed of trucks for any purpose.

All damage or malfunctions should be reported to the “Key Keepers” who will notify the DMSS Facilities/Fleet Manager.

Automobile accident reports must be filed, with as much detail as possible, within one to three days of the incident. Forms for Fleet Services vehicles are in the glove compartment of the vehicles. The lack of a form should not preclude the timely reporting of an accident. Accidents involving injuries should be phoned into the Insurance Coverage Office or to Fleet Services as soon as possible. The DMSS Facilities/Fleet Manager can be of assistance.

The State strives to maintain safe equipment and safe drivers.
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families is committed to promoting a safe environment for its employees. The Department is committed to working with its employees to maintain a safe working environment that is free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior. Reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

The State does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities. Threats or acts of violence include conduct against persons or property that is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating to alter the conditions of state employment, or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or more employees, customers, or business partners. Any employee determined to have committed such acts will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Non-employees engaged in violent acts on the employer’s premises will be reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted.

The following list of behaviors, while not all inclusive, provides examples of conduct that is prohibited:

1. Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress.
2. Intentionally damaging employer property or property of another employee.
3. Hitting or shoving an individual.
4. Threatening to harm an individual or his/her family, friends, associates or their property.
5. The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of property owned, operated or controlled by the state.
6. Making harassing or threatening telephone calls, or sending harassing or threatening letters or other forms of written or electronic communications.
7. Intimidating or attempting to coerce an employee to do wrongful acts, a defined by applicable law, administrative rule, or policy that would affect the business interest of the state.
8. The willful, malicious and repeated following of another person, also known as “stalking” and making of a credible threat with intent to place the other person in reasonable fear for his/her safety.
9. Possession of a weapon while on employer property or while on employer business (unless specifically approved by the Cabinet Secretary/agency head as a job-related requirement).
10. Committing acts motivated by, or related to, race, age, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, sex, disability, marital status, sexual harassment or domestic violence.

All employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor of any threats which they have witnessed or received. Even without any actual threat, employees should report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent, when the behavior is related or might be carried out at work or is connected to state employment. Employees are responsible for making this report regardless of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or
threatening behavior. Any potential dangerous situation must be reported immediately to a supervisor or the Human Resource office. The supervisor is responsible for reporting the situation to his/her manager who in turn will notify the division director and their human resource representative. Reports can be made anonymously and all reported incidents will be investigated if there is sufficient information in order to initiate an investigation.

To protect the rights of the accused, management will limit disclosure of the threat and identity of the alleged perpetrator(s) to involved personnel. The agency does however, have an obligation to warn potential victims of violence. Any release of information will be determined on a case-by-case basis and be cleared through the Department’s Affirmative Action Coordinator and made in a good faith effort to warn potential victim(s) regarding violent activities. The Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families shall make a good faith effort to continue to promote a workplace free from violence.
Employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform the Human Resource Office if any employee exhibits behavior, which could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior may include:

1. Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace.
2. Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility or anger.
4. Sudden or significant deterioration of performance.
5. Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior.
6. Dropping hints about a knowledge of firearms.
7. Making intimidating statements like: “You know what happened at the Post Office” or “I’ll get even” or “You haven’t heard the last of me.”
8. Physical signs of hard breathing, reddening of complexion, menacing stare, loudness, fast profane speech.
9. Having a romantic obsession with a co-worker who does not share that interest.
10. Intense anger, lack of empathy.
12. Brooding or strange behavior.

Office Awareness

1. Be familiar with your building
2. Take precautions when working late or arriving early – make sure someone knows your whereabouts and have them check on you from time to time.
3. Have a telephone close at hand for use in emergencies.
4. Secure personal belongings to protect against theft.
5. Be especially careful when leaving the office and going to your vehicle. If possible, get someone to escort you to your vehicle after dark. Have your keys ready and look all around your vehicle, inside and out.

In all situations, if violence appears to be imminent, employees should take the precautions necessary to assure their own safety and the safety of others. Employees who confront or encounter an armed or dangerous person should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual. Employees should remain calm, make eye contact and talk to the individual. If management can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given. Otherwise, cooperate and follow the instructions given by the individual.
GUIDELINES FOR WHEN WORK SITE IS TEMPORARILY NOT ACCESSIBLE

If an employee’s work site is not accessible due to an unforeseen emergency (bomb threat, flooding, etc.) that necessitates the closing of the site, management will attempt to locate an alternative work site.

If an alternative work site is located, employees will be directed to report there until their normal work site is accessible. If the employee requests not to report to the alternative work site, he/she may be offered the opportunity to use vacation, flex time or compensatory time based on operational needs. Casual/seasonal staff are also directed to report to the alternative site. If a casual/seasonal chooses not to report to the alternative site they will not be paid. Essential Employees may be required to report to the alternative site as part of an emergent situation.

If an alternative work site cannot be arranged, employees will be advised when to report back to their normal work site. Employees will not be required to use accumulated leave as long as they report back as requested.

Employees on approved vacation, compensatory time, sick leave or alternative work schedule, will not have the leave usage changed or their schedule changed solely due to the emergency. In other words, the leave will still be charged.

Management should develop a means of communicating alternative sites to employees out of the office.

THESE GUIDELINES DO NOT APPLY FOR LONG TERM INACCESSIBILITY OF EMPLOYEE WORK SITE AND/OR MAY BE PRE-EMPTED BY A GOVERNOR’S DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY.
Emergency shall be defined as bomb threats, violent incidents, fire, explosion, and natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, etc.

A Departmental team will be developed with representatives from each major location and coordinated by the Department Safety Administrator (DSA). The team will meet bi-annually to develop and discuss action steps needed in the event of an emergency and to review safety related issues and recommendations received from the workplace safety committees. Workplace safety committees will be responsible for coordinating development of site plans to include, but not be limited to, coordinating fire drills, ensuring that first aid kits are stocked with materials recommended by the Red Cross, ensuring that maps are displayed to evacuate the building, and liaison with local Red Cross, fire, police and state authorities.

The DSA will compile a Department Emergency Preparedness Plan consisting of site specific plans to be developed by the Safety Champions. The Plan will include:

1. Identification of individual(s) responsible for
   a. Communication
   b. Data Recovery
   c. Emergency Response

2. Preparedness
   a. Orderly Actions
   b. Communication
   c. Decision-making
   d. Relocation procedure
   e. Data Recovery Procedure
   f. Residential facilities - accessibility to population

3. Prioritization
   a. Protect human life
   b. Eliminate risk/hazard
   c. Physical assets and data
   d. Minimize losses
   e. Resume normal operations

4. Supervisory/Management checklist
   a. What to do in the event of an emergency/Emergencies Procedures Guide
   b. Dealing with Medical emergencies
GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

The following guidelines, not all inclusive, have been extracted from the State of Delaware Safety and Health Manual. These guidelines must be enforced at all levels by members of the management and supervisory staff.

1. All accidents must be reported to your supervisor immediately.

2. The blocking of fire exits is prohibited.

3. The blocking of fire extinguishers is prohibited.

4. Horseplay is prohibited.

5. The use of illegal substances in conjunction with the State of Delaware work activities is prohibited.

6. Unless authorized, firearms or weapons are prohibited.

7. The use of State vehicles for purposes other than the State of Delaware business is prohibited.

8. The use of the State vehicles without driver and passenger restraints (seatbelts) is prohibited.

9. Aisles and passageways must be kept clear and accessible at all times.

10. The use of furniture or equipment for a purpose other than intended is prohibited.

11. Wear personal protective equipment when necessary.

12. Obey all signs and signals.

13. Violation of local, state and federal laws is prohibited.

14. Use universal precautions (treating all blood and body fluids as if they were infectious) when encountering bodily fluids.

15. Do not tamper with, or attempt to adjust equipment with which you are not familiar.

16. Do not climb on furniture or equipment; use ladder or step stool.

17. Stairwells and hallways should remain free of any storage or furniture to ensure walkways are clear, unobstructed and in good order.
18. Work-related materials, boxes and other storage items are not permitted on the tops of workstation cabinets. This area should remain clear.

19. Curtains are not permitted to be hung in offices or doorways as this is a fire and safety hazard.

20. Coffee pots, fans and radios are approved for use in offices and cubicles. Coffee pots must be made of tempered glass, equipped with an automatic shut-off/timer and kept separate from all flammable materials and other potential hazards.

21. Microwaves, toasters and refrigerators are permissible in designated kitchenette areas only.