

Policy: Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

Policy No. O-30

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APPROVED BY: <i>Mary Cotaballa</i>		
V.P. Human Resources		
APPROVED BY: <i>[Signature]</i>		
President, LibertyHealth	10/28/08	10/28/08
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References: Also see: HR Policy # O-22 Rules of Behavior, HR Policy #F-1 Anti-harassment		

POLICY

LibertyHealth is committed to preventing workplace violence and maintaining a safe work environment. LibertyHealth has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence or disruptive behavior that may occur during on its premises or at other locations where employees act as agents for LibertyHealth. "Violence" or "violent act" means any physical assault, or any physical or verbal threat of assault or harm against a person. Disruptive behavior is conduct displayed by an employee that negatively impacts the quality or safety of care or has the potential to do so. Disruptive behavior may be verbal or non-verbal, and often involves the use of rude language, facial expressions, threatening manners, or even physical abuse. All employees, including Senior Administration, management, clinical staff, licensed independent practitioners, governing body members, volunteers or any person conducting business on LibertyHealth's premises who display violent and/or disruptive behavior will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

PROCEDURES

All of LibertyHealth Staff as well as visitors, patients, vendors, etc., should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. (See HR Policy # O-22 Rules of Behavior) Firearms, weapons, and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the premises of LibertyHealth without proper authorization. LibertyHealth employees are expected to adhere to the LibertyHealth's Code of Conduct.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces an employee, a patient/visitor, or any member of the public will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, (See HR Policy # F-1 Anti-Harassment) including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. The following is a partial list of conduct that constitutes inappropriate behavior on the job or violations of policy that while not inclusive, is an example of conduct that is prohibited. Employees who engage in such behavior will receive discipline, up to and including termination (see HR Policy F-5 Disciplinary Action) at LibertyHealth's sole discretion. Other actions or behavior not on this list may subject an employee to disciplinary action and/or termination.

- Causing physical injury to another person;
- Making threatening remarks;
- Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress;
- Intentionally damaging employer property or property of another employee; Possession of a weapon while on company property or on company business; Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence.

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All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor, any other member of management or security personnel. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by patients/visitors, vendors, or any other member of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible.

An employee who confronts or encounters an armed or dangerous person should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual. No one should place him/herself in peril. If an employee sees or hears a commotion or disturbance near his/her workstation, he/she should not try to intercede or see what is happening. If a supervisor 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 use best judgment. Employees should remain calm, make constant eye contact and talk to the individual.

While we do not expect employees to be skilled at identifying potentially dangerous persons, an employee is expected to exercise good judgment and inform his/her supervisor or the Human Resource Department if any employee, patient, visitor, etc., exhibits behavior that could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace;
- Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger;
- Making threatening remarks;
- Sudden or significant deterioration of performance;
- Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior.

LibertyHealth encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or the Vice President of Human Resources and/or his/her designee before the situation escalates into potential violence.

LibertyHealth is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline an employee for raising such concerns.

Depending upon the severity of the circumstances, Security, the supervisor and/or Human Resources will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the LibertyHealth individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, LibertyHealth may suspend employees, without pay, pending investigation. Any employee determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

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Non-employees engaged in violent acts on LibertyHealth's premises might be escorted off the property and/or reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted. Any employee injured at work should seek immediate medical treatment by either Employee Health Services or the Emergency Department. In accordance with the "Risk Management Incident Reporting Policy, the employee and/or supervisor should immediately complete an Employee Injury/Illness Report. LibertyHealth is committed to support an employee who experiences an incident of abuse that occurs on the hospital premises while on duty. Should the employee decide to prosecute a visitor, patient, vendor, etc., LibertyHealth will escort the employee to the police station and to court appearances, paying an employee's wages for up to two (2) days to attend court appearances in relation to the incident. Thereafter, LibertyHealth will provide flexibility in the work schedule so that the employee can seek medical treatment and attend court proceedings related to the case.

RESPONSIBILITY

Employee:

Reports all threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect to the immediate supervisor or any other member of management immediately.

Reports all suspicious individuals or activities immediately assuring not to place him/her self in danger.

Seeks immediate medical attention for any injury incurred from a violent act in the workplace and complete an Employee Injury/Illness Report.

Management

Assesses the situation and alerts Security immediately when appropriate or responds to and investigate all complaints of dangerous situations, acts of violence, suspicious individuals or activities, employee disruptive behavior.

Assures that injured employee receives prompt medical attention and that an Employee Injury/Illness Report is completed.

Assures that the employee is removed from the situation so as to protect him/her. Immediate alerts appropriate departments, i.e., Security, Human Resources, etc.

Investigates and maintains a file of such investigations.

Disciplines employees who engage in acts of violence, seeking guidance from Human Resources where necessary.

Security Department

Conducts annual inspections of the premises to evaluate and determine any vulnerability to the workplace or hazards, and initiating corrective action to reduce risks.

Conducts and participates in annual in-service of violence prevention.

Posts signage to communicate and raise public awareness of uncivil behavior from employees and the public.

Safety/Risk Management

Trains sufficient numbers of personnel to identify aggressive and violent predicting factors and to appropriately respond to and manage violent disturbances

Maintains records of all violent acts against employees while at work for at least five years following the reported act

Establishes a post-incident response system that provides, at a minimum, an in-house crisis response team

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Human Resources

Conduct background investigations to review candidates' and reduce the risk of hiring individuals with a history of violent behavior.

Reviews LibertyHealth's relevant policies as needed.

Conducts and participates in annual in-service violence prevention training.

Provides education regarding acceptable desired behaviors by employees.

CONTROLS

The Vice President, Human Resources shall establish such controls as are necessary to ensure implementation of this policy.

Last Revised 10/28/08