



## Defense Security Service

# REGULATION

NUMBER 11-851  
May 20, 2013

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HCMO

SUBJECT: Workplace Violence Prevention and Response

References: See Enclosure 1.

1. **PURPOSE.** This Regulation establishes standard practices to be used in the prevention of workplace violence, assigns responsibilities, and provides guidance in dealing with incidents of actual or potential workplace violence, should they take place, in accordance with the requirements of References (a) through (e), controlling DoD issuances, and with the requirements of any successor Instruction or supplemental DoD guidance regarding the prevention of and response to workplace violence.

2. **APPLICABILITY.** This Regulation applies to all Federal civilian employees, contractor personnel, and all other individuals assigned, attached, or otherwise physically present at a DSS facility, or while engaged in DSS functions away from a DSS facility, regardless of duty station or level of seniority (collectively referred to in this Regulation as “DSS personnel”).

3. **POLICY.** DSS places the highest priority on the health and safety of its employees, contract personnel, and visitors, and supports managers in efforts to deal with incidents of workplace violence. DSS will not tolerate workplace violence at any level. It is DSS policy that:

3.1. When violence occurs, or a situation occurs that has the potential for creating a danger of violence at the workplace, the situation must be handled quickly, correctly and effectively. If the situation involves a weapon or there is a possibility of injury, the first call should be to appropriate law enforcement officials using the 911 emergency phone number.

3.2. All acts of violence, threats to another individual or to another individual’s property, harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, and other disruptive or threatening behavior involving a direct or indirect threat of physical harm are prohibited and will be dealt with immediately by the appropriate DSS officials.

3.3. In addition to physical acts against people or property, prohibited behavior can also include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm to self or others and include any behavior or activity by an individual that would reasonably cause another individual to feel unsafe. Such behavior or activity must be dealt with immediately and appropriately, and those who commit such acts may be immediately removed from the premises, denied reentry pending completion of the appropriate investigation, and may be subject to administrative and disciplinary action, including removal, criminal prosecution, or both.

3.4. Employees who are subject to or become aware of any violent acts or threats of violence must immediately report the matter to their supervisor or a higher-level management official, the Human Capital Management Office (HCMO), the DSS Security Office, or to the appropriate civilian authorities (i.e., the police). Supervisory or management personnel who receive a report of violent activity or a threat of violence must take the report seriously and immediately assess the situation, determine the nature of the threat, and take appropriate action.

3.5. Field offices will develop procedures for responding to and managing incidents and threats of workplace violence within their work locations. DSS will uniformly enforce all policies and procedures dealing with workplace violence.

3.6. All information regarding an incident and/or threat of workplace violence, including but not limited to names of involved parties, witnesses, reports and investigations of allegations, and/or findings of workplace violence, will be treated as sensitive information and will not be disclosed to persons without an official need to know the information, or as otherwise provided for in law or regulation. DSS may use statements and reports as evidence in administrative and/or criminal proceedings.

4. DEFINITIONS. See Glossary.

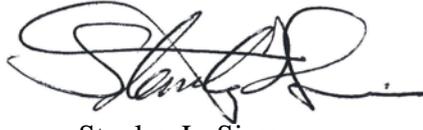
5. RESPONSIBILITIES. See Enclosure 2.

6. PROCEDURES. See Enclosure 3.

7. GUIDE TO WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE. See Enclosure 4.

8. RELEASABILITY. UNLIMITED. This Regulation is approved for public release. Copies may be obtained through the Internet from the DSS website.

9. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Regulation is effective immediately upon signature.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stanley L. Sims', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Stanley L. Sims  
Director

Enclosures

E1. References

E2. Responsibilities

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Glossary

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ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES

- (a) Executive Order 12977, Interagency Security Committee
- (b) The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, as amended
- (c) 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1960
- (d) National Defense Authorization Act Fiscal Year 2010, Section 1113
- (e) Office of Personnel Management OWR-09, "Dealing with Workplace Violence: A Guide for Agency Planners," February 1998
- (f) Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service Guide: Workplace Violence Prevention and Response, May 2012

ENCLOSURE 2  
RESPONSIBILITIES

E2.1. DSS DIRECTOR. The DSS Director will:

E2.1.1. Develop and put into place a workplace violence prevention and response program that reflects DSS's strong commitment to the safety of its personnel, in accordance with Reference (a) of this Regulation. Establish a trained DSS threat assessment group that addresses agency workplace violence concerns.

E2.1.2. Annually notify the workforce of the agency's policy regarding the prevention of and response to workplace violence and of the identities of the members of the Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Team (WVPART).

E2.2. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TEAM (WVPART). The WVPART will provide supervisors and managers with the necessary guidance and training to recognize the signs of and the potential for violence in the workplace, and provide support in dealing with related issues, should they arise. The WVPART is designed to assist management in the continuous assessment of the work climate to detect areas susceptible to workplace violence incidents. The WVPART will:

E2.2.1. Recommend policies, procedures, and training programs aimed at the prevention of and response to violence in the workplace.

E2.2.2. Periodically review current policies, procedures, and training programs to determine their effectiveness in providing the necessary guidance to supervisors and employees in dealing with the prevention of and response to workplace violence. Adjustments will be made as necessary.

E2.2.3. Notify the DSS Director and senior leadership, as applicable, of the employee(s) involved in potential or actual workplace violence issues.

E2.2.4. The composition and responsibilities of the WVPART are:

E2.2.4.1. The DSS Chief of Staff will serve as the chairperson. The chairperson will call periodic meetings of the team, at least semi-annually, to discuss statistics, incidence of violence, threats, prevention efforts, and any other issues pertaining to or could lead to disruption in the workplace, or other related topics. The chairperson may appoint other members to the WVPART to serve as permanent or guest members.

E2.2.4.2. The Safety and Occupational Health Manager will provide data obtained through safety inspections to HCMO to assist in identifying areas that may have a high potential for workplace violence.

E2.2.4.3. The DSS Security Office will:

E2.2.4.3.1. Provide immediate response when notified of the presence of weapons in the workplace, potential acts of violence, an act of violence that has taken place, or when circumstances may necessitate the need for restoring order.

E2.2.4.3.2. Provide properly trained and equipped security personnel to prevent, deter, and respond to threats and incidences of workplace violence.

E2.2.4.3.3. Conduct inquiries into threats and incidents, as appropriate, and ensure that events are properly investigated and addressed.

E2.2.4.3.4. Keep management apprised of the risk of violence.

E2.2.4.3.5. Determine jurisdictional restrictions and identify alternative law enforcement agencies that may be able to provide assistance, including notification and liaison planning.

E2.2.4.3.6. Escort potentially violent individuals safely off the premises, suspend their access to the premises until the HCMO has cleared them for reentry.

E2.2.4.3.7. Ensure that employees with special needs are aware of emergency evacuation procedures and have assistance, as necessary, regarding emergency evacuation situations.

E2.2.4.4. The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) will provide legal guidance concerning the handling of incidents of violence or threats of violence, and in the development of recommended policies and procedures.

E2.2.4.5. HCMO will:

E2.2.4.5.1. Provide assistance and guidance to supervisors of Federal civilian employees concerning personnel actions, including disciplinary and adverse actions related to violence, or threats of violence.

E2.2.4.5.2. Consult with supervisors to provide guidance in dealing with employees who become recalcitrant, difficult to supervise, or who appear to be a danger to themselves or others.

E2.2.4.5.3. Assist supervisors in referring to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) those employees who have demonstrated poor performance, unacceptable conduct or behavior, or who appear to be experiencing personal problems.

E2.2.4.5.4. Provide direction, oversight, and training for the DSS workplace violence prevention policy and procedures.

E2.2.4.6. The EAP will provide assessment, referral, and emergency intervention for Federal employees who commit violent acts, threaten harm to themselves or others, or are themselves victims of such acts. The EAP will coordinate with agency officials to schedule emergency evaluations for Federal employees who appear to be violent, homicidal, or suicidal. Federal regulations strictly prohibit disclosure of information learned while providing federally assisted EAP services unless exceptional circumstances exist (e.g., an employee is judged by the EAP provide to pose an imminent threat of serious harm to others), or unless certain conditions are met (e.g., the employee provides written consent to release information).

E2.2.4.7. The Support Services Division will work closely with the Security Office, the Safety and Occupational Health Manager, and the HCMO to help maintain a safe environment for all people who access the worksite. This includes participating with security personnel in threat assessment surveys, keeping management informed of the physical status of DSS worksites, and supporting budget requests with justification for security upgrades, when appropriate.

E2.2.4.8. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will, if requested, investigate instances of potential, attempted, or actual workplace violence or threats in collaboration with the HCMO and the DSS Security office.

E2.2.4.9. The Office of Public and Legislative Affairs will assist the WVPART in publicizing its efforts and will respond to news-media inquiries concerning incidents involving workplace violence.

E2.2.4.10. Field office representatives, serving at the direction of their directorate head or head of a headquarters staff element, will work with the DSS WVPART and will implement a field WVPART to prevent and respond to workplace violence in their region.

E2.3. DIRECTORATE HEADS AND HEADS OF HQ STAFF ELEMENTS. The Directorate Heads and Heads of HQ Staff Elements will:

E2.3.1. Appoint field office representatives to work with the WVPART and to establish supplemental WVPARTs in each region that meet the needs of their particular region in accordance with this Regulation.

E2.3.2. Ensure that employees and contract personnel attend annual awareness training recommended by the HCMO and WVPART to foster workplace violence prevention and public safety awareness. This annual training is mandatory.

E2.4. SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS. Supervisors and managers must:

E2.4.1. Continuously monitor the climate of the workplace, paying special attention to signs of a hostile work environment.

E2.4.2. Provide their employees with information concerning Federal, DoD, and DSS policies and regulations concerning workplace violence.

E2.4.3. Encourage employees to discuss concerns about working conditions that could possibly lead to an incident of workplace violence, such as a hostile work environment (e.g., during staff meetings, through an open-door policy, etc.)

E2.4.4. Inform employees of the counseling services available through the EAP, especially when they detect, or others report, that an employee appears to be having difficulty dealing with anger frustration, hostility, or other signs of potential violence problems. Supervisors should offer EAP assistance when there is a question concerning the employee's emotional/mental well-being.

E2.4.5. Promptly report all threats that are brought to their attention to their management chain, the HCMO, the DSS Security Office, and the HQ/Regional WVPART.

E2.4.6. When a violent situation or a situation with the potential for violence develops:

E2.4.6.1. That poses an immediate threat to safety or well-being and requires medical resources or police support, supervisors and managers should contact the Security Office and 911 emergency phone number immediately and not attempt to physically stop violent acts except as a last resort.

E2.4.6.2. Once the emergency phone number is called, the management official should contact a higher-level management official or a member of the WVPART, as appropriate, for further guidance or assistance.

E2.4.7. Promote workplace violence prevention programs within their offices through personal involvement and a commitment to training on workplace violence issues and policies.

E2.4.8. Take appropriate corrective/remedial action toward those who make threats, engage in any other forms of violence, or create a hostile work environment.

E2.4.9. Ensure that employees know specific procedures for dealing with workplace threats and emergencies, including how to contact police, fire, and other safety and security officials, and how to evacuate the premises safely. Supervisors must also confirm that employees with special needs are aware of emergency evacuation procedures and have assistance as necessary regarding emergencies.

E2.4.10. Follow procedures set forth in Enclosure 3.

E2.5. EMPLOYEES. Employees must:

E2.5.1. Comply with the workplace violence prevention and response policies as set forth in this Regulation, applicable laws, and DoD regulations.

E2.5.2. Refrain from making threats or engaging in workplace violence.

E2.5.3. Report all acts or threats of violence to their immediate supervisor, the HCMO, and the Security Office.

E2.5.4. Not attempt to intervene in violent acts **except as a last resort** and call the Security Office and 911 for assistance.

E2.5.5. Familiarize themselves with their office environments, notice changes in the behavior of coworkers, and report what they see and hear.

E2.5.6. Complete workplace violence prevention and response training annually, and as directed.

ENCLOSURE 3PROCEDURESE3.1. GENERAL

E3.1.1. The first-level supervisor has significant responsibility for monitoring and controlling the behavior of employees at work and for ensuring that the workplace is free of safety risks and hazards.

E3.1.2. It is important for supervisors and managers to be able to identify potentially problematic behavior and to act promptly and properly the behavior when exhibited.

E3.1.3. It is essential that the supervisors and managers set the tone for the workplace and ensure all employees are treated with dignity and respect. The golden rule of treating others as one would wish to be treated is a powerful tool in preventing incidents of dissatisfaction, frustration, and stress from escalating to a violent or potentially violent level.

E3.2. PREVENTION

E3.2.1. Open communication between supervisors and employees cannot be overemphasized. Through open communications, supervisors and managers can assist in reducing the risk of violence or unacceptable behavior.

E3.2.2. Supervisors must create an environment in which employees feel comfortable conveying concerns, problems and grievances, as well as reporting threats, coercion, intimidation, or potential violent activity through the supervisory chain.

E3.2.3. Early detection and intervention by the first-level supervisor is key to preventing workplace violence. Recognizing the early warning signs and intervening quickly to assist the employee are two key elements for preventing potentially violent employees from escalating to the action level (See Enclosure 4).

E3.2.4. The first-level supervisor plays a crucial role in understanding the early warning signs, recognizing them when they occur, and acting on that knowledge.

E3.3. HANDLING A WORKPLACE ALTERCATION. The most important action that a supervisor—or another coworker if the supervisor is not readily available—can take is to stop the disruption immediately, since the overriding concern is the safety of the staff.

E3.3.1. Intervene by asking the employee to stop the disruptive behavior. If the employee continues the disruptive behavior, request that any other employees who may be involved to

return to their respective work areas or, where appropriate, have them leave the immediate worksite and report to another location within the building.

E3.3.2. The supervisor may direct the disruptive employee to leave the premises and return home using administrative leave. In a serious situation, the supervisor must instruct the employee to go home using administrative leave and call the following business day for further instructions regarding returning to duty. The supervisor will contact the HCMO and the DSS Security Office for further guidance and options.

E3.3.3. Depending on the severity of the situation, the supervisor should contact the DSS Security Office who will assist in diffusing the situation, provide immediate correction actions that the supervisor should take, and notify the rest of the WVPART of the situation.

E3.3.4. Actions to take when someone displays acts of violence:

E3.3.4.1. Without a weapon:

E3.3.4.1.1. Stay calm and listen attentively.

E3.3.4.1.2. Maintain eye contact.

E3.3.4.1.3. Be courteous and patient.

E3.3.4.1.4. Make every effort to keep the situation under control.

E3.3.4.1.5. Signal someone that you need help and have them call for help, either the DSS Security Office, the building security guards, or local law enforcement.

E3.3.4.2. With a weapon:

E3.3.4.2.1. Stay calm and quietly signal for help.

E3.3.4.2.2. Maintain eye contact.

E3.3.4.2.3. Stall for time.

E3.3.4.2.4. Keep talking and follow instruction from the person who has the weapon.

E3.3.4.2.5. Do not risk harm to yourself or others.

E3.3.4.2.6. Never try to grab the weapon.

E3.3.4.2.7. Watch for a safe chance to escape to a safe area.

ENCLOSURE 4DSS GUIDE – WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSEE4.1. GENERAL

E4.1.1. The prevention and management of workplace violence is among the most important factors in providing a healthy, cooperative, and safe workplace where management can maintain a high level of productivity. Such incidences involving workplace violence, bodily injury, death, suicide, and physical or emotional threats are cause for concern and have a negative impact on the workplace environment. With proper training, supervisors can often recognize the signs that are characteristic of those who perpetrate violence and hostility in the workplace, and recognize indicators of other potentially harmful incidents. By recognizing signs, the management official can take action that will reduce the probability that a violent incident will occur.

E4.1.2. Each incident of workplace violence has its own cause. Often it is because employees are frustrated, anxious, impatient, angry, mentally disturbed, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs. These people often lash out at the nearest target and often that means those in the workplace. Although reasons for workplace violence are numerous, some are noteworthy:

E4.1.2.1. Understaffing, which forces people to work beyond normal limits, thus precipitating stressful situations.

E4.1.2.2. Lack of training for supervisors and employees in recognizing and defusing potentially violent situations.

E4.1.2.3. Failure to design safe workplaces and emergency procedures.

E4.1.2.4. Failure to identify hazardous conditions and develop proper controls, policies, and education programs.

E4.1.2.5. Failure on the part of all personnel to report incidences or potential incidences of violence or threats.

E4.2. TYPES OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE. There are different types of workplace violence, depending on the relationship between the employee and the person committing the violence:

E4.2.1. Stranger on Employee. Violence is committed by a stranger. There is no known relationship to the employee or workplace. The stranger may enter the workplace to commit a violent act or may act outside the “traditional” workplace while the employee is in the course of his or her job.

E4.2.2. Customer on Employee. Violence is committed by someone who receives a service, such as a current or former employee, customer, or client. The violence can be committed in the

workplace or outside the workplace, but while the employee is performing a job related function (e.g., an employee performing an assessment in the field).

E4.2.3. Partner on Employee. Violence is committed by someone who has a personal relationship with an employee, such as a current or former spouse or partner, a relative, or a friend. This would include the attacker who has a personal dispute with an employee and enters into or around the workplace to harass, threaten, injure, or kill.

E4.2.4. Employee on Employee. Violence is committed in or outside the workplace by a current or former employee, a prospective employee, or a current or former supervisor or manager.

E4.3. EARLY WARNING SIGNS. Numerous signals can warn that someone has the potential for violence. Listed below are some of the early warning signals that can help alert management and employees to possible problems.

E4.3.1. History. Any history of violent behavior before or after employment with the current employer. An escalating propensity to push the limits of normal conduct, with a disregard for the safety of coworkers. Where there has been a failure to take consistent disciplinary measures against threats of violence or minor incidents of violence, such as pushing or touching that may or may not be associated with a sexual harassment complaint(s).

E4.3.2. Verbal Threats. Making repeated direct or veiled verbal threats of harm, such as predicting that bad things are going to happen to management officials or coworkers; constantly swearing or using otherwise abusive language directed at others.

E4.3.3. Intimidating Behavior. Inappropriate, repeated boundary crossing including excessive phone calls, emails, messages, memorandums, office appearances; gift giving; angry confrontations (easily provoked, impulsive, unpredictable); displaying restless and/or agitated behavior; belligerence towards customers or coworkers. Intimidating others or instilling fear in coworkers (this can be physical or verbal intimidation). Harassing phone calls and stalking are obvious examples.

E4.3.4. Bizarre Thoughts or Paranoid Behavior. Being paranoid, panicking easily, and often perceiving that the whole world is against him or her. Developed fantasies with self-centered outcomes; irrational violent associations or thoughts; secretive behavior; and emotional mood swings. Fascination with other recent incidents of workplace violence and approval of the use of violence under similar circumstances.

E4.3.5. Obsessions. An extreme interest in or obsession with weapons, such as paramilitary training, weapons collections (often including semi-automatic weapons). An obsession with hurting a specific person or group of people; an unrequited or excessively intense romantic attachment to someone (generally not a sexual attachment). Especially if these behaviors start spontaneously or are out of character for the person.

E4.3.6. Extreme Job Involvement. Having an unusual or extreme involvement with the job often with no apparent outside interests; usually, outside relationships fail or are strained. The workplace becomes the person's sole source of identity. This characteristic however, may apply to many of the best workers, including those who would never commit a violent act.

E4.3.7. Recent Marked Performance Decline. Attendance problems or absences from work assignments; decreased productivity and inconsistent work patterns; concentration problems; increased accident involvement; poor health and hygiene; and continual excuses or blame, displaying an inability to accept responsibility for even small errors.

E4.3.8. Serious Stress in the Employee's Personnel Life. Financial problems and/or bill collectors; crying; excessive personal phone calls, and losses (i.e., job, marriage, love one).

E4.3.9. Serious Stress in the Workplace. Workplace events generating great stress such as furloughs, terminations, or unwanted reassignment or relocation, poor performance evaluation, being passed over for promotion. Does not take criticism well, holds a grudge, especially against a management official, and will often verbalize a hope for something to happen to the person against whom he or she has a grudge.

E4.3.10. Substance Abuse. Most drugs interfere dramatically with reasoning ability, social inhibitions, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong. Alcohol and certain drugs may agitate, create paranoia, and cause aggressive behavior.

E4.3.11. Loner. Being a loner with little involvement with coworkers, with the possible exception of a romantic interest in a co-worker. This interest will often be so intense that the co-worker will feel threatened and may report the unwanted attention under the sexual harassment policy.

E4.4. LEVELS OF VIOLENCE. The following levels of violence will assist supervisors and managers in assessing the risk factors for violent behavior (Reference (f)):

E4.4.1. Level I

E4.4.1.1. Implied (veiled) threats.

E4.4.1.2. Verbal or mental abuse.

E4.4.1.3. Harassment or badgering.

E4.4.1.4. Inappropriate tones (threatening) or gestures (menacing).

E4.4.2. Level II

E4.4.2.1. Threatening gestures.

E4.4.2.2. Specific (overt) written or verbal threats.

E4.4.2.3. Mishandling or abuse of property.

E4.4.2.4. Stalking.

E4.4.3. Level III

E4.4.3.1. “Scuffles” (physical contact).

E4.4.3.2. Assault – physical, sexual, armed.

E4.4.3.3. Destruction.

E4.4.3.4. A presently occurring loss-of control event creating fear of imminent harm.

E4.4.3.5. Unauthorized possession of firearms or other weapons on government premises.

E4.5. NEXT STEPS. After careful consideration of the applicable early warning signs, such as those in paragraph E4.3., and the levels of violence in paragraphs E4.4., a supervisor or manager should determine if an incident of workplace violence has occurred, or is reasonably likely to occur. The supervisor should contact the WVPART for guidance regarding appropriate actions to take.

E4.6. WHAT ABOUT DSS? There is a tendency to think that military installations or Federally owned or leased properties are protected environments and are immune to the problems seen in the private sector. It is important to remember that Federal and contract employees, and military personnel represent a cross-section of our society in general and many of the problems of society are likely to surface within the DSS environment as well.

## GLOSSARY

### PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DSS	Defense Security Service
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
HCMO	Human Capital Management Office
HQ	Headquarters
OGC	Office of General Counsel
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
WVPART	Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Team

### PART II. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise stated, the following terms and their definitions apply to this Regulation.

hostile work environment. The perception or description of a workplace or work setting where one or more persons attribute feelings of anxiety, hostility, or bias, affecting their ability to effectively perform their job or work tasks. These actions or behaviors can be attributed to management officials, coworkers, or customers.

workplace violence. Any act of physical violence against persons or property, physical or verbal threats, intimidation, harassment, or other inappropriate, disruptive behavior that causes fear for personal safety or the safety of another at or outside the work site.