

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

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Policy:

It is the policy of Riverside County (County) that there are strict and severe consequences for all threats and violent behavior by County employees in the workplace or in connection with their employment by the County. Zero-tolerance means that any acts of violence by County employees that result in a violation of this policy will not be tolerated and shall result in strict and severe disciplinary action, which may include termination. To ensure healthy and safe workplaces and to reduce the risk of violence, all employees should review and understand all provisions of this policy. This policy includes and covers threats and violent behavior, direct, indirect, implied or actual, from any person, and directed toward any person, occurring at any County facility or in connection with the conduct of County business without regard to location.

PURPOSE: To implement a County wide zero-tolerance standard with regard to threats and violent behavior in the workplace.

- OBJECTIVE:**
1. To assure that all workplace threats and violent behavior are identified, addressed, and corrected promptly.
 2. To ensure the level of physical/facility security in Riverside County workplaces is reasonable and sufficient to protect the health and safety of County employees.
 3. To ensure that the County of Riverside is in complete conformity with all statutory and regulatory requirements related to the prevention of workplace violence, including those required under the Labor Code and Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations.
 4. To ensure review and evaluation of conduct prohibited under this policy and that all disciplinary action is administered appropriately, without bias or discrimination, throughout the County.

SCOPE: All county employees.

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The California Occupational Safety and Health Act (Cal/OSHA) requires all employers to develop an Injury, Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) for hazards unique to their place of employment. Additionally, the Labor Code requires certain departments to adopt, implement, and maintain a Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (WVPP), which may be part of the IIPP. The County IIPP includes a WVPP that provides a framework for all County agencies, departments, and special district programs for preventing assaults – specifically, one of the hazards of work in health

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care and community service, and perhaps the community as a whole. This includes, but is not limited to: procedures for identifying and evaluating workplace violence hazards, responding to and investigating workplace violence hazards, responding to and investigating reports of workplace violence, and responding to workplace violence emergencies.

Workplace violence can be categorized by the type: Type I, II, III, or IV.

Type I violence means violence by an assailant who has no legitimate relationship to the workplace and usually enters the workplace to commit a robbery or other criminal act.

Type II violence means violence directed at an employee by a customer, client, patient, student, inmate, or visitor.

Type III violence means violence by an individual who has some present or prior employment-related involvement with a specific workplace. A Type III incident typically involves a threat or physical action against an employee, supervisor, or management. Perpetrators of Type III incidents are customarily found to be current or former employees.

Type IV violence means violence committed by an individual who does not work at the workplace but has a personal relationship with an employee.

It is important to keep in mind that a particular occupation or workplace may be subject to more than one type of workplace violence. One type of workplace violence is no more serious or important than another.

II. ZERO TOLERANCE STANDARD

The County of Riverside does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against an employee. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in an act of workplace violence. The list of zero tolerance behaviors with regard to threats and/or violence shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Engaging or allowing engagement in threats or violent conduct or, implied, actual, direct, or indirect, or causing actual physical injury to another person at a County workplace or in connection with the conduct of County business.
2. Any aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress.
3. Intentionally damaging County property or the personal property of another individual.

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4. Being in possession of an offensive or defensive weapon (firearm, club, knife with a blade four inches or longer, etc.) unless specifically required or authorized in the course of employment, at any County facility or in connection with the conduct of County business without regard to location.
5. Committing acts motivated by, or related to any protected classes as defined by the California Civil Rights Department

In instances of the above, any potentially dangerous situation must be reported immediately to a supervisor and the Human Resources Department – Safety Loss Control Division, at 24-hour telephone number (951) 955-3520, and to local law enforcement if necessary.

Reports can be made directly, or anonymously, through existing County policies and procedures, including Policy C-25, and the County will investigate all reported incidents. The County will intervene at any indication of a threat or possible act of workplace violence.

Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. All parties involved in a situation may be counseled and results of the investigation may be discussed with them.

The supervisor to whom an incident is reported shall consider the potential need for providing security for the individual who was victimized or threatened as well as for co-workers, and the public at the worksite. Further the supervisor shall engage in the following conduct:

- a. As determined by Human Resources, immediately placing an employee alleged to have made threats or engaged in violent behavior on paid leave pending the outcome of an investigation.
- b. Ensure that any threatening or violent person, employee or member of the public physically leaves the work site; except for incarcerated (jail) inmates, juvenile wards and mental health patients.
- c. Immediately contact an appropriate law enforcement agency if necessary to ensure removal of the offender from the scene and/or if the reported condition poses an imminent danger or threat to life and safety; and
- d. Ensure that an employee who has been the victim of a job-related threat or violence occurring away from County work site(s) does not visit or revisit the worksite until an investigation has been concluded and/or the threat has been resolved.

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Enforcement:

- a. Threats, threatening conduct, or any other acts of aggression or violence in the workplace will not be tolerated. Any employee determined to have committed such acts will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Non-employees engaged in violent acts on County premises will be reported to the proper authorities.
- b. All reports of threats and workplace violence, implied, actual, direct, or indirect, will be documented and investigated. Such records shall include information required under the Labor Code, including but not limited to a narrative of the incident including names and other appropriate identification of the parties involved, verbal comments made or a description of the violent behavior, witness names, and witness statements.
- c. For incarcerated (jail) inmates, juvenile wards, and mental health patient's facilities, the following procedures should be followed by the department:
 - Ascertain the behavior history of new and transferred individuals to learn about any past violent behaviors.
 - Establish a system such as chart tags, logbooks, or verbal census reports to identify individuals with a history of violence, keeping in mind confidentiality and worker safety issues. The log book/records are to be made available upon request by Human Resources Safety Loss Control Division and/or Human Resources Employee Relations Division.
 - Prepare contingency plans to treat individuals who are acting out or making threats or engaging in workplace violence.
 - Report any threats or workplace violence to the Safety Loss Control Division and then follow up with a written report.
- d. County employees who engage in threats or workplace violence, direct, indirect, implied or actual, against co-workers or any other person in connection with County business, are to be subject to legal action by law enforcement authorities and disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

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- e. Managers and supervisors who fail to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with this policy and procedure are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- f. Being in possession of an offensive or defensive weapon (firearm, club, knife with a blade four inches or longer, etc.) is prohibited unless specifically required or authorized in the course of employment, at any County facility or in connection with the conduct of County business without regard to location.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Safety Loss Control Division will:

- 1. Provide guidance to the department in developing the written Injury/Illness Prevention Program, including a WVPP, where applicable.
- 2. Coordinate workplace violence prevention needs with agencies/departments by providing appropriate professional and technical resources.
- 3. Recommend engineering and work practice controls as needed.
- 4. Ensure effective employee training programs.
- 5. Provide annual training to employees, as required by law.
- 6. Conduct regular inspections of County workplaces, including but not limited to those owned or leased by the County in order to identify, evaluate, and correct any workplace violence hazards that may exist.

B. Sheriff's Office will:

- 1. Coordinate workplace violence program needs with agencies/departments by providing appropriate professional resources, technical resources, and investigative assistance when necessary.
- 2. Maintain compliance with the Police Officer Bill of Rights; the Sheriff's Office shall investigate complaints against Sheriff's Office employees and shall maintain the corresponding administrative reports.

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3. Coordinate and assist in the direction and planning of an effective Injury/Illness Prevention Program for workplace violence for the county on an agency/department-wide basis.
 4. Coordinate workplace violence program needs with agencies/departments by providing appropriate professional resources, technical resources, and investigative assistance when necessary.
 5. Recommend engineering and administrative controls as needed.
 6. Coordinate and ensure quality and timeliness of training programs.
- C. Human Resources will:
1. Provide assistance and guidance to agency/department managers and supervisors in the preliminary investigation of threats and acts of workplace violence.
 2. Provide advice and direction as to immediate action to be taken with an employee alleged to have made a threat or engaged in workplace violence, including a determination by the Human Resources Director or designee, whether administrative leave is appropriate in the circumstances and whether law enforcement authorities should be notified of the threat or act of workplace violence.
 3. Assess and evaluate the threat or act of workplace violence in consultation with agency/department head or designee in order to determine whether disciplinary action and/or Paid Administrative Leave may be appropriate.
 4. At its discretion, initiate a threat assessment team in order to assess and evaluate the circumstances of the threat or act of workplace violence and any investigation findings.
 5. Pursuant to Policy C-23, in instances involving threats and/or violence final discipline shall be imposed as identified by Human Resources.
 6. Prior to hiring, take reasonable measures to conduct background investigations in order to review a candidate's background and reduce the risk of hiring an individual with a history of making threats or engaging in acts of violence.

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D. Agency/district/department heads must:

1. Ensure this policy is fully implemented in all work locations within their area of responsibility.
2. Ensure that managers and supervisors are fully informed of the zero-tolerance standard.
3. Ensure that the threat or act of workplace violence is recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
4. Ensure that all managers and supervisors attend the Human Resources/Safety Office Workplace Violence Training Program upon hire.
5. Ensure that all employees are trained as required under the law.
6. Ensure that all threats and acts of workplace violence direct, indirect, actual or implied, are reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies, Human Resources Employee Relations and the Safety Loss Control Division.
7. Ensure investigation materials are sent to Employee Relations and Safety Loss Control Division for review. Consistent with Policy C-23, Human Resources shall impose final discipline in instances involving the use of threats and/or violence.
8. Ensure that all work sites and work practices within the agency/district/department areas of responsibility are reviewed for the purpose of providing employee security and protection from the potential of reasonably foreseeable violent action.
9. Implement appropriate discipline as recommended by Human Resources.
10. Implement an effective safety and security program, which places employee safety and health on the same level of importance as patient/client/customer safety.
11. Ensure the County's commitment to security for all employees and that every effort is made to prevent the occurrence of threats and acts of workplace violence.
12. Implement and maintain an effective written IIPP, including a WVPP, as necessary to comply with legal requirements.

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E. Manager/supervisor must:

1. Report all incidents of threats and acts of workplace violence, persons with weapons and other cases when deemed necessary to the local law enforcement agency.
2. Take steps immediately available to provide safety to the victim and others.
3. Report all threats and acts of workplace violence immediately to management, Human Resources, and Safety Loss Control Division.
4. Be knowledgeable about the County's Board Policy requirements and expectation of a zero-tolerance standard for incidents of workplace violence.
5. Ensure that all employees attend the Human Resources/Safety Loss Control Division Workplace Violence Training Program.
6. Use resources and programs available within the County and the Safety Loss Control Division to address Workplace Violence Concerns.
7. **Immediately** refer the matter to Employee Relations division at (951) 955-3510 and Safety Loss Control Division at (951) 955- 3520 for investigation.
8. Ensure that all reports of threats and violent behavior, direct, indirect, actual or implied, are fully and formally investigated by assisting the Safety Loss Control Division and/or Human Resources staff.
9. Implement and maintain an effective written IIPP, including a WVPP, as necessary to comply with the law.

F. Employees must:

1. Not make threats, either real or those that may be perceived as real, or engage in violent behavior in connection with or during the course of Riverside County employment.
2. Immediately report all incidents of threats or violent behavior to supervisors or immediately contact law enforcement authorities, as appropriate. It is strongly recommended that employees complete an Incident Report as soon as possible and submit to their Supervisor or Safety Loss Control Division.

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3. Immediately disengage and contact the supervisor upon any instance of overt violence or threatening behavior.

Note: Employees are not expected to be skilled at identifying potential workplace violence hazards, including but not limited to potentially dangerous persons. However, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform Human Resources/Safety Loss Control Division if any person, including but not limited to an employee, exhibits behavior which could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. If an employee has any questions about a situation, please contact the Safety Loss Control Division at (951) 955-3520. Such behavior may include, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- Discussing weapons or bringing weapons to the workplace;
 - Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger;
 - Making threats or threatening remarks;
 - Sudden or significant deterioration of performance; or,
 - Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior.
- G. No individual department, agency or district policy or plan shall be promulgated to supersede, interpret or administer this policy other than operational rules developed by the Human Resources Department, and as mandated by Section II, Enforcement, of this policy.

IV. SECURITY HAZARD ASSESSMENT & IDENTIFICATION

Worksite analysis should be done by using a systematic method to identify those areas requiring an assessment of hazards related to potential workplace violence. This analysis should accomplish the following:

1. Preparing a list of those work positions in which employees are at risk of threats or acts of workplace violence.
2. Identifying risk factors that include elements, such as physical risk factors of the buildings, isolated locations, job assignment locations, high risk activities and situations, inadequate lighting and areas where security is or may be deficient.
3. Determining if risk factors have been reduced or eliminated to the extent feasible.
4. Analyzing all newly modified or planned facilities to ensure that hazards identified and then are reduced or eliminated; and

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5. Conducting periodic surveys whenever there is a change in operational functions in order to identify and assess new or previously unidentified hazards in security applications or practices. Surveys must be conducted at least annually.

Analysis of this information will be accomplished by Human Resources/Safety Loss Control Division and should be incorporated into a plan of corrective action for current and continuous hazard prevention and control.

Hazard assessments for workplace security will be performed in the form of periodic inspections. These inspections will consist of identification and evaluation of workplace security hazards and changes in employee work practices. Inspections to identify and evaluate workplace security hazards should be performed by the employee designated to perform inspections as outlined in the agency/district/department's IIPP.

Additional items to consider when assessing workplace security hazards include, but are not limited to the following:

- Access to and freedom of movement within the workplace by non-employees, including recently discharged employees or persons with whom an employee is or may be having a dispute.
- Adequacy of workplace security systems, such as door locks, security windows, physical barriers, and restraint systems.
- Frequency and severity of threatening or hostile situations that may lead to violent acts by persons who are service recipients of the department.
- Effectiveness of systems to warn others of a security danger or to summon assistance (e.g., alarms or panic buttons).
- The use of work practices such as "buddy" systems for specified emergency events.

V. GUIDELINES FOR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Any response to an act of workplace violence, which has resulted in injury or death, should be limited in scope. The individual on scene who observes the incident should limit activities to the following:

- Dial **911**. If using an inter-County phone system, Dial **9-911**.
- Render comfort and minor first aid to any injured victims.
- Immediately notify the following:
 - Human Resources Employee Relations – (951) 955-3510
 - Safety Loss Control Division - 955-3520

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- Agency/district/department safety representative:

The first management personnel responding to the incident must immediately ensure that the above actions have been initiated. Upon completion, management personnel should perform the actions outlined in Section VI., Incident Investigations.

VI. INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

Incident investigation may be conducted by Human Resources, including Safety Loss Control, or law enforcement, depending on the severity and nature of the threat and/or violence. Procedures for investigating threats and acts of workplace violence include the following:

1. Visiting the scene of an incident as soon as safe and practicable;
2. Collection of facts on who, what, when, where, and how the incident occurred;
3. Collection of statements from involved parties, such as employees, witnesses, law enforcement, and/or security personnel;
4. Accessing and reviewing security footage of existing security cameras if applicable;
5. Collection of photographic or video evidence of damage or injuries, where appropriate;
6. Examining the workplace for security risk factors associated with the incident, including any previous reports of inappropriate behavior by the perpetrator;
7. Consultation with the affected employees or witnesses to identify potential contributing causes;
8. Obtaining any reports completed by law enforcement;
9. Assessment of any Threat of Violence, identifying the following, as applicable and to the extent the information is known by the department:
 - a. The exact nature and context of the threat and/or threatening behavior;
 - b. The identified target;
 - c. The person's apparent motivation;
 - d. The person's ability to carry out the threat; and

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- e. The person’s background, including work history, criminal record, mental health history, and past behavior on the job.

Following an investigation, in conjunction with Human Resources, the department may take the following measures, as applicable:

- a. Notify the affected employees of the general results of the investigation, while protecting the privacy of affected and/or involved employees.
- b. Collaborate with the Safety Loss Control Division and Employee Relations on recommended corrective action.
- c. Implement changes in engineering controls, procedures, or policies, if appropriate; and/or
- d. Establish updated work practice controls, if necessary.

VII. TRAINING

Employee Workplace Violence and Violence in the Workplace for Managers (General Training)

Training and instruction on general and job-specific workplace security practices shall be provided to all new employees, other employees that have not previously been trained, and to all employees given new job assignments for which specific workplace security training for that job assignment has not previously been provided. This training will include training on the County’s IIPP and WVPP. Additionally, managers and supervisors will be required to complete a specialized version of this training for Violence in the Workplace.

Occupational Safety and Workplace Violence Prevention Plan SB 553 (Annual Training)

In addition to the training set forth above, California law requires an annual workplace violence prevention training. Annual training will be provided by the Safety Loss Control Division specific to the WVPP as required by law and will include the following: (1) an overview of the WVPP and how to obtain a copy, (2) the applicable definitions and requirements related to workplace violence, (3) how to report threats and acts of workplace violence, (4) workplace violence hazards, (5) how to seek assistance to prevent or respond to threats and acts of workplace violence, (6) strategies to avoid physical harm, (7) the violent incident log, and (8) an opportunity to ask questions about workplace violence prevention.

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Records shall be kept of the following:

VIII. RECORD KEEPING

Record keeping is required by law and providing information for analysis, evaluation of methods control, severity determinations, identifying training needs or overall program evaluations.

- Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) logs. DOSH regulations require entry on the Injury Illness Log of any injury, which requires more than first aid, is a lost time injury, requires modified duty, or causes loss of consciousness. Assaults should be entered on the log. Doctor's reports of work injury and supervisor's reports shall be kept of each recorded assault.
- Threats and acts of workplace violence. Such records must be recorded in the Workplace Violence Incident Log, which the Safety Loss Control Division will maintain for a minimum of 5 years.
- Workplace violence incident investigations. Such records will be maintained for a minimum of 5 years.
- Workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation, and correction. Such records will be maintained for a minimum of 5 years.

- Training records, including the following information: training dates, contents or a summary of the training sessions, name and qualifications of person conducting the training, and names and job titles of all persons attending the training sessions. Such records will be maintained for a period of three (3) years.

IX. HAZARD REDUCTION AND CONTROL

In order to reduce, eliminate, and control hazards, engineering, and work practice controls for all job assignments and facility locations must be implemented.

1. Engineering controls for facilities, include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Bright and effective lighting systems for all indoor building areas as well as grounds and parking areas.
 - b. Curved mirrors at intersections of halls or in areas where an individual may conceal their presence or activity.

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c. Limiting employees from working alone in an isolated unit or facility located in a high crime area.

d. Provision of fixed and mobile alarm system trigger devices, in facilities that are prone to threats or acts of workplace violence.

In order to minimize the risk of workplace violence cellular phones may be provided for official use when employees are assigned to duties which take them out into the community, including but not limited to private residences.

Hand-held alarm or noise devices or other effective alarm devices may also be provided to field personnel.

Beeper or alarm systems, which alert a central office of problems, may also be provided to field personnel.

Other protective devices, such as pepper spray, may also be provided after the agency/department first adopts a use of force policy and training program.

2. Work Practice Controls:

A sound overall program to deter and control violence includes work practice controls that reduce workplace violence hazards due to insufficient security measures. Work practice controls include but are not limited to the following:

- a. A plan to deal effectively with a customer/client who behaves in an aggressive manner, which includes a gradual progression of measures for employees to deter aggressive behavior from escalating to assaults.
- b. Any uniformed security personnel should be trained in the principles of human behavior and methods of dealing with threats, verbal abuse, or violent aggression.
- c. Employees must understand and be encouraged to report all threats and acts of workplace violence. All such incidents must be recorded, and appropriate action taken.
- d. Psychiatric clients/patients should be escorted to and from waiting rooms and not permitted to move about unsupervised in clinic areas. Access to clinic facilities other than waiting rooms should be strictly controlled with security provisions in effect.

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- e. Staff members should be given the greatest possible assistance in obtaining information to evaluate the history of or potential for, violent behavior of in-patients and/or clients. They should be required to treat and/or interview aggressive or agitated clients in open areas where other staff may observe interactions, but still maintain privacy and confidentiality.

- f. Assistance and advice should be sought in case management conferences with co-workers and supervisors to aid in identifying treatment of potentially violent clients. Whenever an agitated client or visitor is encountered, treatment or intervention should be provided, when possible, to diffuse the situation. However, security personnel or other assistance should be requested to help in avoiding violence.

- g. No employee should be permitted to work or stay in a facility or isolated unit when they are the only staff member present in the facility, if the location is so isolated that they are unable to obtain assistance if needed, or in the evening or at night if the clinic or office is closed.

- h. Employees must report all incidents of aggressive behavior threats, workplace violence, etc., with or without injury, and logs must be maintained recording all such incidents.

- i. Records, logs, or flagging charts must be updated whenever information is obtained regarding previous criminal behavior, threat, or act of workplace violence.

- j. Administrators should work with local police or sheriff's office to establish liaison and response mechanisms for police assistance when calls are made for help by a clinic. Likewise, this will also facilitate the clinic or offices provision of assistance to local police in handling emergency cases.

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Reference:

Minute Order 3.11 of 03/07/00

Attachments: Form 2010-1 "Workplace Threat Incident Report"

Form 2010-16 "Employee Training Documentation" Acknowledgement of
County of Riverside Workplace Violence and Threats

Minute Order 3.21 of 02/07/17

APPENDIX A

WORKPLACE THREAT INCIDENT REPORT
AGAINST COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE EMPLOYEE

1. Name of Individual threatening County employee: _____
2. Relationship to County: _____
3. Physical description: Hair _____ Eyes _____ Height _____
Weight _____ Ethnicity _____
Distinguishing characteristics _____

4. (attach picture if possible)
Circumstances of threat: _____

Location of threat: _____
6. Date: _____ Time: _____
7. Exact words of threat: _____

8. Threatened County employee's name: _____
9. Department: _____
10. Work address: _____
11. Work telephone: _____ Home Telephone: _____
12. Additional Comments: _____

13. Supervisor: _____ Work Phone: _____

I certify under penalty of perjury the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Threatened County Employee Signature Date

Supervisor's Signature Date

**APPENDIX B
EMPLOYEE TRAINING DOCUMENTATION**

INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEE TRAINING DOCUMENTATION

NAME _____ **OF** _____ **TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR** _____

TRAINING SUBJECT: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

TRAINING MATERIALS USED: _____

NAME _____ **OF** _____ **EMPLOYEE:** _____

_____ **DEPARTMENT:** _____

_____ **DATE OF HIRE/ASSIGNMENT:** _____

I, hereby certify that I received training as described in the following areas:

- Explanation of the Illness/Injury Prevention Program for workplace security including measures for reporting any violent acts or threats of violence.
- Recognition of workplace security hazards including the risk factors associated with the Type II and Type III of workplace violence.
- Measures to prevent workplace violence, including procedures for reporting workplace security hazards or threats to managers and supervisors.
- Measures to summon others for assistance.
- Employee routes of escape.
- Notification of law enforcement authorities when a criminal act may have occurred.
- Post-event trauma counseling for those employees desiring such assistance.

I fully understand this training, agree to comply with the instructions received, and with the Workplace Violence Policy.

Employee Signature

Date

Trainer/Instructor Signature

Date

**APPENDIX C
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND THREATS**

I have received a copy of and am fully aware of the County of Riverside's Workplace Violence, Threats and Securities Policy; and I agree to abide by the terms of this policy. I also agree to remain apprised of future revisions to this policy and to abide by the terms of all such revisions.

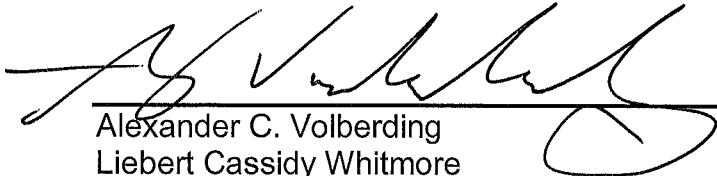
Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

This form shall be retained in department files.

Reviewed and approved as to form:

 5-15-2021

Alexander C. Volberding
Liebert Cassidy Whitmore