Baptist Health South Florida

POLICY NO.: BHSF-5100
TYPE: Administrative

POLICY TITLE: Preventing Workplace Violence

Responsible Department: Human Resources

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SUMMARY & PURPOSE:
Baptist Health is strongly committed to providing a safe workplace and safe environment for employees, medical staff members, volunteers, contractors, vendors, patients, patient's families and all visitors to Baptist Health facilities. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the risk of personal injury to employees, medical staff members, volunteers, contractors, vendors, patients, patient's families and all visitors to Baptist Health facilities, and to minimize the damage to the Baptist Health's property

POLICY:
A work environment that is safe and free from violence is essential for all employees. Baptist Health has zero tolerance of violent or threatening conduct in the workplace. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward any employee, medical staff member, volunteer, contractor, vendor, patient, patient's family and/or visitor to Baptist Health facilities will not be tolerated. For purposes of this policy, a threat includes any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, attempts at intimidating or instilling fear in others, menacing gestures, flashing of weapons, stalking, or any other hostile, aggressive, injurious and/or destructive actions undertaken for the purpose of domination or intimidation. These behaviors will not be tolerated and may result in the immediate discharge of the employee engaging in violent or threatening conduct in the workplace without prior corrective disciplinary steps.

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

- Possession of a weapon while on Baptist Health premises, in a company vehicle, or while carrying out company business is strictly prohibited, except for those authorized for the performance of their job duties and lawfully permitted firearms which are kept at all times in the owner's locked vehicle. This applies to all weapons, including firearms or any instrument that is intended to be used as a weapon.
- Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward any employee, medical staff member, volunteer, contractor, vendor, patient, patient's family and/or visitor to Baptist Health facilities will not be tolerated.
    - For purposes of this policy, a threatening behavior includes:
        - Any verbal or physical harassment or abuse

- Attempts at intimidating or instilling fear in others
- Menacing gestures
- Flashing of weapons
- Stalking
- Any other hostile, aggressive, injurious and/or destructive actions undertaken for the purpose of domination or intimidation or inflicting physical or emotional distress.

- Intentionally damaging Baptist Health property, or the property of another employee, medical staff member, volunteer, contractor, vendor, patient, patient's family and/or visitor to Baptist Health facilities for the purpose of instilling fear or emotional distress.
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Zero-Tolerance for Domestic Violence:
Acts of domestic violence on Baptist Health premises will not be tolerated and may result in the immediate discharge of the employee without prior corrective disciplinary steps. Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of coercive behavior used by one person to control another including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional and psychological violence and abuse; threats; intimidation; verbal abuse; economic control; and stalking.

SCOPE/APPLICABILITY:
This policy applies to all Baptist Health employees. In addition, Baptist Health reserves the right to remove from its premises any individual who engages in any act of aggression or violence.

PROCEDURES TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE:
1. Recognizing Indicators of Risk of Violence in the Workplace:
   Baptist Health does not expect its employees, medical staff members, contractors or vendors to become experts in psychology or to physically subdue a threatening or violent individual. Indeed, Baptist Health specifically discourages anyone from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual. However, Baptist Health does expect and encourage its employees to exercise reasonable judgment in identifying potentially dangerous situations. Experts in the mental health profession state that prior to any actual physical act of violence there are behaviors or signs that may be exhibited by potentially violent individuals including:
   a. Overt resentment, anger and hostility
   b. bullying
   c. extreme stress or agitation
   d. making ominous threats such as bad things will happen to a particular person, or a catastrophic event will befall someone
   e. a sudden and significant decline in work performance
   f. discipline in the recent past for behavior-related incidents
   g. irresponsible, irrational, intimidating, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behavior
   h. reacting to questions with an antagonistic or overtly negative attitude; challenging authority
   i. discussing weapons and their use, and/or brandishing weapons in the workplace
   j. overreacting or reacting harshly to changes in the Employer's policies and procedures
   k. personality conflicts with co-workers
   l. obsession or preoccupation with a co-worker or supervisor, or unwanted romantic attention toward co-worker
   m. attempts to sabotage the work or equipment of a co-worker
   n. blaming others for mistakes and failures
   o. being upset over recent work or personal events, such as marriage, relationships, financial problems and health problems
   p. withdrawal from normal activities, friends and co-workers
   q. acting suspicious or paranoid, holding grudges or having bizarre thoughts

r. substance abuse
s. stalking
t. threats of harm to self
u. isolation, being a "loner"
v. acting morally superior or self-righteous
w. feeling wronged, humiliated or degraded
x. feeling without options or choices except violence
y. confusion
z. frustration
aa. blame
bb. anger
and/or
cc. physically acting out

2. Dealing with Threatening Individuals:
   a. It is important to exercise reasonable judgment when faced with a potentially violent or dangerous individual or situation. When confronted by a person exhibiting threatening behavior, stay calm, be courteous and maintain your distance. Employees should not try to physically confront or subdue a threatening or violent individual. Employees should take steps to make themselves as safe as possible under the circumstances, and assist others to safety, if possible, without placing themselves in danger.
   b. Any employee who reasonably believes that he/she or any individual on Baptist Health premises is in immediate and/or imminent danger of bodily harm, he/she must immediately follow the Baptist Health site's Security emergency plan by calling Security at #7777, for hospital based employees, or call the Police Department at 911, for non-hospital based employees. Baptist Health security codes are located on all Baptist Health "badge buddies."
   c. All potentially dangerous situations should immediately be reported to an employee's leader. In the absence of the leader, Security and Human Resources should be immediately contacted.
3. Actions taken as a result of Workplace Violence:
   a. All acts of threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward any employee, medical staff member, volunteer, contractor, vendor, patient, patient's family and/or visitor to Baptist Health facilities must be reported to leadership, Security and Human Resources.
   b. Crimes reported to Security pursuant to this policy will be referred to local authorities. Victims of a crime on Baptist Health premises will be referred to local authorities to report the incident and may request the assistance of Security or Human Resources in order to initiate this process. Baptist Health will cooperate with local authorities in the investigation of the crime.
   c. Representatives from Human Resources and Security will jointly investigate activity reported under the terms of this policy involving employees of Baptist Health. Failure of any employee to cooperate with any investigation or inquiry conducted by Baptist Health may result corrective action, up to and including termination.
   d. If an investigation confirms that an individual(s) has engaged in prohibited conduct, immediate disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination of employment.
4. Baptist Health prohibits retaliation against employees who in good faith report real or perceived acts or threats of violence.
5. Knowingly making false or malicious claims of prohibited conduct against another employee may subject the employee to corrective disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Note: Security is responsible for reporting property crimes committed against Baptist Health to the appropriate police department.

SUPPORTING/REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION:
N/A

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ASSOCIATED FORMS:

- BHSF Administrative Policies – Human Resources
  - 3390 Domestic Violence Leave of Absence
  - 5075 Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination (formerly Dignity and Respect)
  - 5250 Employee Conduct
  - 5300 Corrective Action
  - 5600 Termination of Employment

ENFORCEMENT & SANCTIONS:

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.