



## New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

### 1105 STAFF FIELD AND OFFICE SAFETY

Chapter: Staff Responsibilities

Section: Worker Safety

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

Policy Directive: **21-36**

Effective Date: **June 2021**

#### References Of Note

Federal Authority:

Statutes: [RSA 169-B](#), [RSA 169-C](#), and [RSA 169-D](#)

Administrative Rules:

Case Law:

This policy establishes DCYF's staff safety program, in both the field and office.

#### **Required Practices**

*Any deviations to the following information must be documented with Supervisory Approval.*

- I. Supervisors will promote a culture of safety within the field office by keeping safety and well-being at the forefront of staff meetings and individual supervision.
- II. Each field office must have a procedure in place (Circle of Safety) for knowing the whereabouts of staff at all times when they are in the field.
- III. Staff must assess for risk and plan for safety prior to all meetings with an individual or family, to the best of their ability.
- IV. Staff must remove themselves from any situation in which someone is deliberately intimidating them, threatening violence, or displaying an outburst of anger (such as throwing objects or breaking things) unless they have the authority to take the individual into protective custody and have been trained to do so (specific to JJS).
  - A. Staff must immediately remove themselves from any situation in which they are threatened with a weapon of any kind, regardless of their authority to take protective custody.
- V. In situations where staff are concerned for the safety of another due to present threats of violence or outbursts of anger, excluding the specific circumstance of holding the authority to take the party into custody (JJS specific), they must remove themselves from the situation and call law enforcement for assistance.
- VI. Staff must not knowingly enter a location suspected to be a clandestine drug lab and must immediately remove themselves if, upon entering, they suspect the presence of a clandestine drug lab or observe hazardous/noxious chemicals commonly associated with the manufacturing of methamphetamine.

VII. Staff must contact law enforcement immediately regarding any unsafe situation as noted above and contact their Supervisor to advise them of the situation as soon as possible.

A. Staff will not return to the location until law enforcement has intervened and a Supervisor has approved contact.

VIII. Physical or emotional harm, or threats of harm, made to or about any staff member (or their family) as a direct result of the staff member's employment with DCYF will not be tolerated, regardless of if the threat was made face-to-face, by phone, or by print (handwritten, typed, or electronic/social media). This includes threats made through a third party.

A. Staff must report any injury or threat received because of their employment to their Supervisor (or designee) as soon as possible and provide requested information about the incident.

B. The Supervisor (or designee) will:

1. Immediately take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the staff member and other staff who may be at risk;
2. Debrief with the staff member to provide emotional support, ask their opinion as to how they would like to proceed, and gather pertinent information as to the situation (as appropriate);
3. Notify the respective Field Administrator by telephone, immediately, when a critical incident has occurred;
4. Ensure that the DHHS Work Environment Threats Form and any other relevant forms are completed within 24 hours;
5. Review and forward the completed form(s) to the appropriate parties within 24 hours; and
6. Consult with the Safety Culture Specialist on the best course of action regarding the person(s) responsible for the threat/injury and inform them as to what is being done to provide support to the staff member.

C. The Safety Culture Specialist (or designee) will:

1. Review information received and seek additional information from the Supervisor or staff member as needed;
2. Collaborate with the Clinical Services Specialist to determine how best to support the affected staff, to include a referral to E.P.I.C. to receive peer support;

3. Determine, in consultation with the Bureau Chief of Field Services (or designee) and Facilities Administration staff, what action will be taken regarding the individual responsible for the threat/injury;
  4. Act as a liaison between DCYF and the Attorney General's Office as appropriate; and
  5. Follow-up with the Supervisor and staff member to debrief, including providing information as to what action was taken and answering their questions about the process.
- IX. The threatened/injured staff member will utilize a teamed response if they continue to work with the responsible individual until the staff member and their Supervisor jointly decide that a teamed response is no longer needed.
- X. When situations arise where staff are personally the subject of a physically or emotionally dangerous level of client animosity, Supervisors will support the staff member to the best of their ability.
- XI. Threats and situations presenting danger or potential danger to staff must be documented in the DCYF electronic information system as appropriate.

<b>Standard Operating Procedures</b>		
<b>SOP</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Applicable Disciplines</b>
1105.1	Staff Safety Procedures-CPS	CPS
1105.2	Staff Safety Procedures-JJS	JJS
1105.3	Clandestine Drug Labs and Hazardous Substances	CPS and JJS
1105.4	Staff Incident Response	CPS and JJS

<b>Glossary and Document Specific Definitions</b>
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A - B    C - D    E - F    G - I    J - L    M - N    O - Q    R - S    T - V    W - Z

<b>Document Change Log</b>			
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