



Abu Dhabi Occupational Safety and Health System Framework (ADOSH-SF)

Code of Practice

CoP 13.0 – Violence in the Workplace

Version 4.0

July 2024

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1. Introduction

- (a) This Code of Practice (CoP) applies to all employers within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and is designed to incorporate requirements set by ADPHC and Sector Regulatory Authorities (SRA's) in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. If requirements of this document conflict with requirements set by another regulatory authority, employers are required to follow the more stringent requirement.
- (b) The purpose of this code of practice is to ensure that employers take measures to prevent or minimize the occurrence of violence in the work place and to protect employees and other potentially affected persons against it, ensuring that they have access to assistance and recourse if they happen to be exposed to it.
- (c) Work place violence is "Any action, incident, or behavior that departs from reasonable conduct in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed, or injured in the course of, or as a direct result of, his or her work".
- (d) Types of Workplace violence include but are not limited to:
 - (i) Violence by Strangers: This is violence committed by an assailant who has no legitimate business relationship to the workplace of the worker.
 - (ii) Violence by Customers or Clients: This is violence committed by an assailant who either receives services from or is under the custodial supervision of the affected workplace or the victim.
 - (iii) Violence by Co-workers: This is violence committed by an assailant who has some employment related involvement with the workplace, for example, a current or former employee, supervisor or manager.
 - (iv) Violence by Personal Relations: This is violence committed by an assailant who confronts an individual with whom he or she has or had a personal relationship outside of work.

2. Training and Competency

- (a) Employers shall ensure that OSH training complies with the requirements of:
 - (i) *ADOSH-SF - Element 5 - Training, Awareness and Competency;*
 - (ii) *ADOSH-SF - Mechanism 7.0 - Occupational Safety and Health Practitioner and Service Provider Registration.*
- (b) Training on the general workplace violence and job-specific workplace security practices shall be provided to all employees based on risk assessment, in a language they understand
- (c) Awareness activities shall include, but are not be limited to:
 - (i) An overview and definition of workplace violence;
 - (ii) The workplace violence prevention policy and program;
 - (iii) The laws and regulations covering violence;
 - (iv) The contents of the risk assessment, including all significant identified risk factors, such as high risk activities and tasks, dangers, and times of day when the risk of violence is increased;
 - (v) Techniques on how to recognize and avoid potentially violent situations;
 - (vi) Proper use of security measures and engineering controls designed to reduce risk;
 - (vii) Incident reporting procedures; and
 - (viii) Emergency response procedures to be followed in the event of violent incident.
- (d) Appropriate training shall be given to supervisory and managerial personnel, as per the entity's needs and risk assessment, to enable them to:
 - (i) Explain and respond to questions about the organization's policy regarding violence;
 - (ii) Identify changes in staff performance and behavior that may indicate a risk of workplace violence;
 - (iii) Assess the working environment and identify working methods or conditions that could be changed or improved to prevent, reduce and eliminate workplace violence;
 - (iv) Support recovering employees, provide advice and help them with administrative procedures; and
 - (v) Ensure that any information on workers exposed to or suffering because of workplace violence is kept confidential, in accordance with national laws and regulations.
- (e) Specific training relating to the worksite shall be provided to any designated Security Personnel, including the psychological components of handling aggressive and abusive customers / clients, and ways to handle aggression and defuse hostile situations.

- (f) Employers shall ensure First Aiders are suitably trained on:
 - (i) The first aid treatment
 - (ii) The procedures to call for medical assistance; and
 - (iii) The requirements of the employer's workplace violence program.
- (g) Refresher training shall be provided at appropriate intervals.
- (h) Employers shall maintain a record of the required training that contains the following:
 - (i) name and ID number;
 - (ii) Emirates ID number of the employee;
 - (iii) subject(s) of training;
 - (iv) date(s) of training; and
 - (v) person providing the training.

3. Requirements

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1 Employers

- (a) Employers shall undertake their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the general requirements of *ADOSH-SF - Element 1 - Roles, Responsibilities and Self-Regulation* Section 3.2.5.
- (b) Employers shall ensure a risk assessment is performed in accordance with *ADOSH-SF-Element 2 - Risk Management* to determine significant risk factors, such as high risk activities and tasks, dangers, and times of day when the risk of violence is increased.
- (c) Employers shall, as far as practicable, provide and maintain a working environment where employees are not exposed to workplace violence. This includes, but is not limited to requirements to:
 - (i) The routine assessment of the incidence of workplace violence and the factors that support or generate workplace violence;
 - (ii) Assigning responsibilities and developing policies and plans at the workplace to combat workplace violence and establishing the required monitoring mechanisms and range of sanction;
 - (iii) Providing information, instruction, training and supervision so employees can perform the work safely;
 - (iv) Providing security personnel if required based on risk assessment;
 - (v) Consulting and cooperating with safety and health representatives, if any, and other employees, regarding occupational safety and health at the workplace;
 - (vi) Consulting with representative of the workers on the development of relevant policies and plans and how to implement them; and
 - (vii) Setting up of mechanisms for collecting data and information in the area of workplace violence.

3.1.2 Employees

- (a) Employees shall undertake their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the general requirements of *ADOSH-SF - Element 1 - Roles, Responsibilities and Self-Regulation* Section 3.2.7.
- (b) Employees are required to take reasonable care for their own safety and health at work and to avoid harming the safety and health of other people through any act or omission at work.
- (c) Employees must comply as far as they reasonably can with instructions given by their employer in the interests of safety or health and follow workplace policies and procedures.
- (d) Employees must attend relevant educational and training programs.
- (e) Employees must report to their employer work-related violence cases.

- (f) Employees must seek guidance and counselling if involved in situations that may lead to workplace violence.

3.2 Workplace Violence Prevention Program Requirements

- (a) Where risk of workplace violence exists, employers shall develop programs, plans and policies in consultation with employees and/or committees to manage and eliminate violence in the worksite. The workplace violence prevention program shall include but not be limited to:
- (i) A list of the relevant risk factors identified in the workplace examination (Appendix 1: Sample Workplace Violence Factors and Control Checklist). These sample checklists can help employers identify present or potential workplace violence problems;
 - (ii) Measures and procedures to control the relevant risks that are identified in the employer's assessment;
 - (iii) Measures and procedures for summoning immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs or is likely to occur;
 - (iv) Measures and procedures for workers to report incidents of workplace violence as required by *ADOSH-SF - Element 7 - Monitoring, Investigation and Reporting*;
 - (v) Employee information and training as required in Section 2 of this document;
 - (vi) Procedures for the employer to investigate and deal with incidents and complaints of workplace violence as required by *ADOSH-SF - Mechanism 11.0 - Incident Notification, Investigation and Reporting*;
 - (vii) Audit/Inspection program to ensure worksites are following the violence prevention program requirements, as per *ADOSH-SF - Element 8 - Audit and Inspection*, and
 - (viii) A plan for program review and update on at least an annual basis or after a serious incident.
- (b) Whenever reasonably practicable, control measures shall be used to eliminate/reduce the risks of violence. Control measures may include, but are not limited to:
- (i) Security doors where access is via a security card or code,
 - (ii) Video monitoring; and
 - (iii) Job rotation to reduce the amount of time workers are stressful, especially when they are new to the job as required by *ADOSH-SF - CoP 9.2 - Managing Work-Related Stress*.
- (c) The entity's Emergency Management System developed as required by *ADOSH-SF-Element 6 - Emergency Management* shall cover workplace violence if required based on risk assessment.
- (d) Employers at sites where there is a developing pattern of workplace violence incidents which may involve criminal conduct or a serious injury shall attempt to develop a protocol with the Police to ensure that violent crimes committed against employees in the workplace are promptly investigated and appropriately prosecuted. In addition, employers shall provide employee assistance (counselling) services.

- (e) The employers, in consultation with employees, shall evaluate the effectiveness of the workplace violence prevention policy and program, at least annually or after a serious incident. The review should focus on incident trends and the effectiveness of the control measures.
- (f) If required in compliance with the requirements of this CoP, any security personnel and security firms contracted by the entity shall be appropriately certified and licensed by the relevant Security Authority(s) (Ministry of Interior of United Arab Emirates).

4. Record Keeping

- (a) At a minimum, the following information shall be documented and records kept for any violence prevention program:
- (i) Records of work violence incidents;
 - (ii) Medical reports of relevant work injury and supervisors reports for each recorded assault.
 - (iii) Police reports of violence incidents occurring in the workplace;
 - (iv) Records describing incidents involving violent acts or threats, even if the incident did not involve an injury or a criminal act (Records of events involving abuse, verbal attacks, or aggressive behaviour can help identify patterns and risks that are not evident from the smaller set of cases that actually result in injury or crime);
 - (v) Documentation of minutes of safety meetings, records of hazard / risk analyses and corrective actions recommended and taken;
 - (vi) Records of all training programs, including subjects covered, attendees, and qualifications of trainers; and
 - (vii) Inspection records, which should include dates of inspection, areas inspected, all finding and recommendations, any control measures implemented, etc.

5. References

- *United Arab Emirates. Ministerial Order No. 28/1 of 1981, Concerning Model Disciplinary Code to Guide Employers in Making Disciplinary Regulations Applied to their Undertakings. Ministry of Labour.*
- *Government of Western Australia Department of Commerce, Code of Practice - Violence, aggression and bullying at work.2010.*
http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/pdf/codes_of_practice/Code_violence.pdf
- *OSHA-Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late-Night Retail Establishments. 2009.*
<http://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3153.pdf>

6. Document Amendment Record

<i>Version</i>	<i>Revision Date</i>	<i>Description of Amendment</i>	<i>Page/s Affected</i>
4.0	15 July 2024	<i>System acronym updated from OSHAD-SF to ADOSH-SF to accurately reflect document title</i>	Throughout
		<i>Change from OSHAD to ADPHC</i>	
		<i>Change of Logo</i>	
		<i>Minor editorial changes throughout the document without changing requirements.</i>	
		<i>Title of Mechanism 7.0 updated to ADOSH-SF - Mechanism 7- Occupational Safety and Health Practitioner and Service Provider Registration.</i>	
		<i>OSHAD-SF - Mechanism 8.0 - OSH Practitioner Registration deleted</i>	

Appendix 1: Sample Workplace Violence Factors and Control Checklist

These sample checklists can help employers identify present or potential workplace violence problems. Employers should expand, modify and adapt this list to reflect their circumstances and risk assessment

Section One: The workplace (Each YES answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Are money/valuables kept at the workplace?		
Has violence been an issue in the past?		
Are people affected by alcohol and/or drug abuse?		
Are customers likely to be angry or disgruntled?		
Are there any other obvious reasons why workers or clients may become violent?		
Section Two: Workers (Each Yes answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Do staff work alone or at night?		
Do staff work unreasonable duties or workload?		
Do inexperienced staff deal with customers?		
Section Three: Identify, Assess and Control (Each NO answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Are all workplace violence reports analyzed?		
Are potentially violent people identified?		
Are risk factors for workplace violence identified?		
Have risks of injury or harm been assessed?		
Have the required controls (e.g., administrative, workplace design, equipment, etc.) been identified and provided?		
Have they been used successfully?		
Is the safety of public/clients considered?		
Section Four: Consultation and cooperation (Each NO answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Is there a forum for employees to share grievances and talk about workplace concerns (e.g. Workplace violence)?		

Does the safety and health representative check hazards?		
Is there a procedure for reporting incidents?		
Are all changes discussed with workers?		
Are workers consulted?		
Section Five: Violence Prevention (Each NO answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Does your workplace have a violence prevention program?		
Was the plan drawn up in consultation with workers?		
Does the plan cover identification, assessment and control?		
Does the plan cover induction and training?		
Is there a security system in the workplace?		
Section Six: Violence Response Plan/Program (Each No answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Does your workplace have a violence response plan?		
Does the plan include first aid and medical support requirements?		
Does the plan include backup from police and emergency services?		
Does the plan include prompt de-briefing and consulting?		
Is an employee assistance service provided?		
Is the plan reviewed after each violent situation?		
Section Seven: Training and Information (Each NO answer indicates a risk of violence)		
Issue	Yes/No	Comments
Have staff been provided with relevant information about workplace violence?		
Have staff been trained to recognize and avoid potential violence, and defuse violence?		
Do staff have interpersonal skills training?		
Are there safe procedures for violent situations?		
Do staff understand violence management procedures?		
Are staff trained to report violent incidents?		



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