

## DCFS LOCAL OFFICE SAFETY PLAN TEMPLATE

*Better to have a plan & never use it than not have a plan when one is needed.  
The best plan is only as good as its implementation.*

### ELEMENTS OF A GOOD PLAN:

- Is appropriate for the individual office, building & scenarios.
- Contains position titles rather than individual names. Otherwise the plan must be updated each time there is a change in employee assignments.
- Has clear, simple instructions & doesn't get tangled up in the weeds with too much detail.
- Is reviewed with all staff & available to several people in the office. Is posted on a shared drive as well as having hard copies.
- Is reviewed periodically for needed updates.

### PREVENTION & PLANNING:

- Have controls in place for assignment & retrieval of keys or key cards.
- Have controls in place for issuing & changing of alarm codes.
- Have controls in place for issuing & retrieving id badges.
- Institute a visitor control log & insure it is used.
- Keep all doors between public areas & employee areas locked.
- If a security guard is on site, maintain a list of duties such as patrolling the parking lot, lobby control expectations, emergency procedures & protocol, etc.
- Interview rooms should be set up so that the visitor is not between the employee & quick egress.
- Employees should notify the supervisor before seeing a potentially dangerous visitor.
- Receptionist should notify employees if a visitor is displaying aggressive or agitated behavior in the lobby.
- Whenever possible visitors should be placed in an interview room while waiting on the employee. This reduces the stress level of the visitor, reduces over crowding in the lobby & reduces the chance for conflict between visitors.
- If a visitor is unhappy at the end of the interview, the employee should guarantee that the visitor exits the building & the office grounds. The employee should notify the receptionist & guard of the potential problem posed by the visitor.
- Post all emergency numbers near phones – especially near receptionist.
  - Post essential numbers prominently.
  - 911 or 9-111 should be the most visible number unless an area is not served by a common emergency dispatch system. If there is no 911 service, post the number for the appropriate local law enforcement agency.
  - Include fire, police, sheriff's office, ambulance, building manager, etc. below the 911 area.
  - Post the office address prominently – in an emergency the address could be forgotten. Or someone unfamiliar with the office could make the emergency call.
- Employees should not be in building after hours without notifying a supervisor or manager.
- At the end of the day the building should be cleared to insure all employees & visitors have vacated.
- Building alarm must be set each evening.
- Designate at least 2 employees per floor (or office sections if the building floor plan dictates) to be the primary responders in an emergency. These 2 people do not necessarily have to intervene in an emergency. They are to be notified of the situation & determine the next appropriate course of action.
- Set up a code word or phrase & method to alert building occupants.

## RESPONSE TO AN EMERGENCY EVENT:

- Upon identification of an emergency event notify the appropriate emergency responders. Indicate if shelter-in-place or evacuation is required.
  - If event is a phone threat record as many elements of the call as possible. If threat is by mail, handle mail as little as possible.
    - Determine if threat is immediate or for an unspecified future time.
    - Notify authorities & staff.
    - If appropriate evacuate building.
    - Circulate picture of person making threats or who poses a potential threat to the office.
    - Provide a picture to the security guard with instructions that this person is not to be granted access to state property due to threats made to staff.
- If appropriate, use building-wide notification.
- If appropriate, clear the area of & adjacent to the emergency area.
- Emergency responders (including guard) – if safe to do so:
  - Utilize local emergency call number (911, etc.)
  - Insure employees & visitors are sheltered-in-place or evacuated.
  - Take action to resolve or contain the emergency, if feasible & safe.
  - Utilize elementary 1<sup>st</sup> aid if trained.
- Employees
  - Insure personal safety.
  - Insure safety of visitors & state property.
  - Follow instructions of emergency responders.
  - Avoid area of the emergency. Don't rubber neck.
  - Do not call 911, etc. unless instructed to do so. This will keep lines from being overwhelmed.
  - Remain calm & do not add to the emergency.
  - Avoid calling people outside of the emergency (such as family) while the situation is unresolved. Such calls cause hysteria in the public & increase traffic in the emergency area. You may be putting your family in harm's way if they rush to the scene.
  - Remain in a safe place until the "all clear" is given.
  - If event involves a visitor in an interview room, use panic button (where available,) exit quickly, notify receptionist, guard &/or emergency responders.
- Shelter-in-place
  - Turn off lights.
  - Lock or barricade door.
  - Close window coverings.
  - Remain in place until "all clear" is given.

- Evacuation
  - Meet at a pre-determined location unless that location is unsafe or too close to the situation.
  - Go on foot to avoid a traffic jam in a parking lot close to the scene.
  - Report to your supervisor as quickly as possible after reaching safety.
  - Supervisors should account for all employees.
  - Remain in a safe location until the “all clear” is given.

#### AFTER THE EVENT:

- Account for all employees & visitors.
- Secure property & equipment as necessary.
- Secure written statements from as many people as possible as quickly as possible while details are fresh.
- Notify local management, State Office & ORM as appropriate. (See appendix for forms.) An initial brief report can be done with a detailed report provided when time allows.
- Complete a DCFS media report, if applicable.
- Complete a report to local law enforcement &/or District Attorney when appropriate.
- Take pictures of any damages to property or injuries to people. Identify each picture with date, event & subject of picture (“damage to desk in room #2.”)
- Secure names & contact numbers for all outside entities who responded to the emergency, including medical personnel who treated employees off-site.
- Complete an after action report to share with staff (what worked, what failed & lessons learned.)
- Modify safety plans accordingly.
- Assess need for employee assistance (medical, counseling, etc.) & see that such is provided.