

**144.566 VIOLENCE AGAINST HEALTH CARE WORKERS.**

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) The following definitions apply to this section and have the meanings given.

(b) "Act of violence" means an act by a patient or visitor against a health care worker that includes kicking, scratching, urinating, sexually harassing, or any act defined in sections 609.221 to 609.2241.

(c) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of health.

(d) "Health care worker" means any person, whether licensed or unlicensed, employed by, volunteering in, or under contract with a hospital, who has direct contact with a patient of the hospital for purposes of either medical care or emergency response to situations potentially involving violence.

(e) "Hospital" means any facility licensed as a hospital under section 144.55.

(f) "Incident response" means the actions taken by hospital administration and health care workers during and following an act of violence.

(g) "Interfere" means to prevent, impede, discourage, or delay a health care worker's ability to report acts of violence, including by retaliating or threatening to retaliate against a health care worker.

(h) "Preparedness" means the actions taken by hospital administration and health care workers to prevent a single act of violence or acts of violence generally.

(i) "Retaliate" means to discharge, discipline, threaten, otherwise discriminate against, or penalize a health care worker regarding the health care worker's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges of employment.

Subd. 2. **Hospital duties.** (a) All hospitals must design and implement preparedness and incident response action plans to acts of violence by January 15, 2016, and review the plan at least annually thereafter.

(b) A hospital shall designate a committee of representatives of health care workers employed by the hospital, including nonmanagerial health care workers, nonclinical staff, administrators, patient safety experts, and other appropriate personnel to develop preparedness and incident response action plans to acts of violence. The hospital shall, in consultation with the designated committee, implement the plans under paragraph (a). Nothing in this paragraph shall require the establishment of a separate committee solely for the purpose required by this subdivision.

(c) A hospital shall provide training to all health care workers employed or contracted with the hospital on safety during acts of violence. Each health care worker must receive safety training annually and upon hire. Training must, at a minimum, include:

- (1) safety guidelines for response to and de-escalation of an act of violence;
- (2) ways to identify potentially violent or abusive situations; and
- (3) the hospital's incident response reaction plan and violence prevention plan.

(d) As part of its annual review required under paragraph (a), the hospital must review with the designated committee:

- (1) the effectiveness of its preparedness and incident response action plans;
- (2) the most recent gap analysis as provided by the commissioner; and

(3) the number of acts of violence that occurred in the hospital during the previous year, including injuries sustained, if any, and the unit in which the incident occurred.

(e) A hospital shall make its action plans and the information listed in paragraph (d) available to local law enforcement and, if any of its workers are represented by a collective bargaining unit, to the exclusive bargaining representatives of those collective bargaining units.

(f) A hospital, including any individual, partner, association, or any person or group of persons acting directly or indirectly in the interest of the hospital, shall not interfere with or discourage a health care worker if the health care worker wishes to contact law enforcement or the commissioner regarding an act of violence.

(g) The commissioner may impose an administrative fine of up to \$250 for failure to comply with the requirements of this subdivision.

**History:** 2015 c 71 art 8 s 25