GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING TO A VIOLENT INCIDENT IN THE WORKPLACE

PURPOSE: To provide general and voluntary direction to coworkers on how to respond during an incident in which damage, injury or death could occur and when regular (established) procedures surrounding an evacuation cannot be safely followed. This guidance is a resource tool and provides general principles and direction as each incident will be unique and is unpredictable.

SCOPE: All individuals (coworkers, vendors, visitors, customers, etc.) on the premises of a facility during a violent incident.

RATIONALE: The possibility of a violent incident in the workplace is a reality. The level of preparedness to respond to such an incident in a facility may have an impact on the outcome of the incident. If an incident occurs, it is highly unlikely that the police will be on site at the outset of the incident. Accordingly, every coworker must be prepared to respond quickly and effectively. These types of incidents may be over in a matter of minutes, perhaps even before the police arrive, and the outcome of such an incident may be dependent on the ability of information to be disseminated and individuals to respond as quickly as possible.

HOW TO RESPOND: If you observe a violent incident, DO NOT ENGAGE OR APPROACH THE ASSAILANT(S). Take immediate action to get to a safe location and call 911.

1. Evacuate:
   - Have an escape route and plan in mind
   - Try to escape if you know where the assailant is and an escape route immediately available to you
   - Leave your belongings behind
   - Keep your hands visible to responding police officers

2. Hide Out:
   - If in doubt whether you can escape safely, find the safest available area to hide
   - Hide in an area out of the assailant’s view
   - Lock or block entry to your hiding place
   - Block entry using any available items and stay behind solid objects out of the assailant’s view
   - If safe, allow others to seek refuge with you
   - Silence your cell phone or pager

3. Take Action:
   - As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
   - Attempt to incapacitate the assailant(s)
   - Act with physical aggression and throw items at the assailant
4. **Call 911:**

   Provide information to law enforcement or the 911 operator, including:
   
   -Location of the assailant
   -Number of assailants
   -Physical description of assailant(s)
   -Number and type of weapons being used by assailant(s)
   -Number of potential victims at location

5. **When Law Enforcement Arrives:**

   - Remain calm and follow instructions
   - Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets, keys, etc.)
   - Raise hands and spread fingers
   - Keep hands visible at all times
   - Avoid quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
   - Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
   - Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating