

Civilian Personnel
VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE

History. This is the first printing of this publication.
Summary. Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Fort Polk (FP) Pamphlet 690-5 prescribes policy and establishes protocols for assessing threats and the potential for violence at Fort Polk and minimizes the possibility that a threatening situation will escalate into violence or a crisis.

Applicability. This pamphlet applies to all Fort Polk civilian employees (appropriated and non-appropriated funds), all military and civilian management officials, and supervisors serviced by the Directorate of Civilian Personnel (DCP). It also applies to other Federal civilian employees stationed at Fort Polk, but not serviced by the DCP. The pronouns he, his, and him used in this regulation are intended to include both the masculine and feminine genders. Any exceptions will be so noted.

Proponent and Exception Authority. The proponent agency for this regulation is the Directorate of Civilian Personnel, Labor/Management-Employee Relations Division, Fort Polk, Louisiana 71459-5341. The proponent has the authority to approve exceptions to this regulation that are consistent with controlling law and regulation.

Supplementation. Supplementation and establishment of command publications and local forms are prohibited without prior approval from the Directorate of Information Management (DOIM),

Administrative Services Division, Building 330, Suite 111, 1820 Corps Road, Fort Polk, Louisiana 71459-0908.

Suggested Improvements. Users of JRTC & FP Pamphlet 690-5 are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms (Department of the Army (DA) Form 2028) directly to DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations Division, Fort Polk, Louisiana 71459-5341.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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/s/
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1. Purpose. This pamphlet outlines sources and early warning signs of potential violence, appropriate responses to early warning signs and threats, post-threat steps, and general prevention strategies. Because of the multiple possibilities related to potential violence and/or threatening situations, this pamphlet provides only the minimum essential elements and must not be interpreted as all-inclusive. As a situation develops, this pamphlet will be expanded to include all specific actions necessary for resolving or alleviating any resultant impact on visitors, employees, and customers because their well-being must remain paramount.

2. Policy. Any form or manner of threatening acts, remarks, or gestures in the workplace is unacceptable. There will be no tolerance for violence, or threats of violence, by anyone at any level. All threats will be thoroughly investigated. Those employees who engage in this type of unacceptable behavior will be subject to the initiation of appropriate disciplinary action. Workplace violence is defined as "an action (verbal, written, or physical aggression) which is intended to control or cause, or is capable of causing, death or serious bodily injury to oneself or others, or damage to property. Violence includes abuse of authority, intimidating or harassing behavior, and threats."

3. General.

a. It is the intent of Fort Polk to provide a workplace for all employees which is safe and free from violence. In so doing, we are complying with and supporting the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which requires employers to provide their employees with a safe and healthy work environment. Workplaces must be free of threats, intimidation, or fear. Any incidents of harassment, threats, or acts of violence in the workplace must be acted upon promptly and appropriately. Those in the workplace must know that incidents of these types are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

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b. Workplace violence is not limited to physical assault, but may also include verbal abuse and sexual harassment. Even the fear of assault or witnessing an

assault on a coworker may have serious health effects on workers. Aside from physical injuries, violent, abusive or threatening incidents in the workplace often result in serious and disabling psychological damage. Employees are entitled to expect the workplace to be a safe environment; yet, incidents of workplace violence are on the rise. As a result, we are recognizing that the workplace is vulnerable to aggressive behavior which may be a response to downsizing, conflicts with supervisors, domestic problems, and other fundamental shifts in the marketplace. Aggressive and threatening employees in the workplace cause anxiety for everyone. Training and awareness greatly reduce the stress level, educate employees about the signs of potential violence, and emphasize the need to report these signs to management.

4. Causes of Work-Place Violence. It is not by accident that workplace violence has escalated over the last few years. Experts believe the many factors of workplace violence include economic, societal, organizational, and psychological.

a. The economic factors are an over-stressed population, downsizing, reengineering, layoffs, growth of technology, recession, massive mergers, post modernism, and high unemployment. Today's eroding economic climate, with its smaller salaries and fewer benefits, is unkind. Also, there is often a lack of reentry opportunities for laid-off employees.

b. Some of the societal factors of workplace violence are a changing society; violence on television, in movies, and in music; violence as an accepted means of problem-solving; and the accessibility of weapons. Violence is a prevalent element in the media today, leading to an implied approval of that violence. Many different societal factors have contributed to the breakdown of families and communities nationwide.

c. The role that management plays is important in workplace violence. When management's style is authoritarian or autocratic, it may result in polarization between employees and managers. Management must employ updated, personal methods to deal with employee complaints, otherwise disillusionment and a lack of trust toward management may develop. Wrongful discharge

cases may continue for years, allowing anger to build.

d. The physiological factors of workplace violence may be the result of employees who have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual abuse from childhood;

they may bring their experiences with them into the workplace. The manager or supervisor assumes the parental role and the coworkers may resemble siblings. Understanding the characteristics of violence-prone individuals is one of the keys to identifying individuals who might threaten or commit violence in the workplace.

5. Early Intervention and Taking Preventive Measures.

a. Shock, surprise, and disbelief are common reactions to workplace violence incidents. There is a very dangerous common myth that workplace violence is essentially random and unpredictable. Actually most violent acts are predictable, even in non-violent jobs where random acts of violence occur. Experts agree that two key elements may prevent a potentially violent employee from escalating to the action level. They are:

- (1) Recognizing the early warning signs.
- (2) Quickly intervening to assist the employee.

b. Any delay in addressing an incident or early warning signs may confuse an already unstable employee and send a message that such behavior is acceptable. The delay may also allow the individual to take further advantage of the situation. The first-line supervisor plays a crucial role in observing changes in an employee and in identifying and responding to early warning signs. While there is no fool-proof system for detecting who might become violent, understanding the early warning signs, recognizing them when they occur, and acting on that knowledge are vital steps in heading off a possible tragedy and getting help for the troubled employee.

c. It is the role of the supervisor to set limits about appropriate behavior at work, to enforce standards and policies, and to deal with difficult employees in a positive way, early on, so that negative feelings do not fester.

d. All employees must know how to lessen the probability of violence occurring in the workplace. The recommended measures to be taken to reduce the risk of violence are as follows:

(1) Watch for warning signs and defuse dangerous situations before violence breaks out.

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(2) Take *all* threats seriously. Notify management when threats are made, even subtle ones.

(3) Understand the procedures to follow when a violent situation arises.

(4) Notify management if any weapon is brought into the workplace.

(5) Mentally prepare for "*what if*" situations.

6. Identifying the Potentially Violent Worker and Violent Behavior. Violent employees are known to instill fear in their coworkers. Obvious types of violence are bombings, shootings, hitting, fighting, screaming, and threats. Not-so-obvious types of workplace violence are harassing, stalking, equipment sabotage, building sabotage, and other irrational responses. One example: people who approach you within an inch of your face. A typical response is: "*Oh, he can't be serious about that; he's just blowing off steam. Give him some space.*" But this is the wrong response. These people need, and, in most cases, desire help. All threats must be taken seriously. In many cases of workplace violence, the problems and warning signs were ignored or not directly handled. Effective supervisors should know how to use positive management strategies on the job to prevent critical incidents.

a. Managers and supervisors must be watchful for warning signs of potential workplace violence. A reduction-in-force (RIF) or termination may be an especially vulnerable time for supervisors and other involved employees. There are red flags which often precede violent behavior, and "*a watchful eye and a tuned ear*" will go a long way in preventing a tragedy.

b. As with any situation, there are no steadfast, guaranteed rules to ensure identification of the potentially violent worker. Supervisors must first examine the employee's work performance to determine if there are indications of a problem. Most often, problems severe enough to warrant concern will affect the individual's job performance. When the supervisor addresses the performance problems, signs of other problems frequently surface. Managers and supervisors at all levels must constantly be on the lookout for telltale signs that an employee is having problems, particularly if the problems involve conflicts with others at the work site. Statistically, those who commit acts of violence have a history of conflicts with others.

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c. Although experts caution that there is no definite profile to determine whether one individual will be more prone to violence in the workplace than another, there are a number of signs often exhibited by employees in a pattern of escalation leading to violence in the workplace. Having one or even several of these signs does not mean that the employee will be violent, but they will heighten

concern. Conditions of the workplace may also suggest an increased potential for violence. The most commonly mentioned warning signals or "red flags" profiling the disgruntled employee are the following:

(1) A history of violent behavior before or after employment with the current employer.

(2) An extreme interest in or obsession with weapons, and compulsive reading and collecting of gun magazines. If this behavior starts spontaneously or is out of character for the employee, it must be considered.

(3) Excessive discussion of weapons at work, carrying a concealed weapon, or flashing a weapon to test reactions.

(4) Making either direct or veiled verbal threats of harm (i.e., predicting that bad things are going to happen to a coworker or supervisor).

(5) Intimidating others or instilling fear in coworkers or supervisors; may be physical or verbal. Harassing phone calls and stalking are obvious examples.

(6) Having an obsessive involvement with the job, often with no apparent outside interests (usually, outside relationships fail or are strained). The workplace becomes the person's sole source of identity (be advised that this characteristic may apply to many of your best employees, including those who would never commit a violent act).

(7) Being a loner with little involvement with coworkers, with the possible exception of a romantic interest in a coworker. This interest will often be so intense that the coworker will feel threatened and may report the unwanted attention under a sexual harassment policy.

(8) Being paranoid, panicking easily, or often perceiving that the whole world is against the employee.

(9) Not taking criticism well; holding a grudge, especially against a supervisor; and often verbalizing a hope for something to happen to the person against whom the employee has the grudge. A classic

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example is to hold a grudge over being denied a promotion.

(10) Expressing extreme desperation over recent family, financial, or personal problems.

(11) Fascination with other recent incidents of work-place violence and approval of the use of violence under similar circumstances.

(12) An escalating propensity to push the limits of normal conduct with a disregard for the safety of

coworkers.

(13) Failure to take consistent disciplinary measures against threats of violence or minor incidents of violence (e.g., pushing or touching which may or may not be associated with a sexual harassment complaint).

(14) Workplace events generating great stress such as layoffs, terminations, labor disputes, or closures. Drawdowns, cutbacks, and RIFs are common causes of stress.

(15) Workplace locations and activities which expose employees to the threat of violent behavior from nonemployees entering the workplace.

d. Other employees may provide key information to the supervisor. If they feel uncomfortable, or if they are fearful of being around a fellow employee, supervisors and managers will take this as a good indication that possible trouble is brewing.

7. Understanding When A Situation Is Violent.

a. The three levels of violence are as follows:

(1) Level One: Individual refuses to cooperate, consistently argues, spreads rumors, and/or makes unwanted sexual comments.

(2) Level Two: Individual refuses to obey policies and procedures, sabotages equipment or steals property, increasingly argues, verbalizes wish to hurt coworkers or management, and/or sends violent notes to coworkers or management.

(3) Level Three: Individual has recurrent physical fights, destroys property, utilizes weapons to threaten or harm, repeats suicide threats, and/or commits rape, murder, or arson.

b. Supervisors and employees must be able to understand when a situation is violent and recognize the different forms of violence. Some of these forms are verbal abuse, threats, physical assault, intimidation, harassment, physical aggression, stalking, using weapons, and damaging property.

c. It is not possible to predict or assume potential for violence based on any one of these factors.

However, a combination of them is looked upon as part of any comprehensive assessment of risk level. There are warning signs frequently associated with individuals who later become violent. Almost without fail, the violent individual exhibits behavior falling under one or more categories as follows:

(1) Verbal threats, such as a stated intention to hurt or kill someone; repeated statements; multiple reports; or constantly swearing at others.

(2) Intimidating behavior, such as inappropriate and repeated boundary crossing (including excessive phone calls, messages, letters, memos, office appearance, following or stalking, gift giving); angry confrontation; restlessness; agitation; or belligerence towards staff or customers.

(3) Bizarre thoughts or paranoid behavior, such as developed fantasies with self-centered outcomes; irrational violent associations or thoughts; delusional commands or statements, e.g., referencing UFOs, the end of the world, being spied upon; secretive behavior; poems or letters that are bizarre or make reference to violence; only worker being singled out or fear that someone is out to get them; emotional mood swings; or receiving unconventional religious messages.

(4) Obsessions, such as hurting a specific person or group; a romantic attachment to someone; or weapons (ownership of a gun or gun collection, fascination with weapons, subscriptions to gun magazines, proficient in their use).

(5) Performance indicators which demonstrate a recent marked decline in performance include the following:

(a) Attendance problems or absences from work assignment.

(b) Decreased productivity or inconsistent work patterns.

(c) Concentration problems.

(d) Safety issues, with increased accident involvement.

(e) Poor on-the-job relationships.

(f) Unusual behavior changes and/or emotional outbursts.

(g) Poor health and hygiene.

(h) Continual excuses/blame; inability to accept responsibility for even small errors.

(6) Serious stress in the employee's personal life, such as financial problems, bill collectors, loss of job, recent divorce, death of a loved one, crying, or excessive personal phone calls.

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work site. Statistically, those who commit acts of violence have a history of conflicts with others.

(7) Substance Abuse.

(a) Most drugs interfere dramatically with reasoning ability, social inhibition, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong.

(b) Alcohol and certain drugs may agitate, create paranoia, and cause aggressive behavior; a marginal individual may be pushed over the edge.

d. Upon noting any of the above warning signals, the immediate supervisor must also consider the following factors:

(1) Body language and tone of voice.

(2) The employee's present ability to carry out the threats (i.e., immediacy of threat; existence of actual plan; availability of means to carry out the plan; or the employee's presence in, or close proximity to, the facility).

(3) The employee's propensity to engage in physical violence (past behavior).

(4) A triggering event causing the employee to react.

(5) The context in which words were used by the employee.

(6) The response and reaction of the target.

(7) The employee's subsequent conduct, e.g., the presence or absence of remorse, concern, or desire to correct.

(8) The individual data collected from personnel and medical records, fellow employees, supervisors and outside data sources, as appropriate, to identify prior incidents as well as any current "turbulence." Often there is a need for clinical assessment regarding psychological factors and the potential for risk. Similarly, there may be a need for clinical intervention, particularly in the case of threatened or actual angry aggression by a troubled employee.

e. After careful consideration of the above factors, the supervisor will determine whether an incident of workplace violence has occurred or is likely to occur. The immediate supervisor shall notify the DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and/or Provost Marshal Office (PMO) of all events or threatened events of violence.

8. Leadership Techniques for Reducing Risks.

a. It is important for supervisors and managers to understand that any interaction with another person

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has the potential of escalating from conversation to confrontation. Occasionally, even the most benign exchanges turn into heated debates and, if not handled properly, will continue to digress into full-blown arguments. These arguments continue to worsen until physical confrontation occurs. This is the point where the potential for violence is at its peak. There are those, however, who do not commit acts of violence immediately; they become

preoccupied with unpleasant events for long periods of time before they finally commit to action.

b. Employees must have clear and concise guidelines in order to know what is and is not expected of them. Supervisors have the responsibility to identify areas of needed improvement when performance is not at an acceptable level. When performance counseling is needed, or when a threat has been made, the supervisor must confront the person responsible. A confrontation will, in some cases, lead to a crisis that will escalate into a volatile situation, if not handled appropriately.

c. Because a crisis normally progresses through stages, the supervisor has several opportunities to defuse the crisis before it gets out of hand. The supervisor will make every effort to contain the crisis at the lowest level. The further the situation is allowed to escalate, the more difficult it becomes to manage.

d. Supervisors must not put themselves in the position of diagnosing an employee's personal problems. There are, however, behavioral signs that may be observed that will tell the supervisor that a possible crisis is developing. The first sign of a potential crisis is anxiety on the part of the employee, especially when confronted by the supervisor.

(1) When the supervisor talks with the employee, the supervisor must always be alert for behaviors that indicate the presence of anxiety. Anxiety may be observed as a noticeable change, either a decrease or increase in the person's normal behavior. A person who is normally quiet and reserved may be on edge or fidgety; an employee who is normally hyperactive may be withdrawn and sullen; or a person who is normally talkative may become quiet and distant.

(2) With the employee displaying behaviors associated with anxiety, the supervisor must be empathic, and must convey to the person an awareness of the anxiety, and express a desire to help alleviate it. The supervisor may prevent the crisis

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from escalating by being supportive of the employee. People are often hesitant to disclose the real reason for their anxiety, but by listening, the supervisor may learn the true reason for it and determine the need that exists.

e. If the employee's anxiety is not reduced early, he will likely become defensive. The employee begins to lose control of rational thought and will often become belligerent and challenge the supervisor or the authority the supervisor represents. The

employee will begin challenging authority by questions. By answering a question with the appropriate type of response, the supervisor may curtail escalation of the crisis.

(1) If the questions are simply information-seeking questions, simple, straightforward answers will normally satisfy the individual. This response will usually be sufficient to keep the employee from attempting to undermine the supervisor's authority and defuse any hostility the person may have.

(2) If the questions are intended to challenge the supervisor or his authority, a power struggle is likely to ensue. At this point, the supervisor may consider redirecting the question back to the person with a comment such as, "*What do you think would be a solution to the problem?*" This will let the person know that the supervisor is willing to listen to suggestions. Employees often are not prepared to be asked for their suggestions, and this can go a long way toward defusing an incident.

f. If addressing the question does not satisfy the employee, the supervisor will likely be met with refusal; the employee will simply refuse to follow directives. When met with this refusal, the supervisor will again redirect any questions to the person as before; set limits that are clear, concise, and enforceable; and outline the consequences of making the wrong choice. The supervisor must be willing to ensure that the consequences are enforced.

g. When it becomes obvious that the employee is getting defensive and starting to lose control of the process of rational thought, it is imperative that the supervisor avoid provoking him. The supervisor must never violate the employee's personal comfort zone, an area surrounding the person where he feels threatened if intruded upon by another person. As long as others stay outside this comfort zone, the person will feel relatively unthreatened. The comfort zone is usually an area 1 1/2 to 3 feet around the person, but may vary depending on the situation,

mood, and his trust of the other person. Entry into the person's comfort zone will almost always cause him to feel threatened and become more defensive. The supervisor must not stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the person who is becoming defensive and must refrain from yelling or pointing a finger in the person's face.

h. If the employee remains defensive after the limits have been set, verbal venting or yelling (and possibly, swearing) will usually occur. This venting

will normally last only a few seconds, if the supervisor allows the employee to vent.

(1) If the venting takes place in a room where there are other people, the supervisor will take immediate steps to isolate the situation by either removing the audience from the area or taking the individual who is venting to a more secluded area. Allowing the person to ventilate may be threatening to the supervisor because no one enjoys being yelled at; but it role models self-constraint and helps to set the tone for the remainder of the conversation.

(2) When the employee starts to calm down, the supervisor will restate the limits that have been set in a nonthreatening manner. The supervisor will use a tone of support, understanding, and reason, but must be ready to enforce any limits that have been imposed.

i. If the employee still has not brought himself under control, intimidation may also be expected. The person will threaten the supervisor, the supervisor's family, himself, or others, either verbally or nonverbally. At this point, the employee has lost control of his emotions and physical violence may be just a step away. Once the employee begins making threats, the supervisor must not attempt to further deal with the employee alone. The supervisor will call for the assistance of other managers or supervisors in the area, if possible, or enlist the assistance of DCP or EAP.

j. If successfully handled, the employee will cease the threatening behavior and eventually reach a state where the supervisor will be able to reestablish communication. The employee will regain control of his emotions, realize what has happened, and, most often, show signs of remorse. If this happens, the supervisor may turn the event into a learning experience by pointing out the unacceptable behavior to the employee.

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9. Procedures for Reporting and Assessing Violent and Threatening Behavior in the Workplace.

a. Quick reference guides for reporting and assessing incidents are at Appendixes A through D.

b. Ignoring an employee who exhibits threatening behavior is the worst possible action to take. Ignoring such behavior only reinforces the behavior and sends a message to the employee that it is acceptable. Addressing problems early is the best way to prevent threatening situations and create a safe

work environment for all employees. The following roles and responsibilities outline an orderly process for handling violence and threatening behavior in the workplace.

c. Employees. Each member of the workforce:

(1) Is accountable for his own behavior.

(2) Is expected to interact responsibly with fellow employees and supervisors.

(3) Will report any threatening situation, unauthorized individuals in the workplace, or threats from nonemployees.

d. Immediate (First-Line) Supervisor. The immediate supervisor of the threatening employee is responsible for:

(1) Arranging for the safety of subordinates, caring for those affected, and maintaining the continuity of the agency's mission.

(2) Communicating information regarding the incident or behavior to his immediate supervisor and upper management, and contacting the appropriate specialists (Employee Assistance Counselors or Employee Relations Specialists). In situations that have the potential for injury or loss of life, supervisors will first contact 911 and then report the situation to the EAP, PMO, or DCP.

e. Second-Line Supervisor and Upper Management.

(1) During a threatening situation, the most important role of management is to provide support to the supervisor dealing directly with the threatening employee. Support may include, but not be limited to, meeting with the first-line supervisor while he obtains statements from witnesses and the threatening employee; arranging for and/or participating in counseling and/or disciplinary sessions of employees; or temporarily relieving the supervisor of his regular duties while he is dealing with the threatening situation.

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(2) At all times, management has the responsibility to identify and address underlying workplace situations which may give rise to stress and/or violence.

f. Employee Relations Specialist. The Employee Relations Specialist consults and advises management throughout the process. Additional responsibilities include assessing and analyzing evidence, advising management on appropriate action, processing disciplinary/adverse action letters, ensuring that evidence exists to support any action

taken, and informing the generalist or relevant personnel servicing team of pending actions.

g. Employee Assistance Program. The EAP Counselors are available to assess the threatening employee and make appropriate referrals, provide support and consultation to victims and supervisors, and participate in debriefing sessions regarding the incident.

h. Violence Intervention Team (VIT). The VIT includes representatives from EAP; PMO; DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division; Staff Judge Advocate; Medical Department Activity, Preventive Medicine; and the appropriate labor union (when bargaining unit employees are involved or affected). Additional expertise will be solicited, as needed. The VIT will review application of this pamphlet, and, in all proceedings, the VIT will comply with laws protecting the confidentiality of individuals.

10. Role of the Violence Intervention Team. The role of the VIT is to assess potentially violent situations in the workplace, develop an action plan to address the situation, and conduct a post-incident review. The recommended step-by-step process for this is as follows:

a. Upon receiving a supervisor's report of workplace violence, the PMO will immediately notify the VIT Manager.

b. The VIT Manager and PMO will assess preliminary information to determine if further action is necessary. The VIT Manager will notify the DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division, Employee Relations Specialist.

c. The PMO will interview the person who reported the threat, as well as any other witnesses to the incident. He will gather as much information as possible about the threat and the person making it,

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document this information in detail, and provide investigation findings to the VIT.

d. The VIT Manager will activate the VIT, if additional investigation is warranted.

e. The VIT will develop a plan in conjunction with the DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division, Employee Relations Specialist, PMO and EAP personnel (including a background investigation of the employee). Emphasis is directed on locating information indicating how the employee responds to stress and

considers the predictors of violence, as outlined in paragraph 6.

f. A VIT member will interview the employee, if warranted. He will provide security if it is believed the employee will become enraged. Security personnel must be experienced and trained to handle the situation. Calm, low-key, security individuals who do not project a threatening manner are recommended. Their behavior must not precipitate an incident of violence (pre-arranged security contingency plans will be formulated).

g. The VIT will determine the employee's continued work status until final disposition is reached (team assessment).

h. The VIT will, with input from EAP personnel, determine if the employee is a threat to himself or others (team assessment). If the employee is determined not to be a threat, a decision is made concerning a referral for counseling and/or other appropriate action.

i. If the team decides the individual is an immediate danger to himself or others, actions may include referring him to law enforcement officials, obtaining a temporary restraining order, or implementing security plans.

j. The team will provide appropriate feedback information and support to the victims and/or targets. The team monitors and assigns responsibility for implementation of all VIT recommendations and actions.

k. After the incident has been investigated and resolved, the VIT will meet to review the incident to determine whether preventive measures need to be changed or added for responding to future incidents.

11. Responsibilities of the Violence Intervention Team. Members of the VIT, identified below, assume responsibilities as follows:

a. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Representative.

(1) Serves as the Team Manager. Coordinates overall response to incident(s) of workplace violence.

(2) Assesses potential of threat and recommends course of action to the team.

(3) Coordinates/provides delivery of professional EAP services to include, but not be limited to, violence intervention, threat assessment, clinical counseling, and treatment methods of chemical dependency issues.

b. PMO.

(1) Responsible for providing a safe and secure workplace. Minimizes personnel-related problems that may involve current and former employees, employee family members, visitors, and customers.

(2) Incident Resolution Process: Upon notification of a potential/actual problem, the PMO will perform the initial information collection concerning the complaint.

(3) Interviews the victim and witnesses to determine who made the threat, against whom the threat was made, specific language of the threat, whether there was physical contact, time and place of the incident, whether there were any witnesses, and whether there were prior incidents involving the subject.

(4) In conjunction with VIT Manager, performs assessment based on collected information, makes the decision whether to interview the employee, selects an appropriate interview site, and determines if further action is warranted.

(5) If the matter is not resolved, considers performing the following actions:

(a) Background checks into criminal records.

(b) Identifying current source of problems (RIF notice, performance appraisal, debts, personal problems, etc.).

(c) Investigating prior disciplinary action record. This will include obtaining weapons registration and referring criminal behavior to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

(d) Work with local law enforcement liaison (request interview and assessment by police or sheriff, establish restraining order, debarment from post, etc.).

(e) Discuss medical evaluation, appropriate disciplinary action, and/or security protection.

c. Supervisors/Managers. Supervisors of the affected work-group are automatically members of

Employee Relations Specialist at the DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division.

(5) Ensure the safety and well-being of the workforce and customers; make arrangements for trauma debriefing for coworkers.

(6) Provide a full report in response to questions from the VIT.

(7) Maintain notes of key events.

(8) Provide periodic updates until the situation has stabilized.

d. Directors.

(1) Ensure implementation of action plan, provide necessary resources, and assume responsibility for overall outcome.

(2) Assess and make recommendations to the VIT on the potential risk of violence and the appropriate course of action (i.e., fitness for duty examination).

(3) Assist the team in the assessment of the potential violent situation and coordinate appropriate medical and injury compensation background and information.

e. Director of Civilian Personnel. Serves as advisor to the VIT.

f. Employee Relations Specialist. Provides input on how to deal with the employee's present work status and background on the employee's past discipline and work-related grievances.

g. Labor Counselor. Provides input on contractual or legal procedures relating to the course of action to be taken.

h. Union Representative(s). As appropriate, provides input to the VIT.

i. Office of Equal Opportunity Programs Representative. Serves as advisor to the VIT.

j. Preventive Medicine/Occupational Health Office Representative. Serves as advisor to the VIT.

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the VIT; as such they will:

(1) Telephone 911 in situations where violence is imminent or has occurred, and then notify their chain of command.

(2) In situations that do not involve or have the potential of immediate violence, notify their chain of command immediately after the situation is under control.

(3) Participate as a full member of the Team.

(4) If warranted and appropriate, remove the perpetrator from the workplace for the remainder of the day on administrative leave after contacting the

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12. Immediate Action When an Incident Occurs.

a. Emergency Situations. Any member of the workforce observing violent or threatening behavior is expected to first secure his own safety and then, in emergency situations, call 911 or the local emergency number, if the situation requires the immediate assistance of medical and/or law enforcement personnel. The employee will be prepared to provide a description of the violent or threatening individual and the exact location of the person who will meet the emergency team. Thereafter, he will report the incident to his chain of command.

b. Non-emergency Situations. Notify their supervisor. If the threatening employee is their supervisor, the employee will notify someone else in the supervisory chain or call the EAP or DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division. Reporting incidents will not be the basis for adverse action.

c. Report the situation to the EAP (VIT Manager), PMO, and/or DCP, Labor/Management-Employee Relations and Training Division.

d. Employees who are threatened, assaulted, or attacked while on official duty in the field (not at a federal installation) will report the incident(s) to local law enforcement authorities and to the PMO so that the proper federal authorities may investigate the incident(s).

13. Post-Incident Procedures.

a. After the incident has been investigated and resolved, the VIT will meet to review the incident and determine whether preventive measures must be changed or added for responding to future incidents.

b. The employee reporting a workplace violence injury, or who has been exposed to or impacted by a violent incident at the workplace, shall have immediate first aid and emotional support, debriefing, or counseling treatment. The employee will also be advised to consult a health professional of his choice for treatment or critical incident/trauma counseling. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Counselors will be available to provide post-trauma critical incident stress debriefings for employees affected by the incident.

14. Training Requirements. All Fort Polk employees will receive overview training on violence in the workplace, the existence and identification of

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early warning signs, and the role and responsibilities of the VIT.

Appendix A A Quick Reference for Reporting an Imminent, Potential, or Actual Violent Incident

INITIAL ON-SITE ACTION:

*Contact the PMO PERSONNEL IMMEDIATELY at 911.

*Briefly describe: WHAT is happening and WHERE it is happening.

*Let the PMO personnel know if Emergency Medical Assistance appears necessary.

*Attempt to clear the immediate area of anyone not directly involved in the incident.

*Send someone to the building entrance, stairwell, or elevator to direct those responding to the incident.

*Contact the servicing Employee Relations Specialist and/or Employee Assistance Professional as soon as possible, or ask someone in a nearby office to do so. The telephone numbers are 4431/2804 for the Employee Relations Specialist and 2961/6756 for the Employee Assistance Professional.

AFTER THE INCIDENT:

*Contact an Employee Relations Specialist, if you have not already done so.

*Contact the PMO personnel to let them know who reported the incident.

*Inform the supervisor of the incident and the observance or involvement in it.

*Contact EAP to request counseling, if needed.

*Cooperate fully in any further investigation or follow-on action related to the incident.

Appendix B Guide for the Analysis of Violent, Threatening, or Bizarre Behavior

WHEN FACED WITH A GIVEN INCIDENT, HOW DOES AN EMPLOYEE ANALYZE WHAT IT MEANS?

o The employee must make a fast judgment on the degree of risk involved.

o Some incidents involve the real probability of actual death or injury.

- o Others give an employee time to make choices.

WAS THE OBSERVED BEHAVIOR OR CONDUCT PHYSICALLY VIOLENT?

- o Did it involve the use of firearms or other weapons?
- o Was the violence on-duty? Who saw or reported it?
- o Off-duty? Who saw it or reported it?
- o Whose employee? An outside employee?

WAS THE EMPLOYEE OR OTHER INDIVIDUAL MAKING THREATS OR ENGAGING IN THREATENING BEHAVIOR?

- o Were they written threats? Verbal or telephone threats? By the supervisor's own employee?
- o Were they remarks that were intimidating or harassing?
- o Was it threatening or intimidating behavior?

WAS THIS CONDUCT OR BEHAVIOR INAPPROPRIATE, RUDE, OR OTHERWISE "STRANGE"?

- o Has this behavior affected the employee's performance of the job? The agency's mission?
- o Is the behavior disturbing the workplace or raising complaints?

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- o Does the supervisor have medical records?

IF THE BEHAVIOR INVOLVES USE OF FIREARMS OR OTHER WEAPONS ON THE PREMISES:

- o Immediately call the PMO at 911.
- o Then, if possible, observe the individual's behavior and appearance. Clothing disordered? Employee under influence of alcohol or drugs? Coherent or not?
- o Get witnesses' statements, arrest documents, etc.

- o See if employee should stay at site. If not, use excused absence to get and keep employee away.

- o Later, refer the employee to the EAP for counseling.

IF THE BEHAVIOR INVOLVES FIGHTING OR PHYSICAL ATTACK ON SUPERVISOR OR OTHER EMPLOYEE:

- o Call the PMO at 911.
- o Get the attacker away from the worksite.

IF THE PHYSICAL VIOLENCE HAS OCCURRED OFF-DUTY:

- o See if employee is in jail or perhaps hospitalized, and for how long.
- o Will supervisor grant leave?
- o Will the supervisor use an indefinite suspension?
- o If the supervisor's information is from police reports, news stories, or other sources, check these out to see whether employee will (or is able to) return to worksite.

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**Appendix C
Dealing with Threats or Threatening
or Intimidating Behavior**

BIZARRE OR IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR: What most people think of when they hear "*VIOLENCE*" is bizarre behavior that makes them worry about future violence.

DETERMINE IF THE BEHAVIOR AFFECTS THE EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE, THE MISSION, OR DISTURBS COWORKERS:

- o Observe the employee's behavior or interview fellow employees, other personnel, or agency clients. Make notes.

o Determine whether the behavior is disruptive. Have there been complaints from staff or clients?

o Does the employee's job require a security clearance? Would the behavior affect the employee's clearance?

o Does the supervisor have information on a medical condition that might cause the behavior? The supervisor may order or offer a medical examination if the employee raises the issue.

o Is there any indication that the employee may be potentially violent? The supervisor will not try to discuss this by himself. Usually the supervisor will have a statement from a doctor, EAP, or law enforcement official.

UNLESS THE BIZARRE BEHAVIOR AFFECTS ONE OR MORE OF THE AREAS INDICATED ABOVE, A SUPERVISOR CANNOT DO ANYTHING BUT:

o Document the dates and occurrences of the behavior.

o Find out in a discussion with the employee if there are things bothering him at the office or home.

o Counsel the employee on actions which are inappropriate and/or violate agency standards of conduct.

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o Refer the employee to the EAP.

IF THE BIZARRE BEHAVIOR IS DISRUPTIVE OR OTHERWISE HAS AN IMPACT ON THE EMPLOYEE'S OR AGENCY'S WORK, THEN TREAT IT JUST AS ONE WOULD OTHER BEHAVIOR:

o If the employee raises a medical issue, request documentation or offer or order a medical examination.

DEPENDING ON THE RESULTS, CONSIDER NON-DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

o Counsel the employee about the disruptive effects of the behavior with a specific written warning on future disciplinary action if it persists or recurs.

o Take any warranted personnel action.

Appendix D Non-Disciplinary And Disciplinary Actions

NON-DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

o Temporary detail to another position, work area, or to light duties.

o Excused absence or "*administrative leave*" -- immediate, but temporary solution. NOT A PERMANENT SOLUTION.

o Indefinite suspension or indefinite enforced leave using adverse action procedures.

o Permanent reassignment or offer of reduction in grade as accommodation.

o Removal for medical inability to perform -- even when employee is engaging in threatening or bizarre behavior if mental disability causes conduct.

o Action based on bizarre or irrational behavior -- characterized as non-disciplinary.

o Action based on loss of security clearance -- mental unreliability.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS INCLUDE:

o Actions based on violent behavior -- physical attacks, destruction of property, or menacing behavior.

o Actions based on potential violence -- usually taken for mental inability or serious off-duty misconduct.

o Actions for threats or threatening behavior or actions for intimidating or harassing remarks or behavior.

o Actions for loss of security clearance.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT:

Disability retirement application does not stay other action unless agency agrees in last chance or settlement agreement. In mental disability cases, try to get family members to file on employee's behalf. In extreme cases, agency must file on behalf of employee -- only if no other person is willing or able to do so.
