

POLICY STATEMENT # 2-3-08
Mental Health and Recovery Board of Wayne and Holmes Counties

Subject: Office Safety Policy

Effective Date:

Supersedes:

Approval Signature: _____

Purpose:

The policy of the Board is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all its staff and volunteers. To this end, information, training and supervision is provided as necessary.

The policy will be kept up to date to take account of changes in Board activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every year by the safety officer.

Safety officer:

The Executive Director will appoint a safety officer, who will carry out the duties described in this policy as well as any other safety duties assigned by the Executive Director.

Fire/Disaster Safety:

If a building/office disaster occurs, while the office is occupied or a threat of a disaster occurs, the building/office should be evacuated and or the fire safety procedure followed below, if appropriate. On leaving the building, staff should assemble at the front of the Wayne Center for the Arts, until all are accounted for who were thought to be in the building.

If you notice a fire you should immediately raise the alarm by breaking the glass of the nearest manual fire alarm call point. This can be done using your elbow or shoe. On hearing this, you should immediately leave the building by the quickest route, closing doors as you leave. On leaving the building, staff should assemble at the front of the Wayne Center for the Arts, until all are accounted for who were thought to be in the building.

A line drawing of the floor plan for our building is attached indicating the position of alarm points, extinguishers, exit routes for evacuation and assembly point.

Fire extinguishing equipment is provided in the building hallways, but should only be used: by those **trained** in its use it, if the fire is **very small**, if by so doing you **do not place yourself in any danger**, or **after raising the alarm** and ensuring that the fire department has been called.

Injuries on the worksite:

In the event of an accident causing injury, the nearest qualified person who can help with first aid should be contacted. The accident victim, if able, or the person who will help administer first aid, will decide on appropriate treatment and further action, if necessary. Following treatment, the accident/injury should be reported to safety officer who will write up an incident report as per the Board incident reporting policy. A first aid kit will be available to staff for minor injuries. Emergency phone numbers will be posted near all extensions to facilitate quick response.

Electrical safety:

The following arrangements for electrical safety apply to all electrical equipment in use in the Board, including personal items.

Only electrical equipment that is properly installed and maintained should be used in the Board offices.

All portable appliances will be inspected by the safety officer and, where necessary, subject to electrical test. All Board staff should routinely check that their electrical appliances are not damaged and that there are no obvious signs of misuse such as damaged or discolored plug tops and worn cables.

Any item that becomes faulty should be taken out of service and either repaired or discarded. Only those staff members or contractors qualified to repair electrical equipment should attempt to do so.

Equipment and furniture should be sited so as to avoid the need for leads to trail across floors. Where these cannot be avoided, proprietary rubber strips should be used to reduce the risk of tripping.

Smoking:

No smoking is permitted in the Board offices. Signs will be posted to let the public know that this is a non-smoking office.

Concealed Weapons:

No concealed weapons will be allowed in the Board offices. Notice of this to the public will be posted at entry ways as per Ohio concealed weapons laws. No person may carry, possess or use any dangerous weapon on Board. No person may display or portray as real any object that resembles a dangerous weapon.

Threats of violence:

No person may engage in violent conduct or make threats of violence, implied or direct, on Board premises or in connection with Board business. This includes but is not limited to:

1. The use of force with the intent to cause harm, e.g. physical attacks, any unwanted contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, or throwing objects;
2. Acts or threats which are intended to intimidate, coerce, or cause fear of harm;
3. Acts or threats made directly or indirectly by words, gestures or symbols.

Employees and volunteers are expected to report any threat or act of violence which they have witnessed, received, or have been informed of to the Safety officer who will conduct an immediate investigation and respond with the appropriate action.

Health and Safety training:

Training and instruction in routine matters will be given, as required, by the Safety Officer. In particular, new members of staff on their first day of joining will be informed of the office safety policy. At least yearly the staff will be trained in:

1. Action in the event of fire/disaster, including proper use of a fire extinguisher.
2. Action in the event of an accident/injury, including the location of first aid equipment and emergency phone numbers.
3. Action in the event of threats of violence
4. Their responsibility for following safety procedures, including the responsibility for reporting health and safety problems and how this should be done, filling out incident reports and for co-operating with colleagues.
5. Any specific responsibilities they have in relation to health and safety

Reporting Health and Safety problems:

A member of the department noticing a health or safety problem that they are not able to put right themselves should immediately tell the safety officer, office manager or other person in authority.

Unauthorized personnel:

An unauthorized person is someone who does not have authority, expressed or implied by appointment or position, to be in the area in question. Unauthorized persons are not allowed access to offices and may not use any tools, office or other equipment wherever situated. A member of the public may like any other visitor or person legitimately on the premises may be an unauthorized person, if in a part of the premises where he or she has no legitimate reason to be.

Children visiting the office must be under the immediate supervision of a responsible adult at all times.

Visitors to Board offices should be instructed to report to their correct destination, a staff member's office or conference room.

Routine office safety:

For routine office activities, there is no significant health or safety risk, and no further assessment is necessary. Non-routine office activities should be assessed, and where any significant hazards are identified, the results of the assessment should be recorded.

Falls are the most prolific cause of injury in offices, accounting for almost half of all office accidents. Next come the handling and lifting of goods, materials and equipment, followed by stepping on, or striking against things; falling objects; machinery; or transporting of materials.

The maintenance of high standards of general housekeeping in offices goes a long way to preventing these and other accidents. Care should be given to the general layout and storage of items to minimize the possible hazards. Particular attention should be given to: the condition of floors and floor coverings; trailing leads; storage of items, particularly heavy ones.

Problems identified in this area should be reported to the safety officer for follow up.

Monitoring the policy and use of outside expertise:

The day to day monitoring of the policy is the responsibility of safety officer. Staff should aid the safety officer and report accidents, near misses or sickness linked to work to determine whether existing arrangements require modification in order to prevent a recurrence.

The safety officer will arrange for outside expertise to perform an independent inspection of office safety and review the findings with staff plus take corrective action where necessary.

Draft Office safety policy 11/18/04