

1 AN ACT relating to health care workplace safety.

2 WHEREAS, health care workers provide services in a wide range of settings
3 including medical-surgical hospitals, psychiatric and rehabilitation hospitals, surgery
4 centers, outpatient clinics, immediate care, skilled nursing, at-home nursing, hospice care,
5 community triage, and modified medical detoxification facilities; and

6 WHEREAS, health care workers are up to 12 times more likely to experience
7 workplace violence than any other profession; and

8 WHEREAS, health care workers deserve to work in a safe and nonviolent setting;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, with passage of this Act, the Commonwealth of Kentucky in joins 10
11 other states in requiring hospitals and all other health facilities to create and implement
12 workplace violence prevention programs that establish information collection and
13 reporting mechanisms for incidents of workplace violence, including threats of violence,
14 actual violence, and any other unsafe act committed against health care workers,
15 occurring in the workplace;

16 NOW, THEREFORE,

17 ***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

18 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 216 IS CREATED TO
19 READ AS FOLLOWS:

20 ***As used in this chapter:***

21 ***(1) "Health facility" has the same meaning as in KRS 216B.015;***

22 ***(2) "Health care worker" means any person, whether licensed or unlicensed,***
23 ***temporarily or permanently employed by, volunteering in, or under contract with***
24 ***a health facility, who has direct contact with a patient of the health facility for***
25 ***purposes of either medical care or emergency response situations potentially***
26 ***involving violence;***

27 ***(3) "Workplace" means any property that is owned or leased by the health facility at***

- 1 which the official business of the health care worker is conducted;
2 (4) "Workplace safety" means the process of protecting health care workers'
3 physical well-being from workplace violence; and
4 (5) "Workplace violence" means any act or threat of physical violence, harassment,
5 intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the
6 workplace.

7 ➔SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 216 IS CREATED TO
8 READ AS FOLLOWS:

- 9 (1) By January 1, 2024, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services shall develop
10 and disperse the following information to health facilities:
11 (a) Guidelines for developing a workplace safety assessment;
12 (b) Examples of a workplace safety plan; and
13 (c) Examples of workplace safety standards specific to preventing workplace
14 violence against health care workers.
15 (2) Beginning January 1, 2025, the cabinet shall annually audit health facilities for
16 compliance with the provisions of Sections 1 to 5 of this Act.
17 (3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the cabinet shall
18 accept that a health facility is in compliance with Sections 1 to 5 of this Act if the
19 health facility:
20 (a) Is accredited by the Joint Commission or another nationally recognized
21 accrediting organization with comparable standards and survey processes,
22 that is approved by the United States Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
23 Services;
24 (b) Is recognized by the United States Office of the Inspector General as a
25 health facility certified to participate in the Medicare and Medicaid
26 programs by the United States Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services;
27 (c) Is licensed as an assisted living community pursuant to KRS Chapter 194A;

1 or

2 (d) Is any provider that accepts payment for services from an individual
3 receiving state supplementation pursuant to KRS 205.245.

4 (4) The cabinet shall promulgate the necessary administrative regulations to
5 effectuate the provisions of Sections 1 to 5 of this Act.

6 ➔SECTION 3. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 216 IS CREATED TO
7 READ AS FOLLOWS:

8 (1) (a) Health facilities shall develop and execute a workplace safety assessment to
9 identify the risk of workplace violence against health care workers.

10 (b) Health facilities shall create a workplace safety plan to address the risks
11 identified in the workplace safety assessment. Each health facility shall
12 develop the workplace safety plan in a way that affords appropriate
13 representation from all the different types of health care workers operating
14 on the premises.

15 (2) The workplace safety assessment described in subsection (1)(a) of this section
16 shall outline strategies aimed at addressing security considerations and factors
17 that may contribute to or present the risk of workplace violence, including but not
18 limited to the following:

19 (a) The physical attributes of the health facility setting, including security
20 systems, alarms, emergency response, and security personnel available;

21 (b) Staffing, including staffing patterns, patient classifications, and procedures
22 to mitigate violence against health care workers;

23 (c) Job design, equipment, and facilities;

24 (d) First aid and emergency procedures;

25 (e) The reporting of violent acts;

26 (f) Health care worker education and training requirements and
27 implementation strategy;

1 (g) Security risks associated with specific units, areas of the health facility with
2 uncontrolled access, late night or early morning shifts, and health care
3 worker security in areas surrounding the health facility such as the parking
4 areas; and

5 (h) Intervention procedures for providing assistance to a health care worker
6 directly affected by an incident of workplace violence.

7 (3) Health facilities shall annually:

8 (a) Conduct a workplace safety assessment;

9 (b) Review the workplace violence incidents from the previous year for patterns
10 that indicate risk; and

11 (c) Review the workplace safety plan and make any necessary adjustments.

12 (4) In developing the workplace safety assessment and safety plan required by
13 subsections (1) to (3) of this section, the health facility shall consider any
14 guidelines on workplace safety standards issued by the cabinet pursuant to
15 Section 2 of this Act.

16 ➔SECTION 4. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 216 IS CREATED TO
17 READ AS FOLLOWS:

18 (1) By January 1, 2024, and at least annually thereafter, each health facility shall
19 provide violence prevention training to all health care workers, volunteers, and
20 contracted security personnel.

21 (2) The training shall occur within ninety (90) days of the health care worker's initial
22 date of hire unless he or she is considered a temporary employee, in which case
23 the training shall occur before the health care worker begins performing his or
24 her duties as an employee.

25 (3) The method and frequency of training may vary according to the information and
26 strategies identified in the workplace safety plan developed pursuant to Section 3
27 of this Act.

- 1 (4) Trainings may include but are not limited to classes that provide:
- 2 (a) Interactive questions and answers;
- 3 (b) Hands-on training;
- 4 (c) Video training;
- 5 (d) Brochures;
- 6 (e) Verbal training; or
- 7 (f) Other verbal or written training deemed appropriate by the workplace safety
- 8 plan.
- 9 (5) Trainings shall address the following topics as appropriate to the particular
- 10 setting, duties, and responsibilities of the health care worker, volunteer, or
- 11 contracted security personnel being trained and shall be based upon the hazards
- 12 identified in the workplace safety assessment:
- 13 (a) The health facility's workplace safety plan, including general safety
- 14 procedures;
- 15 (b) Behavioral predictors of violence;
- 16 (c) The violence escalation cycle;
- 17 (d) De-escalation techniques to minimize violent behavior;
- 18 (e) Strategies to prevent physical harm with hands-on practice or role-play;
- 19 (f) Response team processes;
- 20 (g) Proper application of restraints, including both physical and chemical
- 21 restraints;
- 22 (h) The process to document and report incidents;
- 23 (i) The debrief process for affected employees following violent acts; and
- 24 (j) Resources available to employees for coping with the effects of violence.
- 25 (6) Health facilities shall develop and execute a basic protective skills competency
- 26 test for health care workers, volunteers, and contracted security personnel based
- 27 on the material provided in the training.

1 (7) Health facilities shall develop hiring practices that require applicants to
2 demonstrate competency using protective safety skills.

3 ➔SECTION 5. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 216 IS CREATED TO
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 (1) Health facilities shall develop an internal reporting system for acts of workplace
6 violence committed against a health care worker, patient, or visitor on the health
7 facility's premises, and shall train health care workers on the proper reporting
8 procedure.

9 (2) Health facilities shall maintain a record of reported acts of workplace violence
10 committed against a health care worker, patient, or visitor on the health facility's
11 premises. Each record shall be kept for five (5) years following the date the act
12 was reported, during which time the record shall be available for inspection by
13 the cabinet upon request. The report shall include:

14 (a) The health facility's name and address;

15 (b) The date, time, and specific location on the health facility's premises where
16 the reported workplace violence occurred;

17 (c) The name, job title, department or ward assignment, and staff identification
18 or Social Security number of the victim;

19 (d) A description of the person against whom the act was committed as:

20 1. A patient;

21 2. A visitor;

22 3. A health care worker; or

23 4. Other;

24 (e) A description of the person who allegedly committed the violent act as:

25 1. A patient;

26 2. A visitor;

27 3. An employee; or

- 1 4. Other;
- 2 (f) A description of the type of workplace violence committed as:
- 3 1. Harassment, verbal abuse, or other threatening and violent behavior
- 4 with no physical contact or violence;
- 5 2. Physical violence resulting in mild soreness, surface abrasions,
- 6 scratches, or small bruises;
- 7 3. Physical violence resulting in major soreness, cuts, or large bruises;
- 8 4. Physical violence resulting in severe lacerations, a bone fracture, or a
- 9 head injury; or
- 10 5. Physical violence resulting in loss of limb or death;
- 11 (g) An identification of any body part injured;
- 12 (h) A description of any weapon used;
- 13 (i) The number of health care workers in the vicinity of the act when it
- 14 occurred; and
- 15 (j) A description of actions taken by employees of the health facility in
- 16 response to the act.
- 17 (3) Health facilities shall develop a procedure to follow up with victims of the
- 18 reported acts of workplace violence.
- 19 (4) Health facilities shall provide victims of workplace violence with support which
- 20 may include access to physical and mental health resources.
- 21 ➔SECTION 6. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 344 IS CREATED TO
- 22 READ AS FOLLOWS:
- 23 It is an unlawful practice for a health facility to discriminate or retaliate against a
- 24 health care worker who reports a workplace safety violation or an incident of
- 25 workplace violence.