

## Washtenaw County Community Mental Health

### Site, Environment of Care (EOC) and Community Safety – (policy)

#### PURPOSE

- Assure the physical and emotional safety of consumers, families, staff and others involved in the participation of services through WCCMH.
- Assure the physical and emotional safety provided in a variety of settings included those owned or leased by Washtenaw County and those provided in other community settings, as well as, when services are provided virtually.

#### POLICY

It is the policy of the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health that:

- All WCCMH occupied buildings and/or leased facilities shall have approved emergency procedures for the following emergencies: Fire, Tornado/Severe Weather, Power Failure, Bomb Threat, Medical Emergency and Disruptive Persons/Active Threats. ;The Site Safety (EOC) Team and WC Emergency Management and Risk Management will review the results of any implementation of an emergency plan and shall submit its findings, and resulting recommendations, if applicable, and make recommendations to the full WCCMH Safety (EOC) Committee.
- Training for emergency procedures consists of the following:
  - Each new employee is responsible for reading the site-specific emergency response plan during employee orientation. All Supervisors or Program Administrators will ensure that this is available to the employee and that they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibility during an emergency. This will be documented in the new staff orientation checklist.
  - Drills will be conducted according to the Site Safety (EOC) Team schedule and will serve as learning opportunities for staff.
- The Site Safety (EOC) Committee shall be an integral part of the WCCMH Safety (EOC) Committee, insuring a safe environment for recipients, visitors, and staff. The focus of these committees involves a comprehensive assessment and assurance of safety concerns in the following areas:
  - General overall safety/security of sites operated by WCCMH
  - Control of hazardous materials and wastes
  - Site Emergency Response Plans (ERP)
  - Safe provision of services in sites hosted by other agencies and in the provision of services in homes and other community locations and virtual methods.
  - Staff training and orientation
  - Workplace violence and security
- Each site is responsible for developing and monitoring general safety practices in accordance with the Site Safety (EOC) Team's recommendations.
  - The Site Safety (EOC) Team Chair shall be responsible for that site's compliance with /Site Safety policies and procedures.

- The Site Safety Representatives are also responsible for maintaining site specific safety manuals, site safety minutes, drill documentation and follow up reports.
- WCCMH Human Resources and Safety Team Members are able to provide a site safety orientation to new employees.
- Site Safety Representatives will share safety updates with their teams and remind teams to take the annual safety refresher for their site.
- The WCCMH Safety Teams shall work with the Washtenaw County designated Risk Managers to assure participation and compliance with County and Network wide safety efforts and programs.
- The WCCMH Safety (EOC) Team, appointed by leadership with representation from all sites/programs shall develop response plans, conduct monitoring activities, analyze data, and identify and develop solutions to site and community safety issues. The Team makes recommendations to leadership via the Management Team in quarterly reports and as needed.
- The timely reporting and resolution of issues that may pose an immediate threat to life, health, and/or property within all programs shall occur through the reporting of incidents to the Program Administrator for each responsible program area. Additionally, site-monitoring reviews shall be conducted on a monthly and annual basis to ensure compliance with the standards set forth in the WCCMH Safety (EOC) Annual Plan.
- Orientation and on-going training shall be provided to all personnel applicable with their responsibilities and duties. The WCCMH Safety (EOC) Team will develop trainings, checklists, and other materials and assure that all supervisors have the information needed to keep their staff informed regarding safety. Dependent on size and scope of each site, and in consideration with other occupants of buildings, site safety teams may be established and shall meet at least every other month in order to coordinate and review site safety issues.

## DEFINITIONS

**Business Occupancy:** (Taken from the Joint Commission definition) occupancy used to provide outpatient services or treatment that does not meet the criteria in the ambulatory health care occupancy definition.

## PROCEDURES

*There are no separate procedures for this policy.*

## REFERENCES

Applicable Joint Commission standards; MDHHS Contract; Michigan Mental Health Code; third party payer requirements; county, state and federal regulations and laws; and Authority standards, policies and procedures.

- Washtenaw County Facility Management Utilities Management Plan
- Washtenaw County Emergency Operations Plan

- Washtenaw County Administrator's Directive dated 6-08-98 regarding ID badges
- Washtenaw County Policies and Procedures, Vol. II, Article XI, Employee Benefits, Sec. 7, Workers Compensation (work related injuries and illnesses)
- Washtenaw County Safety Manual, Incident Reporting Procedure, "Supervisors Report of Accident" form.
- Washtenaw County Partnership Agreement: Support Services Infrastructure and WCCMH

**EXHIBITS**

- A. Safety Orientation Key Components
- B. Outreach Safety Protocol

## CMH Safety Orientation Key Components

Review of the Safety Orientation Packet should cover:

- **Safety (EOC) Team & Roles:** see *CMH Environment of Care Structure and Safety Membership sheets, attached*
- Review **Safety Refresher** available in the Transcripts section in Relias once you have completed a training. New Hires should check in with a supervisor or safety liaison if a copy is needed.
- **Washtenaw County Employee Safety website:**  
<https://employee.washtenaw.org/155/Employee-Safety>
- Risk Management & Role: *Judy Kramer and Tammy Richards*
- Emergency Response Plan (ERP): Emergency Response Plan training at each site during new staff orientation and annually with all staff. - **Where it's located:** From the [CMH Wiki](#) homepage, search "[Emergency Response Plans](#)" to find the most up to date version of your site's plan or see a site safety liaison.
- **Evacuation points**
- **Staff role in safety**
- Hazardous Communications: SDS and who is in charge of changes at your site (see site safety representative membership)
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Driving Eligibility Standards/Fleet use, inspections & maintenance( including motor vehicle safety)
- Incident Reporting: how to find on ecentral
  - Vehicle
  - Injury (Public & Employee)
  - Property
- Reporting a Safety Concern
- Workplace Violence
- **Facility tour** (i.e.) point out where they can locate, fire extinguishers, AED, first aid, & BBP kits), point out where to go during evacuation and drills
- **Bedbug Tips and Procedures**
- **CPR/First AID--Designated First AID Responders**—*all nurses at all sites*
- **Office hours of operation and parking**
  - **Before/after hour safety precautions;** safety while In the community- review *CMH Protocol for Promoting Personal Safety during Outreach and Home Visits*
  - **Sign in and out sheets** and how to use- Review *CMH Communication Protocol for Field Visits and End of Day Check Out* including when and who to contact in case of emergency
- **Employee/Employer Notices** (EEOC Postings)
- **Fan out lists** – how they work and expectations
- **Consumer checks, petty cash procedures**
- **Chart lockup at end of day**
- **Medication Lock up procedures**
- **Office lockup at end of day**
- **Team response to emergencies** in and outside the building
- **Team responsibilities to monitor the building and outside areas**

- **Drug testing (if applicable)** (Supervisor is to review 10 key points with new employee in Drug Testing Pool)
- **HIPPA rules and violations**
  - Keep desk clean of consumer material
  - Keep computer clean of consumer material
  - The same HIPPA rules and violations apply when services are provided virtually.
  - No consumer names should be visible when you are not at your desk. Never use consumer names in emails.
  - Keep public areas clean of consumer material
    - Copy machine
    - Fax machine
    - Counters
    - Kitchen
    - All public spaces

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Employee Signature/Date

Supervisor Signature/Date

**OUTREACH SAFETY PROTOCOL – (guideline)****CMH Protocol for Promoting Personal Safety during Outreach and Home Visits**

At all times during a field visit, staff should assess for risks to their personal safety and avoid exposing oneself to undue risk. The approach to outreach or a home visit and whether it should be undertaken alone is dependent upon the risks associated with the consumer and the situation, as well as any applicable policies or procedures. Staff is encouraged to assess all factors carefully and terminate the visit if needed or alter the approach to the visit to assure his/her personal safety.

Any suspicion of excessive substance use, the presence of a weapon, and/or a history or threat of violence would dictate that the necessity of the visit be evaluated. If it is absolutely necessary, carry out the visit with the accompaniment of law enforcement or after a person has been detained and is in a safe location. Otherwise, abandon the visit and re-evaluate the need and approach to achieving the goal.

The accompaniment of another staff person may decrease risk when a person is known to be aggressive or agitated but the presence of a weapon is unlikely.

**1. Preparation**

- Make sure that you sign in/out as to where you are going and alert other staff.
- Always wear your county ID.
- Double team when needed.
- Have your cell phone handy.
- Dress appropriately. Wear shoes and clothes that make it easy for you to move around.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry or carrying a purse.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Carry a minimal amount of cash.
- Conduct visits during daylight hours when possible.
- Avoid leaving items visible on the car seats during visits.
- Prepare the materials needed for the visit in advance and carry them with you.
- Know the layout of the site you are visiting.
- Identify locations where other people may be present and possible escape routes.
- Have knowledge of the activities of the neighborhood in advance and avoid visits when the risk may be higher such as times of increased drug or alcohol use.
- Know the location of the local police or fire department so that driving there for safety is an option.

- Avoid areas with poor visibility by others such as alleys or isolated buildings.
- Be aware of your personal behavior and the risk it may pose to others for example in domestic violence or child abuse situations.
- Be aware that your behavior may unintentionally trigger a response in another person that could not be predicted.
- Be prepared to respond with de-escalation techniques or escape.
- Report all incidents occurring in the field according to CMH and Washtenaw County policies and procedures and to Environment of Care and/or your Site Safety Team. Use the WC Incident Report form when appropriate.

**2. While you are driving:**

- Always wear your seatbelt
- Lock all doors
- Follow all traffic laws
- Do NOT use a cell phone or text while driving
- Keep radio and other noises to a minimum so you can hear emergency vehicles

**3. When you park:**

- Plan where you park, circle the area once
- Park in a well-lit area with a good view of the destination
- Park so you can easily enter and exit your car and the destination
- Lock your car

**4. When you transport clients:**

- Always lock the car doors
- Ensure all passengers use the seatbelt
- No smoking in the car
- Drive in the right hand lane if possible
- Take all objects that may be used as a weapon out of the car

**5. Approaching a consumer's home:**

- Always wear your County Identification
- Carry medications in a briefcase or non-see-through bag of some kind
- When approaching a home and loud noises are heard from within the house, get a clear understanding as to what you are actually hearing. If there are loud voices, don't enter the home unassisted.

\*NOTE: If you decide to get the attention of the people inside, knock on the door and stand on the sidewalk away from the home. Or stand near the car with car door open (ajar). These would be safe areas to communicate until things are calmer.

## **6. Stay one step ahead**

- Know where the exit is.
- Don't turn your back.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Be aware of anything that looks like it could be used as a weapon.
- Know the person's history especially of any violent behavior.
- Take time to survey the area through the open door before entering. Once in the apartment/home, look around for alcohol, drug paraphernalia or other people present.

## **7. Move one step at a time**

- Take your time to look and listen.
- How does consumer respond to your approach and greeting? (Does h/she smile back, move away,) i.e., probe and check their reaction. If h/she backs away, they may feel threatened or trying to hide something.

## **8. Attention/awareness**

- Pay full attention to what is spoken and unspoken.
- Be aware that words often do not convey true meanings i.e. "Hi, how are you?" "Fine" (When the individual does not appear to be fine.) Tone and pitch of voice serve as good indicators of intent of the speaker.

*Pay attention to EVERYTHING in the home, and position yourself closest to the door.*

- Always keep a safe, but non-suspicious, distance from the consumer.
- Avoid sitting while others are standing
- Never let anyone get between you and the door.
- Avoid a sitting position when the consumer leaves you alone in a room. Stand until everyone returns. If consumer should return angry, you are in a position to leave.
- Avoid being with a person while h/she is or has been drinking alcohol or using drugs. Tell them you can talk when they are not using.
- Avoid discussing problem areas when consumer is in the kitchen preparing meals or making coffee. Try to get consumer to sit and talk.

- Avoid discussing problems when visitors are present.
- Avoid discussing problems when family members are present unless this has been prior agreed upon.

**9. Working together**

- Teamwork- relay important information especially about consumer behaviors to one another
- Tell the team if you are uncomfortable with seeing a consumer or going into a specific environment. Have the courage to say 'I'm scared' and the maturity to say "I hear you" "Let's figure this out"
- Discuss Safety frequently at all staff meetings.

## **CMH Communication Protocol for Field Visits and End of Day Check Out.**

This section provides information on protocol/strategies that can be used to assure that an identified person knows of field staff intended whereabouts and can raise the alarm if staff signals a personal threat, or does not return or make contact at the appointed time.

### **1. Procedures: Staff**

- Designate a responsible person who is aware of field staff daily activities or to whom field staff reports his/her daily schedule of activities. (Usually the Supervisor.) Agree on the method and timing of check-in contact.
- Identify a code word or phrase that indicates the existence of a hazardous situation. Have a plan in place that the code word or phrase will trigger.
- Staff should carry a cell phone and numbers for emergency contacts.
- When possible, use a county vehicle with the Washtenaw County sign on the side of the vehicle. Ensure the vehicle being driven is in good condition, with a full tank of gas and stocked with emergency supplies and a BBP kit. Carry street directories and maps of the areas of visits if visiting site is unknown to you.
- Know agency policies related to automobile accidents and medical emergencies.
- If staff ends the day in the field or is working after normal hours, H/she must call supervisor at the end of the last outreach to check out for the day. No exceptions. The Supervisor is responsible for knowing that that all staff have returned safely at the end of the day.

### **2. Procedures: Supervisor**

- Must be available to the staff during the time they are in the field including after hours.
- Be ready to act if staff calls with a problem, uses the identified code word to signal a hazardous situation, or misses a scheduled call or check in. Have this information available:
  - ✓ Make, model, and color of the vehicle.
  - ✓ Staff's cell phone number
  - ✓ Staff's home phone number
  - ✓ Names, addresses and telephone numbers of clients or sites to be visited.
  - ✓ Approximate times of visits
  - ✓ Agreed time for the field staff to make contact during the day or after the last visit
- If a field staff fails to make contact at the agreed upon time and/or to check out at the end of the day, the supervisor will:
  - ✓ Telephone the staff cell phone.

- ✓ If no answer, telephone the home number.
- ✓ If not there, telephone the phone numbers of the clients or sites visited.
- ✓ Inform the Program Administrator. Contact police of a suspicious incident and/or respond in accordance with your Program Administrator's instructions.