



Blue Shield
of California
Foundation

An Independent Licensee
of the Blue Shield Association

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY GUIDE

- **Blue Shield of California Summary of Human Resources Policies in Support of a Workplace Response to Domestic Violence**
- **Model Domestic Violence Policies**



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Summary of Human Resources Policies In Support of a Workplace Response to Domestic Violence

HARASSMENT-FREE WORKPLACE

Blue Shield is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment that is “free from all forms of harassment,” and charges every Blue Shield employee with the responsibility of contributing towards that harassment-free environment. In addition to employees, this policy also extends to third parties who enter company facilities or who have contact with Blue Shield employees through the telephone, E-mail, US Mail or other methods of communication. Employees are encouraged to notify their managers, Human Resources, or the Corporate Compliance Director of any situation they feel is not in accordance with this policy. The company, in turn, will investigate the situation, and take appropriate action.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

“Blue Shield is committed to providing its employees with a safe and healthy workplace. To accomplish this objective, Blue Shield needs, appreciates, and welcomes input from its manager, leaders and all employees in the identification and prevention of potential work hazards.” Our policy encourages employees to inform their managers, Human Resources, or the Corporate Compliance Director of situations (either within the company or outside of work) that could pose a threat to their safety or the safety of others in the workplace. When notified, Human Resources works in conjunction with Facilities and Security to take appropriate actions to address the concerns. These actions may include increasing security personnel at a work location, arranging for the employee to work at a different location, providing a leave of absence or obtaining a restraining order on behalf of the company, depending upon the particular set of circumstances.

TIME OFF WORK

Through its PTO (Paid Time Off) policy, Blue Shield provides eligible employees with time away from work for any reason without the loss of pay. Depending upon the length of service, employees accrue from 20 days to 28 days of PTO annually.

Employees are encouraged to work with their managers and Human Resources for accommodations to address their particular circumstances, including those related to

domestic violence issues.

(In addition, Blue Shield does provide flex time whenever possible, based on the business needs of the department, or for compelling personal reasons. Employees may have as much as a two-hour window of flex time in which to arrive at work, depending upon the needs of the work area.)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Through our Personal Leave of Absence policy, Blue Shield provides up to three months of time away from work each year for compelling personal reasons, including domestic violence issues. After a Personal Leave, every attempt is made for employees to be returned their same positions or to comparable positions.

BUSINESS CONDUCT

As part of Blue Shield's commitment to providing a healthy and safe workplace, employees and outside individuals are expected to honor Blue Shield's work rules that deal with workplace conduct. Blue Shield has a zero tolerance policy for conduct that suggests any form of violence. Our policy states: "...any and all threats of violence and statements that may be construed as threats or implied threats made against any Blue Shield team member, system or property will be taken seriously and result in immediate action, up to and including termination, as well as reporting of same to appropriate law enforcement officials. Blue Shield's rules and regulations also require ...conduct which is conducive to the orderly and efficient operation of the Company. Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to:...

- Possession, purchase, sale use, manufacture or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol on Blue Shield premises or reporting to work under the influence of same;...
- Possession or purchase of firearms or ammunition or other weapons on Blue Shield premises;
- Offensive conduct or language;
- Any conduct that adversely reflects upon Blue Shield of California, the Company's name or image.

MODEL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

Summary of Policy

(Name of Employer) is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment that is safe and free from all forms of harassment and/or violence, and charges every employee with the responsibility of contributing towards that environment. This policy also extends to outside parties who enter *(name of employer's)* facilities, or who have contact with employees through the telephone, E-mail, US mail or other methods of communication. Employees are encouraged to notify their managers or Human Resources of any situation they feel that is unsafe or otherwise inconsistent with this policy.

(Name of employer) also recognizes the destructive effects of domestic violence on individuals, their work performance and the workplace as a whole. Employees experiencing violence or abuse of any type at home are encouraged to seek help from law enforcement and/or from domestic violence counseling agencies. Employees can receive referrals to community resources from their manager, Human Resources, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and in some cases, may be eligible for other assistance from *(name of employer)* to help maintain their safety and the safety of their co-workers.

When notified of safety concerns, Human Resources works in conjunction with security to take appropriate actions to address safety concerns. Depending upon company resources and the facts of the situation, these actions may include: *(insert appropriate actions, such as increasing security personnel at a work location, arranging for the employee to work at a different location, providing a temporary change of duties for an employee, providing a leave of absence or obtaining a restraining order on behalf of the company.)*

Definition of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence means intentionally or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury or placing any family member, domestic partner or cohabitant in reasonable fear of bodily injury. Specifically, it may include physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal or emotional abuse, threats of violence or stalking behavior, or deliberate damage to property or pets.

Time off Work for Domestic Violence

In accordance with California law, *(Name of employer)* provides eligible employees who are experiencing domestic violence with time away from work. Employees may use personal leave, sick or vacation leave, or unpaid leave as necessary to address domestic violence-related needs, such as getting medical attention, attending counseling sessions, court hearings or relocation. The employee must give reasonable notice unless advance notice is not feasible. *(Add any employer-related specifics such as process for applying, documentation required.)* To the extent allowed by law, *(Name of employer)* will maintain the confidentiality of an employee requesting such leave.

Flex Time

Based on the business needs of the department eligible employees experiencing domestic violence may also be permitted to flex their work hours.

Leave of Absence

(Name of employer) provides up to *(amount of time)* unpaid leave per year to eligible employees for compelling personal reasons, including domestic violence. It is our policy for employees returning from a leave of absence to be returned to their same positions or comparable positions.

Business Conduct

(Name of employer) does not condone and will not tolerate violent conduct. Any and all acts of violence and threats of violence made against any employee, location or property will be taken seriously and may result in immediate action, up to and including termination, as well as reporting same to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The use of *(name of employer's)* premises, telephones, E-mail or mail to commit violent acts or to communicate any threat of violence to anyone, whether they are an employee or not, is specifically prohibited and may constitute grounds for dismissal.