**FIELD SAFETY PLAN**

**POLICY & PROCEDURES**

# Policy Statement:

[AGENCY NAME] shall provide a safe and healthy work environment for all staff in compliance with California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3203. Staff must follow applicable laws, rules, and regulations along with agency policies in the provision of field-based services - services provided outside of the program’s physical offices, properties, and program locations.

# Scope:

This field safety plan is written to protect all program staff and personnel.

# Purpose:

Provide staff with guidelines to reduce risk and maintain health and safety while providing field-based services (FBS). This document outlines the following:

1. Safety responsibilities of staff providing FBS
2. The procedures for identifying and addressing risk while providing FBS
3. Emergency procedures for FBS locations
4. Staff communication during FBS services
5. Privacy and Confidentiality when providing FBS
6. Cultural Competency and Diversity when providing FBS

# Background:

It is the goal of the program to provide services at times and locations that best meet the needs of our patients while balancing staff and patient safety. Providing field-based services can decrease barriers to access. This procedure is informed by the mission of the program, industry best practices, the conduct requirements of applicable accrediting, certifying, and licensing organizations, the other policies and procedures of the program, and the requirements of entities contracted with the program, including but not limited to applicable payers, healthcare management organizations, county and state health and human services departments.

Follow the "Guidance for Personnel Providing Services at Sites Not Operated by the Program," as found in our [INSERT DOCUMENT NAME].

# Responsibility of Staff Providing Services at Sites Not Operated by [Agency Name]:

1. Never provide services in locations that are unsafe or present accessibility challenges for staff or patients. If an unsafe situation occurs while providing services, leave as soon as it is safe.
2. Follow the emergency procedures of the field-based setting where the service is taking place.
   1. If there is not an emergency procedure already in place for the site, consider the safety of the physical environment, including accessibility.
3. Regardless of the service delivery location, the program staff will inform their supervisor and follow Incident Reporting Overview procedures after experiencing any emergency.
4. Follow protocols in place for communicating about patient decisions to continue or discontinue services, and about the location that services will be provided.
5. Review and follow the procedures in the Injury and Illness Prevention Program if injuries occur at the Field-Based service site.

# Responsibility of Supervisor of Staff Providing FBS

1. Supervisors promote a culture of safety in the work environment, including when FBS is delivered.
2. Conduct risk/hazard assessment of FBS location in collaboration with staff providing FBS and agency risk management.
3. Verify and document the risk/hazard assessment of the FBS site.
4. Ensure staff providing FBS know the Injury and Illness Prevention (IIPP) and field safety procedures.
5. Instruct staff providing FBS to complete necessary trainings.

In order to ensure that the location in which staff provide FBS is both safe and appropriate for themselves and the patient, program staff must follow the instructions found in the Injury Illness Prevention Program Manual[[1]](#footnote-2).

# Preparing for Field-Based Services

1. Gather as much information as possible about the person and place that will be visited.
2. Conduct risk/hazard assessment prior to providing FBS. The assessment should examine both potential safety issues with the patient and safety issues with the site in which the visit will take place. The assessment should consider the various potential risks to safety, and the likelihood and severity of the risk. The assessment should examine environmental factors, travel conditions, patient factors, and staff vulnerability.
3. Based on risk assessment, appropriate steps should be taken to mitigate risk.
4. Staff are encouraged to communicate any concerns regarding their personal safety. Staff who request assistance in assuring their safety, should not fear retaliation, blame, or questioning of their competency from their supervisors or colleagues.
5. Obtain clear, specific directions; know exactly where the field visit will be conducted.
6. Request that additional staff to accompany if safety is a concern.
7. Track location of FBS: staff should document all planned patient encounters on their online work calendar and to make their calendar accessible to the supervisor. If an online calendar is unavailable, provide list of FBS locations and call in at designated times.
8. Follow the procedures for checking in and out of the FBS site.
9. Follow all COVID-19 and other infectious disease safety guidelines from Los Angeles County Public Health, CALOSHA, and California Department of Public Health.
10. All staff will attend safety trainings, as appropriate, prior to providing FBS and at a minimum of annually thereafter.

# Safety Practices While Providing Services

1. Park in a well-lit, visible area and don’t get out of the car if safety is a concern.
2. Pay special attention to safety alerts (e.g., unleashed dogs, illegal activity, communicable diseases, mental health crises).
3. Walk on well-lit, well-traveled streets. Do not take shortcuts through wooded areas, parking lots, or dark alleys.
4. Have key in hand before reaching vehicle, office, or home.
5. Carry cell phone
   1. call for when necessary
   2. keep the cell phone fully charged
   3. be familiar cell phone reception for FBS site
   4. keep emergency contacts on speed dial
   5. keep GPS-enabled mobile phone applications activated at all times while in the field and share location with supervisor and/or other staff
   6. use the phone discreetly, so as not to inadvertently escalate a potentially volatile situation
6. Keep valuable items out of sight or don’t bring them at all.
7. Carry as little as possible into the field-based site or home.
8. State the goal of the visit in advance. Once the goal is achieved, leave. Make it clear that there is a schedule to keep and that you are expected elsewhere.
9. Keep a clear path to the exits at all times. Avoid any trapped positioning if a quick exit is needed.
10. Immediately leave if there are weapons on site.
11. Do not give out personal information, such as home address or telephone number.
12. Pay attention to internal warning signals. Leave at any time safety is a concern.
13. Pay attention to signs that there may be a risk of physical violence with or without a weapon and be prepared to respond according to emergency procedures.
14. Staff must keep their employee badge clearly visible at all times when they are working in field-based service locations.

# Staff review and follow these travel reminders:

# When taking public transportation:

1. Know which lines/routes you will take, how often they run, and where you will board.
2. Always stay awake and alert.
3. Keep control over any bag and/or equipment you might have with you.
4. Know how to call for help: Alert the driver/operator if you have a safety concern.
5. Be mindful of signage instructing you on emergency procedures.

# When taking ride share transportation (Uber, Lyft, etc.):

1. Always check the license plate and name of the driver to ensure you are getting into the right vehicle.
2. Wait for your ride in a safe, well-lit area.
3. Monitor the driver’s route using your app.
4. Always stay awake and alert.
5. Keep control over any bag and/or equipment you might have with you.

# When driving:

1. Never operate a motor vehicle if you are too tired or impaired.
2. Have keys in hand before reaching your vehicle. Look in back seats before entering.
3. Avoid sitting in car with doors unlocked. Lock car doors immediately upon entering your vehicle.
4. Use defensive driving techniques when driving.
5. Use your seat belt when in a moving vehicle.
6. Drive with car doors locked.
7. Always keep car in working order with at least ½ tank of gas during your travel.
8. Park in a well-lit, visible area, and don’t get out of the car if safety is a concern.
9. If you are being followed, do not drive home; drive to nearest police or fire station and honk your horn or drive to an open gas station or business where you can safely call for help.
10. Always carry a small flashlight with you (on your person and in the car).
11. Review and follow OSHA Safe Driving Practices for Employees: <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Safe_Driving_Practices.pdf>.

**Field-based services staff are prepared and equipped for emergencies and accidents that may occur while at work.** Agencies shall identify and assess a wide variety of potential emergencies that could occur while staff provide FBS. It should be tailored to FBS site and include information about all potential sources of emergencies.

1. Staff are prepared for medical emergencies:
   1. Staff are prepared and equipped to request medical aid through 911 when an incident is causing what appears to be life threatening or physical distress.
   2. If required, Staff are up to date on their annual CPR and First Aid training.
   3. Staff has relevant emergency medical information for themselves.
   4. Staff has relevant emergency medical information for the individuals being served.
   5. Staff has appropriate personal protective equipment applicable to their field assignment.
   6. Staff should carry naloxone, or other FDA-approved opioid antagonist medication, and be trained in its administration.
2. Staff are prepared and equipped to communicate during emergencies:
   1. Staff supervisor and treatment team are aware of the staff's field appointments and are informed of any significant changes to staff itinerary.
   2. Staff phone is charged and has good reception in the area that services are provided.
   3. Staff has appropriate emergency contacts for themselves saved in their phone.
   4. Staff has emergency contact information for the individuals being served close at hand.
   5. Staff are prepared to call their supervisor or other clinical leadership staff in real time to discuss whether the service recipient desires to continue or discontinue services.

# Safety Training

Staff are up to date on all health and safety trainings, including:

1. Workplace violence prevention
2. Emergency response plan
3. Injury and Illness Prevention Program
4. Driving safety and the Driving Vehicles for Agency-Related Business Manual
5. Naloxone, or other FDA-approved opioid antagonist medication, administration.
   1. OEND, LA County DHS: [Overdose Prevention Training Video](https://www.laodprevention.org/od-prevention-videos)
   2. CA Public Health: [Administering Naloxone Video](https://youtu.be/nurz9qPGKws)
   3. [SAPC Naloxone & Harm Reduction Training](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc/videos/SAPC%20HRU_Naloxone%20&%20Harm%20Reduction%20Training%20Recording_2022.mp4)

# Reporting Requirements

[List agency procedures for reporting incidents. Reporting procedures shall meet CALOSHA IIPP incident reporting requirements]

1. Staff must immediately report all accidents, exposure incidents, near misses, occupational accidents, injuries, or illnesses to their supervisor or designees.
2. Supervisor or designees shall document and report the incident to [Agency Risk Management]. Prepare an Injury and Illness Incident Report (Form 301), or equivalent.

Staff must adhere to all applicable public health orders in effect while providing services. This includes applicable orders by county and state public health departments and public health emergency declarations and related guidelines.

# Monitoring

Policies are reviewed at least biennially to ensure consistency with current practice standards in behavioral health care and compliance with federal, state, and county regulations, licensure requirements and accreditation standards.

Staff must ensure the Privacy and Confidentiality of Patient Information while providing field-based services.

The program staff must be up to date with the culturally and linguistically appropriate services training assigned to them according to the Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan and be competent to provide services for the culturally diverse communities and at-risk populations in their assigned FBS location.

1. Injury and Illness Prevention (IIP) Program is required for every California employer. IIP requirements can be found on the CALOSHA website: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/iipp.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)