

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 20, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 15, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 4, 2013

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 718**

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**Introduced by Senator Yee**

February 22, 2013

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An act to add Section 6401.8 to the Labor Code, relating to employment safety.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 718, as amended, Yee. Hospitals: workplace violence prevention plan.

Existing law regulates the operation of health facilities, including hospitals.

Existing law, the California Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1973, imposes safety responsibilities on employers and employees, including the requirement that an employer establish, implement, and maintain an effective injury prevention program, and makes specified violation of these provisions a crime.

This bill would require a hospital, as specified, as a part of its injury prevention program and in conjunction with affected employees, to adopt a workplace violence prevention plan designed to protect health care workers, other facility personnel, patients, and visitors from aggressive or violent behavior. As part of that plan, the bill would require a hospital to adopt safety and security policies, including, among others, a system for the reporting to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health of any violent incident, as defined, against a hospital employee, as specified. The bill would further require all medical staff

and health care workers who provide direct care to patients to receive, at least annually, workplace violence prevention education and training, as specified. The bill would prohibit a hospital from preventing an employee from, or taking punitive or retaliatory action against an employee for, seeking assistance and intervention from local emergency services or law enforcement for a violent incident. The bill would also require a hospital to provide evaluation and treatment, as specified, for an employee who is injured or is otherwise a victim of a violent incident.

The bill would require a hospital to document and keep for 5 years a written record of all violent incidents against a hospital employee, as defined, and to report to the division any violent incident, as specified. The bill would also authorize the division to assess a civil penalty against a hospital for failure to report a violent incident, as specified. The bill would further require the division to *post on its Internet Web site a report to the relevant fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature information* regarding violent incidents at hospitals, as specified, and to ~~develop~~ *adopt* regulations implementing these provisions by January 1, 2015.

Because this bill would expand the scope of a crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 6401.8 is added to the Labor Code, to  
2 read:  
3 6401.8. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (n), as a part of  
4 its injury prevention program required pursuant to Section 6401.7,  
5 a hospital described in subdivision (a), (b), or (f) of Section 1250  
6 of the Health and Safety Code shall adopt a workplace violence  
7 prevention plan designed to protect health care workers, other  
8 facility personnel, patients, and visitors from aggressive or violent  
9 behavior. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, security  
10 considerations relating to all of the following:

- 1 (1) Physical layout.
- 2 (2) Staffing, including staffing patterns and patient classification
- 3 systems that contribute to the risk of violence or are insufficient
- 4 to address the risk of violence.
- 5 (3) The adequacy of facility security systems, protocols, and
- 6 policies, including, but not limited to, security personnel
- 7 availability and employee alarm systems.
- 8 (4) Potential security risks associated with specific units or areas
- 9 within the facility where there is a greater likelihood that a patient
- 10 or other person may exhibit violent behavior.
- 11 (5) Uncontrolled public access to any part of the facility.
- 12 (6) Potential security risks related to working late night or early
- 13 morning hours.
- 14 (7) Employee security in areas surrounding the facility,
- 15 including, but not limited to, employee parking areas.
- 16 (8) The use of a trained response team that can assist employees
- 17 in violent situations.
- 18 (9) Policy and training related to appropriate responses to violent
- 19 acts.
- 20 (10) Efforts to cooperate with local law enforcement regarding
- 21 violent acts in the facility.
- 22 (b) As part of its workplace violence prevention plan, a hospital
- 23 shall adopt safety and security policies, including, but not limited
- 24 to, all of the following:
- 25 (1) Personnel training policies designed to protect personnel,
- 26 patients, and visitors from aggressive or violent behavior, including
- 27 education on how to recognize the potential for violence, how and
- 28 when to seek assistance to prevent or respond to violence, and how
- 29 to report violent incidents to the appropriate law enforcement
- 30 officials.
- 31 (2) A system for responding to violent incidents and situations
- 32 involving violence or the risk of violence, including, but not limited
- 33 to, procedures for rapid response by which an employee is provided
- 34 with immediate assistance if the threat of violence against that
- 35 employee appears to be imminent, or if a violent act has occurred
- 36 or is occurring.
- 37 (3) A system for investigating violent incidents and situations
- 38 involving violence or the risk of violence. When investigating
- 39 these incidents, the hospital shall interview any employee involved
- 40 in the incident or situation.

1 (4) A system for reporting, monitoring, and recordkeeping of  
2 violent incidents and situations involving the risk of violence.

3 (5) A system for reporting violent incidents to the division  
4 pursuant to subdivision (h).

5 (6) Modifications to job design, staffing, security, equipment,  
6 or facilities as determined necessary to prevent or address violence  
7 against hospital employees.

8 (c) The plan shall be developed in conjunction with affected  
9 employees, including their recognized collective bargaining agents,  
10 if any. Individuals or members of a hospital committee responsible  
11 for developing the security plan shall be familiar with hospital  
12 safety and security issues, as well as the identification of aggressive  
13 and violent predicting factors. In developing the workplace  
14 violence prevention plan, the hospital shall consider guidelines or  
15 standards on violence in health care facilities issued by the division,  
16 the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and,  
17 if available, the State Department of Public Health.

18 (d) All medical staff and health care workers who provide direct  
19 care to patients shall, at least annually, receive workplace violence  
20 prevention education and training that is designed in such a way  
21 as to provide an opportunity for interactive questions and answers  
22 with a person knowledgeable about the workplace violence  
23 prevention plan, and that includes, but is not limited to, the  
24 following topics:

25 (1) General safety measures.

26 (2) Personal safety measures.

27 (3) The assault cycle.

28 (4) Aggression and violence predicting factors.

29 (5) Obtaining patient history from a patient with violent  
30 behavior.

31 (6) Characteristics of aggressive and violent patients and victims.

32 (7) Verbal and physical maneuvers to diffuse and avoid violent  
33 behavior.

34 (8) Strategies to avoid physical harm.

35 (9) Restraining techniques.

36 (10) Appropriate use of medications as chemical restraints.

37 (11) Any resources available to employees for coping with  
38 violent incidents, including, by way of example, critical incident  
39 stress debriefing or employee assistance programs.

1 (e) All temporary personnel shall be oriented to the workplace  
2 violence prevention plan.

3 (f) A hospital shall provide evaluation and treatment for an  
4 employee who is injured or is otherwise a victim of a violent  
5 incident and shall, upon the request of the employee, provide access  
6 to followup counseling to address trauma or distress experienced  
7 by the employee, including, but not limited to, individual crisis  
8 counseling, support group counseling, peer assistance, and  
9 professional referrals.

10 (g) A hospital shall not prohibit an employee from, or take  
11 punitive or retaliatory action against an employee for, seeking  
12 assistance and intervention from local emergency services or law  
13 enforcement when a violent incident occurs.

14 (h) (1) In addition to the reports required by Section 6409.1, a  
15 hospital shall document and keep for a period of five years a written  
16 record of any violent incident against a hospital employee  
17 immediately after the incident is reported by that employee or any  
18 other employee to a manager, supervisor, or other hospital  
19 administrator. The hospital shall document and keep a written  
20 record of all violent incidents, regardless of whether the employee  
21 sustains an injury. This record shall include, but not be limited to,  
22 the date and time of the incident, the unit in which the incident  
23 occurred, a description of the circumstances surrounding the  
24 incident, and the hospital's response to the incident.

25 (2) A hospital shall report to the division within 72 hours the  
26 information recorded pursuant to paragraph (1) regarding a violent  
27 incident. If the incident results in physical injury, involves the use  
28 of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, or presents an urgent or  
29 emergent threat to the welfare, health, or safety of hospital  
30 personnel, the hospital shall report the incident to the division  
31 within 24 hours.

32 (3) If a hospital fails to report a violent incident pursuant to  
33 paragraph (2), the division may assess a civil penalty against the  
34 hospital in an amount not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100)  
35 per day for each day that the incident is not reported following the  
36 initial 72-hour or 24-hour period, as applicable pursuant to  
37 paragraph (2).

38 (i) The division may, at its discretion, conduct an inspection for  
39 any violent incident reported pursuant to subdivision (h).

1 (j) Nothing in this section requiring recordkeeping and reporting  
 2 by an employer relieves the employer of the requirements of  
 3 Section 6410.

4 (k) ~~(4)~~ By January 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, the division  
 5 shall ~~report to the relevant fiscal and policy committees of the~~  
 6 ~~Legislature~~, in a manner that protects patient and employee  
 7 confidentiality, *post a report on its Internet Web site containing*  
 8 information regarding violent incidents at hospitals, that includes,  
 9 but is not limited to, the total number of reports and which specific  
 10 hospitals filed reports pursuant to subdivision (h), the outcome of  
 11 any related inspection or investigation, citations levied against a  
 12 hospital based on a violent incident, and recommendations on how  
 13 to prevent violent incidents at hospitals.

14 ~~(2) The requirement for submitting a report imposed pursuant~~  
 15 ~~to this subdivision is inoperative on January 1, 2019, pursuant to~~  
 16 ~~Section 10231.5 of the Government Code.~~

17 ~~(3) A report to be submitted pursuant to this subdivision shall~~  
 18 ~~be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government~~  
 19 ~~Code.~~

20 (l) By January 1, 2015, the division shall adopt regulations to  
 21 implement the provisions of this section.

22 (m) For purposes of this section, “violent incident” shall include,  
 23 but not be limited to, the following:

24 (1) The use of physical force against a hospital employee by a  
 25 patient or a person accompanying a patient that results in or has a  
 26 high likelihood of resulting in injury, psychological trauma, or  
 27 stress, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.

28 (2) An incident involving the use of a firearm or other dangerous  
 29 weapon, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.

30 (n) This section shall not apply to a hospital operated by the  
 31 State Department of State Hospitals, the State Department of  
 32 Developmental Services, or the Department of Corrections and  
 33 Rehabilitation.

34 SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to  
 35 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because  
 36 the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school  
 37 district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or  
 38 infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty  
 39 for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of  
 40 the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within

1 the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California  
2 Constitution.

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