

10-WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to promote a safe, secure and productive environment for the employees and customers of the City Government by communicating that workplace violence or threats of workplace violence will not be tolerated by the City of Waynesboro. Further, this policy provides definitions, describes prohibited actions, behavior, and conduct, and prescribes procedures and responsibilities for reporting and investigating behavior believed to be in violation of this Policy, procedures for addressing prohibited behavior and measures of discipline.

This Policy applies to all positions and employees of the City, to include full-time and part-time classified, at-will, hourly employees, and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

Employee: any individual in the service of the City under any contract of hire, express or implied, oral or written, where the City has the right to control or direct employee in the material details of how the work is to be performed.

Volunteer: any individual who gives his or her service to the City without any express or implied promise of remuneration.

Third parties: individuals who are not City employees, including but not limited to customers, relatives of employees, acquaintances of employees, or other individuals coming into contact with City employees.

Workplace: any location, either permanent or temporary, where a City employee performs any work-related duty. This includes, but is not limited to, buildings and the surrounding perimeter, including the parking lots, field locations, alternate work locations, and travel between work assignments and other work related travel.

Workplace violence: threats or acts of violence including conduct against persons or property that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to alter the conditions of city employment, or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or more city employees.

Threats or incidents of workplace violence include but are not limited to the following prohibited conduct:

- a. injuring another person physically; causing bodily harm;
- b. engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of bodily harm to any person;
- c. engaging in behavior that subjects another individual to extreme emotional distress;
- d. possessing, brandishing, or using a weapon (that is not otherwise required by the individual's official duties, i.e. police officers and deputy sheriff's) while on City property or engaged in City business;
- e. intentionally damaging property;
- f. threatening to cause bodily harm an individual or to damage property;
- g. retaliating against any employee who reports a violation of this, or any City policy;
- h. making harassing or threatening telephone calls, sending harassing or threatening letters or email.

This list shall be deemed to make other such acts...?

Violent acts of employees occurring outside the workplace may also be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. In these situations, the City must set forth in writing that the violent conduct committed has an adverse impact on the employee's ability to perform the assigned duties and responsibilities, creates a liability associated with continued employment that it undermines the effectiveness of the City's activities and/or otherwise compromises the reputation of the City of Waynesboro.

Third parties violating this policy may be subject to criminal prosecution and/or civil action.

Disciplinary Actions

City employees violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary actions as detailed in Section 31 of the Employee Handbook, up to and including termination, depending on the circumstances. City employees may also be subject to criminal prosecution and/or civil action.

PROCEDURES

Reporting Acts or Threats of Workplace Violence

Employees shall immediately report any and all threats or incidents of workplace violence to their immediate supervisor, department head, and/or to the Human Resources office. Supervisors receiving reports of prohibited conduct as defined herein shall immediately notify their department head, who shall immediately notify the Director of Human Resources. If the supervisor is not immediately available, the employee shall immediately report to the department director in their chain of command or the Director of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources shall, as soon as possible, notify the City Manager or the Assistant City Manager of all acts or threats of workplace violence.

Employees who are victims of, or witnesses to an incident of workplace violence shall immediately notify their supervisor, who shall immediately notify the department head and the Director of Human Resources. If the immediate supervisor is involved in the incident, the report shall be made to their department director/chief.

If an employee has sustained injuries during an incident, appropriate medical assistance shall be offered. Injuries sustained during incidents of workplace violence may be covered by Workers' Compensation.

Responding to Threats and Act of Violence

In the event of credible threats and incidents of violence, immediate action shall be taken to provide appropriate medical assistance to victims and to restore or preserve a safe working environment and protect employees and customers. Appropriate responses include but are not limited to: calling for police assistance dial 9-1-1 or 9-9-1-1 from most office phones, removing employees from the work environment, relocating employee work stations, and/or assignments, and/or making any other arrangements deemed necessary.

If imminent danger exists, employees shall call 9-1-1 or 9-9-1-1 (from most office telephones).

Documenting Threats or Acts of Violence

In all cases, the department head shall immediately prepare a written statement providing the date, time location, involved parties including perpetrator(s), victims, witnesses, circumstances, and a description of the conduct in question and or threat, injuries, property damage, and actions taken in response. The statement shall be submitted to the City Manager, Human Resources office, and City Attorney's office within two business days.

Documenting Threats or Acts of Violence (cont'd)

All reported threats or incidents of violence shall be thoroughly documented and investigated by the department head with assistance from the Director of Human Resources. A written incident report shall be provided to the City Manager within three business days of the report of the incident or threat.

Employees and third parties may be subject to criminal prosecution and/or civil action for incidents of workplace violence.

If the incident involves family or household members, it shall be handled in the same manner as stated above, and include any action(s) necessary to protect the interest and rights of the employer and employee(s) involved.

When practicable, photographs should be taken of physical injuries and/or property damage.

If the incident has resulted in personal injury or death, the investigation shall include any and all written documentation necessary to protect and provide appropriate medical care and/or compensation in accordance with applicable state, federal or local laws and regulations.

FIREARMS AND OTHER DANGEROUS WEAPONS

In the interest of maintaining a workplace that is safe and free of violence, and unless otherwise provided below, possession or use of firearms or other dangerous weapons is prohibited on City property, in City vehicles, or in any personal vehicle which is being used for City business.

Officers and employees of the City may possess a firearm on City property if:

a) engaged in military or law enforcement activities; or, b) legally in possession of a firearm for which the employee holds a valid permit and said firearm is lawfully secured within an attended personal vehicle, or within a locked unattended vehicle while that person is working on City property.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Human Resources Department shall be responsible for the implementation of a Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The responsibilities shall include:

- a. providing training for supervisors and managers to help them recognize conditions that might contribute to workplace violence and how to properly address and respond to these situations;
- b. providing training to employees about recognizing and responding to potentially violent or violent situations in the workplace;
- c. establishing relationships with appropriate support services; and
- d. providing information to employees about resources and services available to them in response to workplace violence, and the potential for domestic violence to enter the workplace.