



Department of Public Works and Engineering

Violence in the Workplace

Policy No. 1-20

Policy Statement

In conjunction with Administrative Procedure 3-21, Violence in the Workplace, the Department of Public Works and Engineering (PWE) endeavors to provide safe and secure work environments for its employees. PWE therefore considers that all forms of threats and violence along with the possession of unauthorized weapons on or in city facilities, property, vehicles, etc. are contrary to the department's commitment and objectives. Therefore, PWE sets forth a zero tolerance policy for threats, violence, threatening behavior and bullying in the workplace.

Purpose

To clearly articulate the policy of the Department of Public Works and Engineering on the subject of workplace violence; to clearly set forth the department's expectations of all employees concerning workplace violence and workplace behavior; to establish the responsibilities of managers, supervisors and employees in relation to workplace violence and to provide guidance in dealing the potential or real threats or instances of workplace violence.

Scope

This policy applies to all Department of Public Works and Engineering employees and supersedes any other previously issued policy, procedure or directive.

Policy

1. Preventing workplace violence

It is the intent of the Department to avoid and prevent workplace violence rather than having to react to a violent incident. Employees are expected to notify their management of situations within the organization that may trigger violence among employees, including poor communication, low morale, unfair or disparate treatment. Any employee who is victimized, feels victimized, observes or has knowledge of any violation of this policy should immediately report the incident to his/her Manager and the Employee Relations Section assigned to PWE. Reports can be made anonymously and all reports of violence or threats will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dale A. Rudick".

Date Approved:

3/13/17

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All policies are subject to amendment. It is the employee's responsibility to refer to the Department of Public Works and Engineering's intranet site for the official, most recent version. Individuals printing a copy of this policy are responsible for ensuring that revisions to the document have not been issued since it was printed.

feasible to protect the rights of those concerned. Any employee who is found to have violated any aspect of this policy may be immediately removed from the premises as well as be subject to disciplinary action up to and including indefinite suspension, and if warranted, may also be subject to criminal prosecution.

2. No adverse employment consequences for making a complaint or taking part in an investigation.

An employee will not suffer adverse employment consequences for making a complaint or taking part in the investigation of a complaint. However, because of the serious nature of the alleged offense and the consequences associated with such behavior, an employee who intentionally makes a false accusation of a threat or threatening behavior may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including indefinite suspension. Additionally, employees, supervisors or managers who fail to report violations of this policy or who fail to cooperate and/or facilitate an investigation shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including indefinite suspension.

3. Violation of Policy

An employee will be considered to have violated this policy when s/he commits an act of violence in any form or his/her violent, threatening or harassing behavior interferes with another employee's performance, creates a hostile work environment or threatens to or actually disrupts the work place. Such behavior will not be ignored, condoned or tolerated.

4. Prohibited Conduct

The following list of behaviors, while not all inclusive, provides examples of conduct that is prohibited:

- 4.1 Causing physical injury to another person;
- 4.2 Making threatening remarks (even those apparently made in jest);
- 4.3 Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress (including outburst such as yelling and hitting, kicking or breaking something);
- 4.4 Intentionally damaging employer property or the property of another person or employee;
- 4.5 Possession of a weapon while on or in city property or on city business. This includes traditional weapons such as guns, knives, clubs, blackjacks, etc and also includes explosive, chemical, biological weapons. Additionally, objects such as tools, motorized vehicles and equipment can be considered weapons when used in a violent or threatening manner.
- 4.6 Committing acts motivated by or related to sexual harassment or domestic violence;
- 4.7 Arson;
- 4.8 Sabotage (either by omission or commission);

- 4.9 Stalking;
 - 4.10 Obscene, threatening, intimidating communications including but not limited to those via telephone, email, written correspondence, instant messaging, etc.
 - 4.11 Offensive jokes or comments regarding participating in violent events; and
 - 4.12 Acts that management deems inappropriate for the workplace.
5. Early Warning Signals
- Employees, supervisors and managers should be aware of the following early warning signals that might be indicators of future events:
- 5.1 Any history of violent behavior, before or after employment with the city;
 - 5.2 An extreme interest in or an obsession with weapons;
 - 5.3 Excessive discussion of weapons at work, carrying a concealed weapon or "flashing" a weapon to test reaction;
 - 5.4 Making either direct or veiled threats of harm (i.e., predicting that bad things are going to happen to a coworker or supervisor);
 - 5.5 Intimidating others or instilling fear in coworkers or supervisors (this can be physical or verbal intimidation);
 - 5.6 Behaving in a paranoid manner, panicking easily, often perceiving himself/herself as a victim;
 - 5.7 Displaying hopelessness through statements like "What's the use?" "Nothing matters anymore." "I've got no future";
 - 5.8 Making suicidal references, or threats, or making or describing plans consistent with committing suicide such as getting personal affairs in order, selling off possessions, etc.);
 - 5.9 Reacting adversely to criticism or holding a grudge;
 - 5.10 Verbalizing a hope for something to happen to the person who has criticized him/her or against whom a grudge is held.

Procedure

1. All department facilities should develop a plan for responding to incidents of workplace violence to include alerting employees, identifying areas where employees can go for safety, determining if and where panic buttons should be installed, procedures for limiting access to authorized personnel, ensuring lighting and other appropriate preventative security measures are in place, etc. This plan should also identify procedures for second shift, third shift and weekend operations, where applicable.
2. All PWE employees should attend training on identifying, preventing and dealing with violence in the workplace at least every two years.

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3. All employees and especially supervisors and managers should maintain an awareness of their coworkers' behavior as well as that of others including citizens, contractors, vendors, etc.
4. Employees must report dangerous or potentially dangerous situations to a supervisor immediately.
5. In a situation where physical harm to the employee or others appears to be imminent or actually occurs, the immediate course of action is to retreat to safety.
6. Supervisors/Managers will report events or potential problems to their management and the Employee Relations Section assigned to PWE immediately.
7. Threats and/or incidents of workplace violence occurring on second, third and/or weekend shifts should be reported to management as required above. If a supervisor or manager is not immediately available, employees should call Right-of-Way Dispatch at the number specified in the Accident Prevention Plan.
8. Containment and intervention measures including but not limited to retreating to safety, calling 9-1-1, etc. will be taken promptly.
9. Precautionary measures to safeguard employees, citizens and others will also be promptly implemented.
10. If an employee has determined that a call to 9-1-1 is necessary, that call must be immediately followed by calls to management and Employee Relations.
11. Employee Relations will communicate with the other members of the PWE Threat Assessment Team (Legal, Employee Assistance Program, Security, area management) as circumstances warrant to assist in determining the course of action. In the event of an actual incident, actions will focus on removing the violent employee from the workplace and providing medical assistance and emotional support to those involved in the incident. Employee Relations will provide assistance and help identify resources for needed assistance.
12. In the event of a threat of violence, Employee Relations will, in collaboration with the Legal Department and the Employee Assistance Office if necessary, recommend what action to take concerning the employee. The employee may be placed on relief of duty with pay while the circumstances of the situation are investigated.
13. Employees making threats of violence may be required to meet with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) professional and the department may request additional evaluations if it is deemed prudent and necessary.

14. EAP staff may be requested to visit the job site to assess employee reaction to and concerns about safety in the workplace and will advise management regarding findings its assessment and recommendations.
15. If recommended by the EAP, Legal and PWE Employee Relations and indicated by the evaluation, an action plan will be developed by the EAP staff and the employee must provide a signed commitment to continue in the recommended plan.
16. The supervisor of the employee will forward to the Deputy Director a recommendation for corrective action under the Positive Corrective Action Program.

Compliance

Adherence to the above is mandatory. Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to corrective action.

Attachments

Attachments	Title
N/A	

Revision History

Rev.	Revision Date	Modified by	Description
01	03/13/17	DO/MSB	New Format/Updated