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Violence in the Workplace

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The participation of all City employees is necessary for a successful policy against violence in the workplace. The procedures set forth below help define responsibilities of all City employees and offer guidance in support of the City's Workplace Violence Policy. The term "workplace violence" is used throughout these Procedures as defined in that Policy. Workplace violence may include, but is not limited to: intentional harassment, physical attack, property damage, and/or threat of such acts; or actions that are perceived to be violent or threatening and which investigation confirms were reasonably interpreted to be violent.

1. VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- A. Each Key Business Unit should periodically assess its current security measures or process and conduct a worksite analysis of work areas to determine what security is needed to help prevent workplace violence.
- B. Building security, where available, will maintain security controls for that building (i.e., employee badges, sign-in sheets, etc.).
- C. The City will provide managerial training in violence prevention employment techniques, such as applicant screening and exit interviews. Advanced training for Key Response personnel will be conducted. Employees will receive orientation to the Workplace Violence Policy.
- D. The City's Workplace Violence Policy will be displayed within each Key Business Unit.

2. MANAGERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Support the City's principle of, and rationale for, encouraging work environments that are safe from violence, threats, and harassing/aggressive behavior.
- B. Identify Key Response personnel. These will include (1) those chosen by each Key Business Executive as the person(s) within the Key Business Unit who will handle violent incidents/threats and (2) selected personnel from across the City who, because of the nature of their jobs, will be involved at a City level in violent incidents/threats (such as the Human Resources Key Business Executive, the Building and Facilities Manager, Employee Assistance Representative(s), Risk Management personnel, Employee Relations staff, Fire Department Emergency Medical Technicians, etc.).
- C. Inform employees on a periodic basis about the City's policy and procedures on encouraging work environments that are safe from workplace violence, as that term is defined in the City's Workplace Violence Policy. Explain that the Workplace Violence Policy requires the participation of all employees.
- D. Inform all employees that workplace violence or other abusive, aggressive, or disruptive behavior in any form will not be tolerated in the workplace.
- E. Arrange for all existing and new employees to receive information on the City's Workplace Violence Policy, and provide for training, as necessary.
- F. Be alert to the possibility of workplace violence on the part of former employees, customers, and other third parties. Take preventive and/or corrective action when necessary. For their own protection, City employees should not try to handle a violent or potentially violent incident on their own.

- G. Be aware of potential situations where workplace violence might occur, and take preventive and/or corrective steps including, where appropriate, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- H. Be aware of any patterns or changes in employee behavior which exhibit the potential for workplace violence or disruption. All such behavior/actions should be documented by the supervisor or manager for the record. Such changes should be addressed in private counseling sessions with the employee, where Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services should be recommended and literature about the EAP should be given to the employee.
- I. Supervisors and managers shall be aware of the location and telephone number of the EAP. They must be knowledgeable about the services available through EAP. Supervisors and managers shall make appropriate and timely referrals for assistance for staff who threaten or engage in violence or other abusive, aggressive, or disruptive behavior.
- J. Enforce provisions of the Workplace Violence Policy and the Key Business Unit's procedures.
- K. Any supervisor or manager who receives a notice or complaint of workplace violence, or who has reason to suspect that these acts or behaviors are occurring, must notify the Police Key Business, the Human Resources Key Business, and/or Building Security, depending on the degree of threat of violence. Notification shall be made in accordance with the Crisis Management Team Guidelines, as set forth in section IV of this document. *All threats, including those made jokingly, will be taken seriously.*
- L. Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of a threat or imminent danger of violence toward an employee must notify that employee of the potential danger.

3. EMPLOYEE REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any individual who experiences or witnesses any acts, conduct, behavior, or communication which is against the Workplace Violence Policy must immediately contact his or her supervisor, the Human Resources Key Business, the Police Key Business, and/or Building Security, at the individual's election. For their own protection, individuals should not try to handle a violent or potentially violent incident on their own.

If reporting an imminent threat and/or act of violence, an individual should first secure his/her own safety and then immediately contact the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Key Business by dialing 911 (9-911) and/or Building Security, as appropriate.

Individuals who are threatened, assaulted, or attacked while on official duty in the field (not a City facility) should immediately report such incidents to both the Police Key Business and the immediate supervisor.

If an individual has committed violent acts or made direct threats, the individual may be removed from City property until an investigation has been completed. At the end of the investigation, the City will determine how to respond. In the meantime, the City will make responses as appropriate.

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Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken in instances of misconduct. An example of such an incident of misconduct would be when an individual has committed a violent act or has made a direct threat.

Employees who knew of information about workplace violence but did not report it in a manner consistent with this procedure, may be subjected to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

4. *The City will not retaliate against an employee for honest reporting of instances of workplace violence.*

IV. CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM GUIDELINES

In an attempt to be prepared for the possibility of responding to an event of actual or threatened workplace violence, the City will use a three-level plan for action. In each instance of violence or threat of violence, specific departmental representatives will be identified as resources for response and resolution, and those individuals will become the Crisis Management Team. When informed of an allegation of violence, the Crisis Management Team will respond and investigate the matter. Details of the investigation will be kept confidential, to the extent possible.

The levels that will be used for implementing appropriate response, and response guidelines for each, are as follows:

Level 1 - An Act Of Violence That Results In Injuries Or Death.

In the event of a violent act in the workplace, first priority shall be to attend to the immediate danger and injuries. The first response to an actual act of violence is to contact emergency response personnel. An instance of actual violence can be reported by calling 911 (9-911) and, in the case of employees located in the CMGC, calling Building Security at extension 4535. If a medical emergency exists, Fire Department Emergency Medical Technicians may also be contacted (336-4174) for immediate assistance while other medical responders are arriving.

As soon as possible, the Human Resources Key Business Executive (KBE) should be notified in order to assemble a Crisis Management Team which may include the following: the Human Resources KBE; the KBE of the involved Key Business Unit; representatives of the Police Key Business, the Risk Management Division, the City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, and the Corporate/Communications Officer; and other representatives as necessary (i.e. an Employee Assistance Program Representative, Building Security, etc.).

The Crisis Management Team will be charged with the responsibility of securing the scene, debriefing personnel, ensuring appropriate care of the injured, notifying family, responding to media requests, formulating measures to prevent recurrence, and documenting actions taken.

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Level 2 - Danger Is Imminent.

A direct threat of violence shall be reported in accordance with the Procedures set forth above. Once the work location is secure, the Human Resources KBE shall be notified in order to assemble a Crisis Management Team which may include the following: the Human Resources KBE; the KBE of the involved Key Business; representatives of the Police Key Business, the City Attorney's Office, and the Corporate/Communications Officer; and other representatives as necessary.

The Crisis Management Team shall be charged with the responsibility of investigating the incident, communicating with affected employees, formulating plans to help protect employees and the public, and providing other support as necessary.

Level 3 - Threats.

In the event that an individual presents or implies a threat of violence, the employee(s) who received the threat shall immediately contact his/her supervisor to alert the supervisor of the situation. The supervisor should take action as necessary and shall report the incident in accordance with the procedures set forth above.

The KBE or designee of the Key Business Unit in which the threat occurs shall develop an action plan for dealing with the threat and attending to the safety and security of employees. The KBE or designee shall take appropriate actions toward the individual making the threat (i.e. employee counseling/discipline, following up with law enforcement officials through the prosecution of the individual).