



Office of the Mayor
City of Columbus
Ohio

POLICY REGARDING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

INTRODUCTION:

The City of Columbus endeavors to provide a workplace for City employees, which is free from all forms of violence and the influence of violence. This policy recognizes that a workplace free from violence or the threat of violence is fundamental to the health and well being of City employees. To promote a work environment free from violence, the City expects that all employees, at every level, will be treated with respect and dignity.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The City of Columbus has adopted a “zero tolerance” policy against physical attacks, threats, menacing and harassing behaviors in the workplace. Conduct and behavior that contributes to an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment will not be tolerated. City employees found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and may also be personally subject to other civil and criminal penalties. All forms of violence, threats or intimidation directed at City employees by persons outside the City will be met with an immediate response, which may include civil and/or criminal action designed to protect the employee and prevent further instances of workplace violence. This policy and any related sanctions are deemed supplemental to the City’s Central Work Rules, the Civil Service Commission Rules and Regulation, all applicable collective bargaining agreements, all applicable Memoranda of Understanding, and applicable State and Federal laws.

This “zero-tolerance” policy also includes domestic abuse and domestic violence incidents that impact the workplace. Employees who are victims or potential victims of domestic or dating violence are encouraged to take the following steps:

1. Contact EAP for confidential counseling and referrals
2. Inform your supervisor or human resource manager (all reports are confidential)
3. Contact Safety and Security who will bring the necessary resources together to help evaluate risk and formulate an appropriate response or action plan.

COVERAGE:

This policy applies to all employees of the City of Columbus whether full-time, part-time, temporary or seasonal. It also applies to volunteers and interns working under the direction of City employees.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **WORKPLACE** is any location, either permanent or temporary, where an employee performs any work-related duty. This includes but is not limited to, City owned buildings and surrounding perimeters including parking lots, field locations, and traveling to and from work assignments. A field location includes and location where an employee is performing their duties irrespective of whether the location is owned by the City.
2. **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE** is behavior or conduct consisting of, but not limited to, oral or written threats, harassment, intimidation, physical attack or property damage, and proscribed criminal acts, including both felonies and misdemeanors, such as homicide, domestic violence, forcible sex offenses, stalking, kidnapping and assault either occurring at or arising from the employee's place of work with the City.
3. **PHYSICAL ATTACK** is any form of aggression resulting in physical assault with or without the use of a weapon OR any aggressive act of hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, scratching, or any other such physical contact directed at a City employee by a customer, visitor, or co-worker which arises during or as a result of the performance of their duties and results in physical or mental injury.
4. **THREAT** is an expression of present or future intent to cause physical or mental harm to another regardless of whether the party communicating the threat has the present ability to do harm.
5. **HARASSMENT** is any behavior or communication that is intended to coerce or induce fear.

REPORTING/INVESTIGATION/FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES:

All City employees should be concerned about workplace safety and security issues. Therefore a City employee who believes that he or she is or has been subjected to or has witnessed workplace violence as defined above must report the incident to the Personnel or Human Resources office in their department or division. In cases where the reporting person is not a City employee, a report should be made to the Columbus Division of Police. Reported information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

order are encouraged to provide a copy of the order to the department or division administrator or his designee. The information contained in the protection order will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and disclosed only on a need-to-know basis. The term protection order includes any civil, temporary protection order, or stalking protection order issued by any court of competent jurisdiction whether in or out of state.

The City will maintain a database to routinely analyze aggregate data. The division or department Personnel or Human Resources office will investigate every incident of workplace violence and prepare a written report.

After an incidence of workplace violence, the division or department Personnel or Human Resources office where the incident occurred should contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 645-6894. EAP will coordinate all crisis response activities.

DISCIPLINE:

City employees who violate this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Employees may also be subject to possible civil and criminal action. Any disciplinary action will be taken pursuant to the City Central Work Rules, Civil Service Commission Rules and Regulations and/or the applicable existing collective bargaining agreement.

TRAINING:

The City will provide opportunities for City employees to be trained in the risk factors associated with workplace violence and the proper techniques for handling emergency situations in order to minimize the risks of violent incidents occurring in the workplace. Training sessions will be announced in the future.

NON-RETALIATION:

This policy prohibits retaliation against any employee who brings a good faith complaint of violent or intimidating behavior or, who helps in investigating such complaints; the employee will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, nor discriminated against or discharged because of the complaint.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE INCIDENT FORM PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The purpose of the incident reporting form is to document incidents of violence in the workplace. The City of Columbus Occupational Safety and Health Programs Division of the Department of Human Resources will collect and analyze the data to identify emerging trends, patterns, and areas of high vulnerability; and help determine ways to reduce or eliminate the risks. The Human Resources office of each Division (or Department) will conduct an internal investigation and follow up with the person reporting the incident.

ALL EMPLOYEES ARE ENCOURAGED TO REPORT INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. No incident should go unreported!

Procedures:

- Any employee, who is involved in or has witnessed an incident of violence at work, should complete the form.
- Upon completion, the form should be forwarded to the HR personnel office within the Division/ Department.
- The Human Resources representative will investigate each incident and report back to the employee of the status of the investigation.
- The Human Resources representative will send a copy of the report to the Occupational Safety and Health Programs Division.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Program shall prepare Safety and Health Programs Division reports.

If you have any questions or concerns in completing the form, please contact your Human Resources Representative.