

Dept. of Human Resource Management
Workplace Violence Policy #1.80

Preventing Workplace Violence

Objectives

- Participants will be able to:
 - Define Workplace Violence
 - Identify prohibited conduct & warning signs of violence
 - Know where to report potential violence
 - Know what to do in a crisis

Purpose of Policy

- Establish a procedure that prohibits violence in the workplace
- Maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior

What is Workplace Violence

- Any violent act, physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse directed at employees and occurring in the workplace by another employee or third party

Supervisor Responsibilities

- Realize that every complaint is not necessarily a workplace violence issue
 - Performance , Training, Disrupting work flow...
- Take all complaints seriously
- Not retaliate on someone who reports a violent or potentially violent situation

Supervisor Responsibilities

- Understand the policy in order to
 - Enforce the policy
 - Explain the policy to employees
- Follow agency procedures/plans for investigating complaints of workplace violence

Supervisor Responsibilities Continued



- As appropriate
 - Talk with supervisor
 - Talk with Human Resources
 - Notify the Police
 - Apply progressive discipline and/or the Standards of Conduct

Everyone's Responsibility

- Know the policy
- Know what is a workplace violence issue and what is not
- Know where to report potential or actual violence

Everyone's Responsibility

- Prevention..Prevention..Prevention
 - There should be NO SURPRISES
- Report potential or actual violence
 - Validate concerns
 - To a supervisor, the supervisor's supervisor, Human Resources, the Police
- Be aware...co-workers, surroundings

Policy 1.80

- This policy applies to all employees
- The policy recognizes and recommends a response to any third party that may pose a threat to the safety of the workplace
 - Third party = relatives, strangers, visitors
- Violent acts occurring outside the workplace may be grounds for disciplinary action

Policy 1.80

- Discipline depends on the type and severity of the action but can include termination of employment
- The applicable policy depends on the classification of the employee
 - Classified/Operational – DHRM Standards of Conduct Policy #1.60
 - Professional/Faculty – respective handbook

Prohibited Conduct

- Simply put, any attempt or act that..
 - Harasses
 - Intimidates
 - Injures

(Based on DHRM Policy 1.6o)

Warning Signs

- Remember....a sign of potential violence is a CHANGE in someone's behavior
 - Verbal
 - Emotional
 - Behavioral
 - Threatening

Types of Verbal Threats

- Talking louder than normal voice
- Verbal or written abuse or harassment, including direct contact, voicemail, e-mail, social networking sites
- Threat made directly or indirectly including direct contact, voicemail, e-mail, social networking sites

Types of Verbal Threats

- Bizarre or off color comments or jokes
- Conflicts with others
- Inability to accept personal responsibility in situation
- Talking about violence, glorification of or reference to other violent incidents

Types of Verbal Threats

- Statements such as the system is out to get him/her
- Loss of hope or ever seeing themselves in a more positive situation
- Talking about his/her fascination with weapons

Emotional Warning Signs

- Non-verbal signals of emotional distress
 - Based on perception of abnormal look or actions compared to typical look or action.
- Anger or excessive irritability
- Impatience

Emotional Warning Signs

- Appearing stressed and/ hopeless/depressed
- Attendance, performance issues
- Steals/sabotages the work of other

Behavioral Warning Signs

- Blames other for their problems/not taking personal responsibility
- Distancing self from others
- Concentration or memory problems
- Use of, or increase use of, alcohol/drugs

Behavioral Warning Signs

- Lack of concern for the safety of others
- Violent outbursts or displays
- Reference or glorification of other acts of violence

Threatening Behavior

- Indicates harm to another or a threat to the property of another
 - **Direct threat**- I am going to punch you
 - **Indirect threat** – If he is approved for another day of vacation...it is the last day of vacation she'll ever take.
 - **Ambiguous threats** – I hope everyone knows where their kids are tonight...

Threatening Behavior

- Any action that intimidates or is designed to intimidate
- Harassment
 - In person, e-mail, voicemail, regular mail, social network accounts and etc

Threatening Behavior

- Stalking
- Carrying/brandishing a weapon
- Display of symbols associated with violent or hostile groups

**Can you think of other
Threatening Behaviors?**



Prevention

- Know your employees and co-workers
- Watch, monitor and validate what you see
- Seek advice & assistance, if needed
- Deal with warning signs early
- Use Progressive Discipline to address issues along the way

Prevention

- Talk with the person/maintain contact and communications
- Uses resources to help BEFORE they blow up
- Have a plan!
- Take all complaints seriously

Responding to a Crisis

- Have an escape route and use it
- Notify Police immediately
- Provide all possible information to the Police
 - Location, names of person(s) involved
 - Description of perpetrator
 - Types of weapon(s) used, if any

Responding to a Violent Person

- Like a Crisis..you need to
 - Get to a secure location as soon as possible
 - Notify the Police
 - Provide all the information available to you
- Do not try to be the mediator!

After a Violent Incident

- Document
- Cooperate with investigation
- Recognize emotional impact
- Care for employees, co-workers and self
- Provide or receive counseling

Resources – On Campus

- W&M Human Resources
 - 757-221-3169
- William and Mary Police Department
 - 757-221-4596
 - 911 calls from Campus Phone go to W&M Police Dept.
 - 911 calls from Cell go to Williamsburg Police Dept.
- W&M Ombuds
 - 757-221-1941

Resources – Off Campus

- Employee Assistance Program
 - 866-725-0602
- Employment Dispute Resolution
 - 888-232-3842
- Virginia Domestic Violence Crisis and Support Resources
 - Williamsburg City 757-258-5051
 - James City County 757-258-5051
 - York County 757-722-2261

Summary

- Be prepared
- Prevention is best
- Be alert
- Report violence
- Respond appropriately
- Use resources

Questions

