

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

Purpose

The Village of Avoca is committed to the safety and security of our employees. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to our agency, staff, and clients. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on Village of Avoca property will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including summoning criminal justice authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other as well as clients, following all policies, procedures, program requirements, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

The Village of Avoca is committed to protecting all people from violence or the threat of violence against employees, customers, or vendors. Any Village employee, customer, or vendor may not use violence or the threat of violence while performing work, conducting business, or visiting Village premises. All employees will participate in the annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all Village employees and all personnel in a contractual or other business relationship with the Village, including, for example, applicants, temporary or leased employees, independent contractors, vendors, consultants, volunteers, or visitors. Depending on the extent of the Village's employees in the workplace, this Policy may be applied to the conduct of non-employees with respect to treatment of Village employees in the workplace. This Policy applies with equal force on Village property as it does at Village-sponsored events, programs, and activities which take place off Village premises.

Policy Objectives

By adopting and publishing this Policy, it is the intention of the Village of Avoca to:

1. Provide safety education for employees so they know what conduct is not acceptable, what to do if they witness or are subjected to workplace violence, and how to protect themselves.
2. Inform employees about notification procedures established by the Village of Avoca which enable any employee who believes (s)he is the victim of workplace violence to submit a complaint which will be investigated by the Village of Avoca.
3. Secure the workplace with lighting, metal detectors, and alarm systems, where appropriate. Ensure appropriate access by public through use of employee ID badges and guards, where appropriate.
4. Where applicable, limit the amount of cash on hand.
5. Provide field staff with cell phones, require them to prepare a daily work-plan, and inform a contact person of their location through the day, where appropriate. Keep employer-provided vehicles properly maintained.
6. Instruct employees not to enter any location where they feel unsafe.
7. Take threats seriously. Respond to reports by individuals. Call 911 when there is threat of bodily harm.

Definitions

1. Crime of Violence or Violence: Includes any degree of murder, voluntary, manslaughter, aggravated rape, rape, mayhem, especially aggravated robbery, robbery, burglary, aggravated assault, assault, physical or verbal threats and battery.
2. Weapon: Includes an explosive or an explosive weapon, a machine gun, a short barrel rifle, or shotgun, a handgun, a firearm silencer, a switchblade knife, or any other implement for infliction of bodily injury, serious bodily injury, or death that has no common lawful purpose.
3. Bullying: Workplace bullying is the repeated less favorable treatment of a person by another or others, which may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. Workplace bullying is behavior that can intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate an employee.
4. Work Site: All Village of Avoca property owned or operated by the Village or in a Village vehicle.
5. Reporting: An employee who witnesses an incident of violence or threatening language or conduct must promptly report the incident to his or her supervisor or the Risk Manager.
6. Discipline: An employee who violates this Policy by engaging in violent conduct or bringing a weapon into the workplace may be subject to discipline, up to and included reprimand, fine, suspension, demotion, or termination.

Policy

The Village of Avoca has a strong commitment to its employees to provide a safe, healthy, and secure work environment. The Village expects employees to maintain a high level of productivity and efficiency. The threat of

violence, occurrence of violence, and the presence of weapons in the workplace during work hours or otherwise are inconsistent with these objectives. The Village expects all employees to report to the work site without possessing weapons and to perform their job without violence toward any individual. Likewise, employees will perform their job without being subject to workplace violence.

Examples of Prohibited Activities

The Village of Avoca specifically prohibits the following and will routinely discipline an employee up to and including termination for any of the following:

- Use, possession, or sale of any weapon
- Storing any weapon in a desk, locker, vehicle, lunch box, tool kit, bag, purse, or any other method of concealing on the work site or other Village location
- Refusing to submit to an inspection for the presence of a weapon, when requested by the Village
- Refusing to sign a statement to comply with the Village's Policy on Workplace Violence
- Refusing to participate in an investigation pertaining to allegations or suspicion that violence has or is likely to occur, or an investigation pertaining to the carrying of a weapon by the employee or a co-employee
- Verbal or physical threats, threatening gestures, or threatening statements
- Fighting
- Bullying

Examples of Protected Activity

Includes but may not be limited to:

- Complained/ reported a problem with discrimination, including: sexual harassment and all other categories (race, national origin, age, gender, pregnancy, disability, and religion)
- Complained/ reported safety issues
- Requested accommodations of a disability
- Filed workers compensation claim
- Served as a witness at an unemployment hearing
- Were a whistleblower
- Refused to violate the law or code of ethics
- Sued the Village under certain laws such as the discrimination laws, whistleblower laws, and benefit-related laws
- Any good faith communication that discloses or demonstrates an intention to disclose information that evidence either 1) an improper governmental activity or 2) any condition that may significantly threaten the health or safety of employees of the public if they disclosure or intention to disclose were made for the purpose of remedying the condition.

Procedures

Note that the confidentiality of the employee making the good faith disclosure will be maintained unless it becomes necessary to disclose the identity to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the laws and to provide the accused individuals(s) their legal rights of defense. All reports of illegal and dishonest activities should be promptly submitted to the supervisor, department head, elected official, or Personnel Department. At any time before the complaint is fully resolved, the complainant may submit a request to the responsible supervisor, department head, elected official, the Risk Manager, or which the employee is working the Risk Manager or the Personnel Department is responsible for investigating and coordinating any Corrective action.

EFFECTIVE DATE & POLICY DISSEMINATION

The effective date of this Policy shall be January 1, 2012. The Village of Avoca shall ensure that this Policy is adequately disseminated and made available to all employees of the Village of Avoca.

PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION

Complaints of retaliation should be brought directly to a supervisor, the Risk Manager, or the Personnel Department.