



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SECTION: 500 – Health, Safety & Security		PROCEDURE #: 503-A
TITLE: Workplace Violence Prevention		IMPLEMENTS POLICY #: 503
SPONSORING DEPARTMENT/DIV: Support Services/Human Resources		
EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/25/2016	REVIEWED:	LAST AMENDED:

OBJECTIVE: To establish procedures to keep Staff and visitors safe and to respond to acts or threats of violence in the workplace.

AUTHORITY: The authority to issue or revise these procedures is reserved to the County Administrator. The County Administrator may authorize exceptions to these procedures when deemed appropriate.

PROCEDURES:

1. Preventative Measures:

Department Directors, managers and supervisors are expected to develop preventative measures to reduce the risk of workplace violence. Preventative measures are subject to review and approval by the County Administrative Office (CAO), who may decide if others (for example: County Counsel, Facilities and Parks Services, Human Resources, Risk Management) should be involved in developing and reviewing suggested measures. The following are examples of preventative measures:

- 1.1. Inform Staff that workplace violence is not tolerated, and any sustained violation of the policy will result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- 1.2. Inform Staff of the expectation to report incidents that are or could be perceived as workplace violence.
- 1.3. Encourage victims or potential victims of domestic violence to seek assistance from public or community agencies, law enforcement, Human Resources or the County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

- 1.4. Encourage Staff to report the existence of any restraining or protective orders that could affect workplace safety and to seek assistance through the County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- 1.5. Communicate the importance of workplace safety to Staff on a regular basis.
- 1.6. Establish a professional and safety-conscious work environment.
- 1.7. Be familiar with and communicate County and Departmental emergency procedures to Staff.
- 1.8. Encourage Staff to be familiar with their work location and trends in criminal activity in or around the area.
- 1.9. Be alert and aware of the surrounding environment when coming and going to and from one's personal vehicle.
- 1.10. Be cautious of unauthorized persons entering and exiting work areas.
- 1.11. Participate in and encourage Staff to attend workplace violence prevention training.

2. Response Procedures:

Workplace violence generally falls into three categories. Department Directors, managers and supervisors are responsible for responding appropriately based on the applicable category. The suggested actions by category are as follows:

2.1. Violence Has Occurred:

- 2.1.1. Call 911 (and/or utilize Duress Alarm if necessary).
- 2.1.2. Evaluate the threat for additional incidents of violence, warn other potential victims, inform victims about available medical services and cooperate with law enforcement.
- 2.1.3. Report the incident(s) to supervisors and Department Director as soon as reasonably able to do so.
- 2.1.4. Refer any requests for information or interviews from the media to the Washington County Public Information Officer.
- 2.1.5. Notify Human Resources at the earliest possible time.
- 2.1.6. Complete a *Workplace Violence Report Form* (see Section 2.5 below) as soon as possible and submit to Human Resources and Risk Management.
- 2.1.7. Human Resources will review the reported incident with department management to determine the appropriate course of action to address the incident and facilitate an immediate response to ensure the safety of all Staff.
- 2.1.8. Once the immediate threat has been addressed and the work environment has been secured, Human Resources will initiate an investigation of the incident.

2.2. Immediate Threat Exists:

- 2.2.1. Call 911 (and/or utilize Duress Alarm if necessary).
- 2.2.2. Staff should not put themselves or anyone else at risk during a threat or dangerous situation that is imminent.

- 2.2.3. Report the incident(s) to supervisors and Department Director as soon as reasonably able to do so.
 - 2.2.4. If the threats of danger and violence still exist, Staff should warn potential targets, and take reasonable actions to immediately exit the area.
 - 2.2.5. Complete a *Workplace Violence Report Form* (see Section 2.5 below) as soon as possible and submit to Human Resources and Risk Management.
 - 2.2.6. Human Resources will review the reported incident with department management to determine the appropriate course of action to address the incident and facilitate an immediate response to ensure the safety of all Staff.
 - 2.2.7. Once the immediate threat has been addressed and the work environment has been secured, Human Resources will initiate an investigation of the incident.
- 2.3. Threat Made, No Immediate Danger Apparent:
- 2.3.1. Staff should immediately report the incident to their supervisor or next in-line supervisor.
 - 2.3.2. Notify law enforcement if threat of violence to person or property is made. This includes threats made in person or through phone call, voicemail, email, text, or social media platforms.
 - 2.3.3. Assist in connecting victims or potential victims of domestic violence, with advocates that can provide assistance with safety planning.
 - 2.3.4. A *Workplace Violence Report Form* (see Section 2.5 below) shall be completed as soon as possible and submitted to Human Resources and Risk Management.
 - 2.3.5. Human Resources will review the reported incident with department management to determine the appropriate course of action to address the threat and facilitate an immediate response to ensure the safety of all staff.
 - 2.3.6. Once the immediate threat has been addressed and the work environment has been secured, Human Resources will initiate an investigation of the incident.
 - 2.3.7. Supervisors shall develop a plan of action in collaboration with Human Resources and law enforcement, to include appropriate corrective action based upon assessment of the incident or threat.
- 2.4. Reporting an Incident:
- 2.4.1. Staff members who become aware of a display of violent, abusive, or threatening behavior must immediately contact law enforcement (if applicable) and report such behavior to their immediate Supervisor and Department Director.
 - 2.4.2. The Human Resources Manager is to be contacted by the Supervisor or Department Director, initially by direct or phone contact.

- 2.4.3. Department Director will direct reporting employee(s) to complete a *Workplace Violence Report Form* and forward the completed report to Human Resources (See Section 2.5 below).
- 2.4.4. To the extent possible, such reports will be handled confidentially, on a need-to-know basis.
- 2.4.5. Staff will not be penalized in any way for making a report in good faith.
- 2.4.6. Staff should not assume that the County is aware of any possible violent situations and should immediately report all complaints and concerns.
- 2.4.7. Any Staff member who intentionally makes a false allegation or report will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination.
- 2.4.8. The County Administrator or Assistant County Administrator shall be notified of all reports under this section by the Human Resources Manager.

2.5. Workplace Violence Report Form:

The *Workplace Violence Report Form* is to be used by Staff and witnesses to document and report acts of workplace violence including physical and/or verbal threats. To complete the *Workplace Violence Report Form*:

- 2.5.1. The reporting Staff member must complete and sign the *Workplace Violence Report Form* as soon as practical after an incident.
- 2.5.2. The completed report (including any additional pages) shall be placed in a sealed envelope marked “confidential” and hand delivered or sent through interoffice mail to the attention of the Human Resources Manager.
- 2.5.3. Completed reports and any information related to the Report Formed will be maintained in a confidential file in Human Resources.

3. Training.

The County will make available and encourage Staff to attend a workplace violence prevention training program that is designed to inform Staff about workplace violence. Participants are presented with the definition of workplace violence, traits and warning signs of violent behavior, and the measures to take when dealing with acts or threats of violence. The Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and corresponding Administrative Procedures will be covered in the training sessions.