



Ithaca Police Department

120 East Clinton Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

General Order Number: 308

Title: Workplace Violence

Issuing Authority: Chief John Barber

Effective Date: 12/01/2015

Rescinds/Supersedes: All previously issued directives

Review Date: 12/2016

Applicable NYSLEA Standards: 14.1; 44.1

Number of Pages: 4

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the City of Ithaca provides a safe workplace for all employees and employs all means necessary to reduce the risk of workplace violence. The City does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees.

II. Policy

- A. To ensure a safe workplace and to reduce the risk of violence, all employees shall review and understand the provisions of this policy and the City's workplace violence policy set out in the City Employee Handbook.
- B. Consistent with these policies, threats or acts of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion which involves or affects City employees while in the performance of their work for the City or which occur on City property will not be tolerated.
- C. For the purposes of the City's workplace violence policies, workplace is defined as any location, either permanent or temporary, where any City employee performs any work-related duty, including, but not limited to buildings and the surrounding perimeters, including parking lots. It includes all City-owned, leased or donated space, including vehicles, and any location where City business or sponsored activity is conducted.

III. Definition of Workplace Violence

- A. Workplace violence is defined as all threats or acts of violence occurring on City property, as defined above.
- B. The following list of behaviors are examples of prohibited conduct:
 - 1. Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates an objective reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress; intentionally damaging employer property or property of another employee; hitting or shoving an individual with any part of one's body and/or object; threatening to harm an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or their property; Intentional destruction or threat of destruction of property owned, operated, or controlled by the City or City employees; making harassing or threatening telephone calls, or sending harassing or threatening letters or other forms of written or electronic communications;
 - 2. The willful, malicious and repeated following of another person, also known as "stalking", and/ or making of a credible threat with intent to place the other person in reasonable fear for his or her safety;
 - 3. Making a suggestion or otherwise conveying that an act to injure persons or property is "appropriate", without regard to the location where such suggestion occurs;
 - 4. Unauthorized possession of a weapon while on City property or while on City business
 - 5. Committing acts of violence motivated by, or related to, race, age, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, sex, disability, marital status, sexual harassment or domestic violence.

IV. Procedure

- A. All personnel are responsible for notifying their supervisor of any threats, which they have witnessed or received. Employees are encouraged to report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent, when the behavior is related or might be carried out at work or is connected to City employment. These reports should be made regardless of the relationship between the City and the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior.
- B. In all situations, if violence appears to be imminent, employees should take the precautions necessary to assure their own safety and the safety of others.

- C. If a supervisor or police officer can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given. If possible, employees should immediately notify the Tompkins County 911 Center of a serious threat to their safety or the safety of others.
- D. When appropriate, any potentially dangerous situations must be reported immediately to a supervisor or command level officer and the Chief of Police and/ or Mayor.
- E. Reports can be made anonymously and all reported incidents will be investigated if there is sufficient information in order to initiate an investigation.
- F. Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis.
- G. Acts of aggression and violent behavior require immediate action. When they occur, supervisory or command level personnel should tell aggressive employees to leave the workplace or have them removed.

V. Warning Signs, Symptoms and Risk Factors

- A. While the City does not expect employees to be experts at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform their Supervisor if any employee exhibits behavior, which could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior may include:
 - 1. Discussing weapons or bringing non-issue weapons to the workplace without an authorized purpose;
 - 2. Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger;
 - 3. Making threatening remarks;
 - 4. Sudden or significant deterioration of performance;
 - 5. Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior;
 - 6. Physical signs of hard breathing, reddening of complexion, menacing stare, loudness, fast profane speech;

7. Having a romantic obsession with another City employee who does not share that interest;
8. Intense anger or lack of empathy;
9. History of interpersonal conflict; domestic problems, and/or unstable/dysfunctional family;
10. Brooding, unusual or strange behavior.

B. Supervisors should be alerted to and aware of these indicators. Supervisors should consult with the Chief of Police if an employee exhibits such behavior to determine the best course of action.

VI. Domestic Violence

- A. All City employees are to be aware of the issue of domestic violence and its impact and potential for violence in the workplace.
- B. Individuals who obtain an order of protection which lists a City location are requested to provide the Chief of Police with a copy of any temporary or permanent order of protection.
- C. Any employee who is protected by or subject to a "no-contact order" will furnish the Chief of Police a copy of said no-contact order.
- D. In the event an employee of the police department becomes subject to an order of protection, the Deputy Chief of Police of Operations must be notified immediately. Failure to notify the Deputy Chief will be grounds for disciplinary action.
- E. Upon receipt of a "no contact order" or order of protection, the Chief of Police will develop a plan to maximize compliance with the order and to promote the safety of the employee and others at the City.
 1. This plan may include but not be limited to, surrendering any City weapon, requiring surrender of any and all badges, shields and identification cards identifying the officer as a member of the Ithaca Police Department, suspension without pay, suspension with pay or assignment to administrative duty.