



## Workplace Violence Prevention

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on how to recognize, prevent, and manage workplace violence and threats of violence, and to maintain a safe work environment.

### **Policy**

It is the City of Gainesville's policy to promote a safe work environment for its employees. It is the intent of the City to maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior. This policy includes an absolute prohibition against employees carrying firearms or personal weapons onto any City property, except as may be specifically authorized by law.

### **Definitions**

*Workplace Violence* – Is a verbal, written, or physically aggressive threat or attack intended to intimidate, cause injury or death to others in a place of employment, and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide.

*Threat* – Any behavior that could be interpreted by a reasonable person as an intent to cause physical harm to another individual. Threatening behavior may be verbal or non-verbal. Such behavior may, or may not, include the actual act of physical force, with or without a weapon, toward an individual. Threatening behavior may come from within or outside the organization (e.g. customers, strangers, co-workers, personal relations, etc.).

*Active Killer* - An individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined space or other populated area. In most cases, active killers use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

Violence, threats, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior in our workplace will not be tolerated; that is, all reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. Such behavior includes oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm.

**Reporting Procedure and Investigation**

The City relies upon the cooperation of all employees, supervisors, and managers to maintain a safe working environment. Do not ignore violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior. If you observe or experience such behavior by anyone on City premises, whether he/she is a City employee or not, report it immediately to a supervisor or manager. Supervisors and Managers who receive such reports should seek advice from the Employee and Labor Relations Division regarding investigating the incidents and initiating appropriate action.

**\*Note: Threats or assaults that require immediate attention by police should be reported first to 911]**

**Risk Reduction Measures**

While the City does not expect employees to be skilled at identifying a potentially dangerous person, employees are expected to exercise good judgement and to inform their supervisor or manager if any employee, customer, or member of the public exhibits behavior which could lead to a potentially dangerous situation. Such behaviors may include:

- Depression/withdrawal.
- Repeated violations of company policies.
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation.
- Behavior that may suggest paranoia (e.g., “everybody is against me”).
- Escalation of domestic problems into the workplace.
- Talk of severe financial problems.
- Talk of previous incidents of violence.

**Active Killer Incidents**

In an active killer situation, you should quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life, following the ‘Run, Hide, Fight’ model. Employees should be aware of and follow their Departmental Emergency Action Plan.

**Enforcement**

Any employee who is determined to have engaged in any act of workplace violence shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and may be subject to criminal penalties.

The City will support all efforts made by supervisors, managers and employees in dealing with violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior in

the workplace and will monitor whether this policy is being implemented effectively. If you have any questions about this policy/administrative procedure, please contact the Employee and Labor Relations Division.

Adopted: 11/21/19