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**SUBJECT: VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

**POLICY:** Clark County Fire & Rescue prohibits and does not tolerate violent acts or threats against personnel, visitors, guests, or other individuals within its facilities, at emergency incidents, or during any other District related activity. All reports of incidents are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. Personnel found to have engaged in such conduct are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**PURPOSE:** To provide a safe and secure work workplace for all personnel, free from threats and violence.

**SCOPE:** All District personnel.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Violence**  
For the purposes of this policy, violence is defined as any conduct, threatened or actual, by any person, that causes or is likely to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behavior that gives a person reasonable cause to believe that he/she is at risk of injury.

**Workplace Violence**  
Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to:

- Assault, battery, stalking, threatening behavior such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects (belonging to the District or a member), use of obscene or abusive language or gestures, or conduct that causes a person to believe that he/she is under a threat of death or serious bodily injury;
- Inflicting, or threatening injury or damage to District property or another person's life, health, well being, family, or property;
- Harassing behavior that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates, annoys, alarms, or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be unwelcome. This includes words, gestures, intimidation, bullying, or other inappropriate activities;
- Verbal or written threats – any expression of intent to inflict harm;
- Verbal abuse – swearing, insults, or condescending language; and
- Physical attacks – hitting, shoving, pushing, or kicking.

Swearing, verbal abuse, pranks, property damage, vandalism, sabotage, pushing, theft, physical assaults, psychological trauma,



anger-related incidents, rape arson, and murder are all examples of workplace violence.

Workplace violence can occur at off-site District related functions or at social events related to work, but resulting from work e.g. a threatening telephone call to a member's home from a fellow member or citizen.

**PROCEDURE:**

To ensure early identification and prevention of violence in the workplace, all personnel are responsible for reporting to their direct supervisor any incident committed by a District member or citizen that constitutes a potential or actual threat of violence towards a District member, especially if one or more of the following factors is known to be present or to have occurred (the list is not exclusive):

1. Threatening statements to do harm to self or others;
2. References to other incidents of violence;
3. Intimidating behavior such as insubordination, open defiance, pestering, or confrontational behavior;
4. History of violent, reckless, or anti-social behavior;
5. Recent marked decline in performance;
6. Major change in personality, mood, behavior, or standards of personal grooming;
7. Obsessions with persons or things, particularly weapons;
8. Experiencing what appears to be serious stress in personal life;  
or
9. Obvious or suspected substance abuse.

The Chief shall

1. Coordinate specific training for personnel when such a need has been identified;
2. Provide active support to supervisors in implementing this policy; and
3. Exercise responsibilities similar to those described for supervisor for their area of responsibility.

Supervisors shall

1. Ensure that all personnel are aware of the contents of this policy;
2. Promote enrollment in training courses in these areas that are available to personnel;

3. Ensure that their own skills in these areas are current;
4. Be aware of and use appropriate stress-defusing measures when dealing with potentially violent persons and when conducting performance reviews or engaging in discipline and termination of personnel;
5. Intervene in any incident to implement this policy;
6. Take immediate action when necessary, including, but not limited to calling for additional emergency services, such as police or ambulance services; and
7. Immediately report to the Chief any direct or veiled threats of violence made to a member and what, if any, action was taken.

Following a report of an incident, the Chief or his designee shall:

1. Coordinate an immediate investigation, in cooperation with the police or through a trained risk assessor, when any incident or potential incident of violence is reported, in order to assess the risk or continued risk to District personnel.
  - a) Investigations may include interviews with the member, significant other, supervisors, and other personnel; and a review of previous incidents if applicable.
  - b) Where a bargaining unit member is the subject of an investigation, an appropriate bargaining unit representative will be included as a member of the investigating team;
2. Take immediate steps to eliminate the risk and any possible recurrence if violence or threats are found to have occurred;
3. Develop or recommend and monitor, the implementation of an action plan until there is a final resolution of the risk of violence;
4. Document any information received or action taken in a separate file and take measures to protect the confidentiality of this information;
5. Advise supervisors on how to minimize the risk of violence associated with performance appraisals, disciplinary measures, and terminations and on courses relating to the management of violent and abusive behavior;
6. Coordinate the provision of assistance to members who were the target of violence or witnesses to violence and who may suffer adverse effects from the situation; and



7. Ensure that all personnel receive a copy of this policy and coordinate general training as well as specific training in response to identified needs.

The member shall:

1. Use appropriate stress-defusing behavior with citizens, fellow members, and public officials;
2. Report to the supervisor or Chief, as appropriate, any early warning sign of a potentially threatening situation which arouses concern and any instances of threatening statements of threatening behavior which was directed at them or at any other person;
3. Cooperate fully in any fact gathering interviews which are designed to assess the risk of violence in the workplace and keep all information concerning the matter confidential.

Failure to do so will result in disciplinary or other appropriate action.

The following apply to action resulting from a report:

1. Members who, with good intentions, provide information about behavior or actions which they perceive as threatening or potentially violent will not be subject to disciplinary or other action if their perceptions are not substantiated;
2. A member who is the subject of a report and who refuses to discuss potentially violent behavior or cooperate in interventions to assess or defuse the risk of workplace violence is, if information is uncovered through fact-finding to establish a reasonable possibility of risk, granted leave (employee leave will be without pay and benefits) until such time as he/she agrees to cooperate and provides proof of cooperation. Refusal to cooperate may result in dismissal if the member has received written notice to that effect and has been given a reasonable opportunity to cooperate;
3. Interventions that may form part of a risk assessment or plan of action for a District member who is the subject of a report or investigation may include referral to the employee's physician, use of the short term disability plan or temporary leave of absence, referral to counseling or other services, fitness-for-duty evaluation, and other appropriate interventions. Extreme situations may warrant suspension, obtaining appropriate court orders and/or police involvement;

4. Employees who are found to be at risk of engaging in violent conduct or who have engaged in violent conduct may be subject to suspension or dismissal if warranted. Disciplinary action will not normally be taken until all other avenues of assistance have been considered and found to be inappropriate or ineffective. Employees who engage in repeat violent behavior after a first incident is reported may be subject to immediate dismissal or suspension, pending the development of an appropriate plan of action;
5. Where the threat or incident of violence has originated from an external source, actions that warrant consideration may include changes to the physical work space, changes to procedures to offer better support and protection, withdrawal of services, police intervention and the use of appropriate court orders;
6. A summary of the incident will be kept in the personnel file and all other related documents will be kept in a separate file; and
7. This policy and its procedures do not abrogate any employee's right to file a grievance with the appropriate bargaining unit or to access other provisions of the Collective Agreement which may apply.

The following apply to trauma support:

1. District personnel who have witnessed or experienced a traumatic event may need special support. Their special needs will be acknowledged and accommodated. The District maintains a list of available services that offer appropriate support; and
2. The Chief or his designate will advise affected staff of their support options and will coordinate any special assistance that may be required.