



City of Palm Springs Administrative Policy Statement Concerning Violence in the Workplace

Statement of Policy

The City is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace. In this regard, the City establishes a “zero tolerance” policy for actual or threatened violence against employees, consultants, customers, visitors, or anyone else on City premises or engaging in City-related business. Security and safety in the workplace is every employee’s responsibility. It is therefore essential that every employee understand the importance of workplace safety and security.

Moreover, as part of this policy, the City seeks to prevent workplace violence before it begins and reserves the right to address behavior that suggests a propensity towards violence even prior to any violent behavior occurring. The City believes that prevention of workplace violence begins with recognition and awareness of potential early warning signs and will establish procedures within its Personnel Department for responding to any situation that presents the possibility of violence.

The City’s prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in City operation, including but not limited to City personnel, contract and temporary workers, vendors, customers and anyone else on City property, in City parking lots, at City-related events or on City business. Violations of this policy may be followed by legal action as appropriate.

The City may also seek a temporary restraining order or injunction on behalf of City workers if the situation warrants such action.

Workplace Violence Defined

Workplace violence includes conduct against persons or property that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating so as to alter employment conditions or create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for any City employee or anyone doing business with the City, on City premises or engaged in City-related business. Violence occurring off City property and not during City business is also prohibited if it involves a City employee and if the threats or acts of violence adversely impact the City’s best interests.

General examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Threats of any kind, including behavior that can reasonably be interpreted as a threat;
- 2) Threatening, physically aggressive, or violent behavior, such as intimidation of or attempts to instill fear in others;
- 3) Other behavior that suggests a propensity toward violence, which can include belligerent speech, excessive arguing or swearing, sabotage, threats of sabotage or suggestion of sabotage of City property, harassing or threatening telephone calls, letters or other forms of written or electronic communications, or a demonstrated pattern of refusal to follow City policies and procedures;
- 4) Intimidating or attempting to coerce an employee to do wrongful acts that would adversely affect the business interests of the City;

- 5) Harassing surveillance or “stalking,” such as the willful, malicious and repeated following of another person and making a credible threat with intent to place the other person in reasonable fear of their safety;
- 6) Defacing City property or causing physical damage to City facilities; or
- 7) With the exception of authorized safety or security personnel, bringing weapons, including weapons paraphernalia, firearms or dangerous devices and materials of any kind on City premises, in City parking lots, to City-related events or while conducting City business.

Reporting Workplace Violence

Every act or threat of workplace violence must be treated seriously and reported immediately to the employee’s supervisor or the Personnel Officer. This includes any of the above-listed actions or behavior, or any other behavior giving rise to a reasonable fear of workplace violence by an employee, customer, consultant, visitor, or anyone else. Supervisors shall communicate all such reports to the Personnel Officer.

Further, employees should notify their supervisor or the Personnel Officer if any restraining order is in effect, or if a potentially violent non-work related situation exists that could result in violence in the workplace. Supervisors must communicate any such information to the Personnel Officer.

If an act of violence has actually occurred against a person or property, or is imminently feared, the employee, supervisor or Personnel Officer should seek emergency assistance immediately. In such situations, the employee, supervisor or Personnel Officer should immediately contact law enforcement authorities by dialing 911.

Investigation

All reports of workplace violence will be taken seriously and will be promptly investigated. In appropriate circumstances, the City will inform the reporting individual of the results of the investigation. To the extent and degree possible, the City will attempt to extend confidentiality to the reporting employee and to the investigation, but may need to disclose results and/or names in appropriate circumstances, for example, in order to interview witnesses, protect safety, or in the event of criminal prosecution or other litigation.

Retaliation

The City will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who reports workplace violence. Any incidents of retaliation should be reported immediately to the employee’s supervisor or the Personnel Officer. Any employee who is found to have retaliated against any person who has reported workplace violence may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Corrective Action and Discipline

The City establishes a “zero tolerance” policy for actual or threatened violence against employees, consultants, customers, visitors, or anyone else on City premises or engaging in a City-related activity. If the City determines that workplace violence has occurred, the City will take appropriate corrective action and will impose appropriate discipline on offending employees. The appropriate discipline will depend on the particular facts, but may include written or oral warnings, probation, and reassignment of responsibilities, suspension, or termination. If the violent behavior is that of a non-

employee, the City will take appropriate corrective action in an attempt to ensure that such behavior is not repeated.

False Reports

Any employee who knowingly or maliciously files a false report of workplace violence will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

Employee Training

All employees shall receive training and instruction via video, written materials and/or other means on workplace security practices. Training and instruction shall be provided within twelve (12) months following the adoption of this policy and periodically thereafter. Additional training and instruction may be provided whenever the City is made aware of new or previously unrecognized hazards.