

CITY OF SPOKANE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE	ADMIN 0620-06-48 LGL 2006-12
TITLE: WORKPLACE THREATS AND VIOLENCE EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 1998 REVISION EFFECTIVE DATE: February 9, 2006	

1.0 GENERAL

1.1 Workplace violence continues to be a significant problem.

1.2 TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1.0 GENERAL
- 2.0 DEPARTMENTS/DIVISIONS AFFECTED
- 3.0 REFERENCES
- 4.0 DEFINITIONS
- 5.0 POLICY
- 6.0 PROCEDURE
- 7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES
- 8.0 APPENDICES

2.0 DEPARTMENTS/DIVISIONS AFFECTED

This policy shall apply to all City divisions and departments.

3.0 REFERENCES

None

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 "Workplace Violence" as used in this policy means acts of physical, verbal or written aggression, threats to inflict physical harm, or damage to property, or any purposeful or knowing behavior which would cause a reasonable person to feel threatened by an employee or non-employee in the workplace. "Workplace Violence" does not include reasonable force in the defense of oneself or others. "Workplace Violence" also does not include the appropriate use of force or weapons by law enforcement officers, duly assigned security guards, or others acting lawfully to protect and defend life and property.

4.2 "Weapon" means any firearm, switchblade knife, or knife with a blade longer than four inches, dangerous chemicals, explosive devices of any kind, chains, and other objects intended to injure or intimidate others.

4.3 "Threat" is defined as an expression by word or conduct of intent to commit violence that places the listener or reader in fear of imminent bodily harm, or is of such character that another individual could be placed in fear of imminent bodily harm. The overall context of statement, including nonverbal communications will be taken into account to determine if such an expression is a threat covered by this policy. There are generally three types of threats recognized by the City: veiled, conditional and direct.

- A veiled threat involves reference to a violent act and an association with the present situation.
- A conditional threat contains words such as "if" or "or" and references a violent act with the condition.
- A direct threat is a warning of a pending violent act.

5.0 POLICY

5.1 The City will not tolerate any workplace acts of violence to persons whether they are employees or members of the public, or to property. Any employee who commits or threatens an act of workplace violence will be subject to investigation and discipline. It is the goal of the City to provide a workplace that is free from intimidation, threats or violence.

5.2 Employee Responsibilities

5.2.1 Employees are expected to treat co-workers, members of the public and property with respect. No employee is permitted to commit or threaten violence against any other employee or member of the public. Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to physical abuse, verbal threats to inflict physical harm, vandalism, arson, and use of weapons.

5.2.2 Employees are not permitted to bring a weapon into the City workplace or onto any City property unless the weapon is required to fulfill the employee's job duties, such as those of a police officer, or the Deputy Mayor grants a prior exception in writing.

5.3 Supervisory / Management Responsibilities

5.3.1 Supervisors, managers and department/division directors shall attend training on identifying and defusing workplace problems and conflicts.

5.3.2 Supervisors are expected to appropriately intervene when they see an employee on the receiving end of abuse, whether from another employee or a member of the public.

5.3.3 The responding supervisor, manager or director, shall establish command, and immediately assess whether there is a current significant risk of violence that could result in physical harm to people or property. He/she shall determine the appropriate level of emergency response. The supervisor, manager or director's efforts should include the following actions:

- Assuring that 9-911 has been called, if necessary.
- Alerting other employees in the immediate area about the situation.
- Attempting to move individuals at risk to a safer location.
- Implementing the appropriate evacuation proceeding if rapid evacuation of the building seems warranted.
- Controlling staff involved so that they do not interfere with or hinder the efforts of law enforcement or other emergency personnel who may respond to the incident.
- Assuring that necessary immediate medical attention and/or emotional support is provided to employees affected by the incident.

5.4 City Responsibilities

5.4.1 Due to the need to allow public access to City facilities and services, the City cannot guarantee the protection of employees or members of the public against random acts of violence that may occur.

5.4.2 The City subscribes to the concept of a safe work environment and supports the prevention of workplace violence. Prevention efforts include, but are not limited to informing employees of this policy, instructing employees regarding the dangers of workplace violence, communicating the sanctions imposed for violating this policy and providing a

reporting hierarchy within which to report incidents of violence without fear of reprisal.

5.5 Disciplinary Action

5.5.1 Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, depending on the severity of the violation.

5.6 Members of the Public

5.6.1 Any member of the public who violates this policy may be denied access to City business locations.

6.0 PROCEDURE

6.1 Employee Responsibilities

6.1.1 Employees shall be alert to and immediately report suspicious or threatening behavior and incidents of workplace violence to their supervisor, or contact law enforcement, fire and/or emergency medical personnel by dialing 9-911 in the case of immediate serious threat or commission of a crime, and using the attached reporting form to the Human Resources Director and the Risk Manager. In the event of imminent danger to persons or property, employees shall take action to safeguard persons or property before making the formal report.

6.1.2 Employees shall report to the Human Resources Director, the Risk Manager, or 9-1-1 as appropriate, any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent.

6.1.3 Employees are responsible for making the report required in the two preceding paragraphs regardless of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person or persons who were threatened or were the focus of the threatening behavior.

6.1.4 Except as noted above, reports shall be made immediately after a threat or act of workplace violence has occurred.

6.1.5 Employees are to retreat from situations when in fear of imminent physical harm.

6.1.6 All individuals who apply for, or obtain a protective or restraining order which lists City work locations as being protected areas, shall immediately notify their department director.

6.2 Supervisory / Management Responsibilities

6.2.1 The supervisor, manager or director contacted regarding workplace violence shall respond immediately and notify the Human Resources Director of the situation as soon as possible.

6.2.2 When a department director is notified of an employee having identified City work locations as being protected areas for purposes of restraining or protective orders, OR of a domestic violence situation for which the employee is requesting protection, the Human Resources Director and the Risk Manager are to be consulted immediately, to determine what actions may be appropriate.

6.2.3 Department directors are responsible for periodic examinations of the escape routes of the work area and for communicating any changes to all employees in the area. On an as needed basis, the department/division director may request a security audit from the Police Department to determine whether additional security measures are necessary.

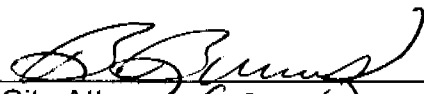
7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Human Resources and Risk Management departments shall be responsible for administering this policy.

8.0 APPENDICES

Workplace Threat / Violence Report

APPROVED BY:



City Attorney (Atty)



Deputy Mayor



Director

1-25-06

Date

CITY OF SPOKANE

WORKPLACE THREAT/VIOLENCE REPORT

NAME _____	DATE _____
DEPARTMENT _____	PHONE EXT. _____
TIME OF INCIDENT _____	LOCATION OF INCIDENT _____
NATURE OF INCIDENT (e.g. physical threat) _____	

1. Describe in detail what happened.
2. Who made the threat or committed the violent behavior? (Include name, if known; if not known, include description.)
3. Against whom was the threat made or the violent behavior directed?
4. What was the specific language of the threat?
5. Describe any physical conduct by the threatening party that would make you believe that the individual intends to follow through on the threat?

6. What are the names of any other witnesses to the threat or violent behavior?

7. Were there any previous threats or violent behavior from the person making the threat or committing the violent behavior?

8. Do you have any suggestions for minimizing the risk of a violent act based on the information you have?

9. Do you have any other information that will help the City in its investigation?

Signature

Date

Send the original to:

Human Resources Department
Fourth Floor, City Hall
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201-3327