

# Employee Safety/Violence in Workplace

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## 1.0 POLICY

Violence, threats of violence or activities that may provoke violence will not be tolerated by the Town of Carolina Beach. It is the obligation of each and every employee to contribute to the safety of the work environment by refraining from threats, violence, or activities that may provoke violence, by reporting threats, and by making every effort to handle conflicts maturely. All employees are required to report possible internal and external threats to their supervisor.

## 2.0 PURPOSE

The Town is concerned for the security and safety of employees. The Town has established procedures to respond to reports of potential threats, violence or activities that may provoke violence. The Town provides training to educate employees in ways to prevent violence and encourages employees to discuss any concerns about security with supervisors, the Town Manager or the Human Resources Department.

## 3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Violence** - Physical force employed so as to violate, damage, abuse, injure, or strike in any manner.
- 4.2 **Threat** - An expression or action showing intent to inflict harm. The giving of signs or warnings of violence or the announcement of violence as a possibility.
- 4.3 **Prohibited Weapons** - Firearms, explosives, ammunition, knives (except pocket knives) not furnished or approved by the employee's department for the accomplishment of the job, and any other objects prohibited by law. (It is not possible to list every object which might be used as a weapon. Therefore, any object that is used to threaten, injure or cause damage to a person or property may be regarded as a weapon for the purpose of this policy). Tear gas/pepper spray/mace for personal defense in a small container (container not to exceed 150 cubic centimeters, cartridge not to exceed 50 cubic centimeters) is not prohibited by this policy.
- 4.4 **Pocket Knife** - A small knife, designed for carrying in a pocket or purse, which has its cutting edge and point entirely enclosed by its handle, and that may not be opened by a throwing, explosive, or spring action.

## 5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL RULES

- 5.1 All employees are expected to wear the Town-issued identification badges, or alternate approved identification, at all times while on duty.
- 5.2 Prohibited Behaviors - Examples of behaviors which will not be tolerated by the Town while in the performance of duties as a Town employee include but are not limited to:
  - A. The act or threat of bodily harm to another employee or member of the public
  - B. Hitting, shoving, fighting, pushing or grabbing

- C. Subtle or implied threats to other employees
- D. Brandishing a weapon
- E. Brandishing any object in a manner which may make an employee reasonably feel threatened
- F. The use of language which would be regarded by reasonable people as likely to provoke violence, or any attempt to incite violence by another
- G. Carrying prohibited weapons, whether concealed or visible, in Town buildings, on Town worksites, in Town-owned vehicles, on Town-owned property, or while in the course of carrying out Town duties. (This does not apply to weapons locked in personal vehicles on Town-owned lots or employees who are authorized to carry weapons in the course of their employment, i.e. Police Officers.)
- H. Wantonly damaging or threatening to damage Town or employee property, or
- I. Violent outbursts of rage.
- 5.3 Corrective Action
  - A. Violence against any employee will, subject to investigation and review, result in termination. (This will not apply in the event that the violence is determined to be in self-defense and that the employee had no other means of protection available).
  - B. Other violations, including threats of violence, will be covered by the relevant Town or Departmental disciplinary policy.
  - C. It is impossible to detail all occasions when employees' actions might require discipline. Therefore, supervisors need to take a common sense approach and consider at least the time, location and activities involved before taking corrective action.
- 5.4 General Provisions
  - A. Town Manager - All incidents must be reported to the Town Manager as soon as possible.
  - B. Role of the Human Resources Department - Nothing herein prevents an employee from reporting a threat or violent action to the Human Resources Director, or other member of the Human Resources Department staff. In fact, departments are encouraged to make the Human Resources Department aware of such threats.
  - C. Confidentiality - When an employee reports a threat of violent action to his supervisor, the report should be treated with discretion. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if protection of employees requires that the information be shared.
  - D. Non-Retaliation - The Town will not retaliate against any employee for honestly and responsibly reporting threats or violent acts by any employee
  - Communication of Policy - Department Directors are expected to review this policy with their employees. It is essential that employees be able to access the Police Department if an emergency arises.

## **6.0 PROCEDURES**

- 6.1 If an employee feels that his or anyone else's life is in imminent danger, the employee should immediately call 9-1-1 and request police assistance (central phone system must dial 9 first).
- 6.2 Some employees may be at an increased risk of violence or crime because they work alone in hazardous environments. Supervisors and Managers must ever be mindful of the threats to employees that work alone and have exposure to hazardous work environments or security threats

- 6.3 If the incident is not one of imminent danger where Police presence is required, the following steps are to be followed in all situations involving threats, violence, or other violation of this policy
  - A. Every employee must report any threat or incident of violence immediately to a supervisor or manager.
  - B. The supervisor or manager must take action to eliminate or neutralize the threat if possible, and if not possible to refer it immediately to a higher level.
  - C. The affected department will investigate the allegation, document the results, take appropriate disciplinary and follow-up actions and report the incident to the Town Manager.

## **7.0 APPENDIX, APPENDICES**

None