

**CITY OF ROCHESTER
ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY**

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The City of Rochester strives to ensure a healthy and productive working environment for all teammates. In that regard, employee safety and security are of the utmost importance. The City views aggressive and/or violent behavior as disruptive and contrary to a safe work environment.

Policy on Violence

For the purpose of this policy, a threat, display of anger and/or violent behavior is deemed an expression of intent to cause physical or emotional harm to another person or damage the property of another. A threat may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled and without regard to whether the party communicating the threat has the ability to carry it out in the present or future.

Examples of conduct prohibited under this policy include, but are not limited to those that:

- Distract, interfere with, or prevent normal work functions or activities including, verbally abusing others (such as, name calling, yelling, using profanity or vulgarity); making unreasonable or inappropriate demands for time and attention (demanding an immediate appointment or a response to an issue on the spot).
- Include physical actions short of actual contact/injury (e.g., aggressively moving closer), threats to a person or property; stalking or unwanted contact; persistent unwanted pursuit (including romantic); menacing or intimidating behavior intended to frighten, coerce, or threaten (such as pounding on a desk or door, "getting in your face," fist/finger waving/shaking); deterring personal movement or expression in the workplace; or sabotaging or vandalizing property belonging to the City or any employee.
- Include physical assault, with or without weapons; behavior that a reasonable person would interpret as being violent or threatening their safety, (e.g. throwing objects in the workplace regardless of the size or type of object being thrown, or whether a person is the target of the thrown object); physically touching another person in an intimidating, threatening, malicious or hostile manner; specific threats to inflict physical harm; and instigating or engaging in a physical altercation or engaging in any other conduct that results in physical injuries to another person.

Potential warning signs that should be reported (which may not be a violation of policy, but may indicate the need for intervention and assistance) include, but are not limited to:

- A change in behavior or increased obsession regarding dangerous weapons, comments about having immediate access to any such weapons while at work or bringing any such weapons to work.
- Displays of erratic, irrational, impulsive or bizarre behavior that generates fear in others; or obvious signs of emotional instability (including substance abuse and/or dependence, stress, anger, hostility, etc.).
- Making implied or outright threats to harm their self or others.
- Drastic changes in job performance or feeling victimized by management or others (me against them).

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- Any behavior or collection of behaviors that instill fear or create concern that an individual might act out violently.

Accountability

The City encourages all teammates to be alert to the possibility of incidents and threats of violence and to use sound reasoning and good judgment when identifying and reporting co-workers, other persons, or incidents of concern. All teammates are responsible for notifying their immediate supervisor, or in the absence of their supervisor, another member of the management team or their Human Resource business partner, of any threats that they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

Even without an actual threat, teammates should also report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent. This includes behavior that is job related or might be carried out on a public site, or is connected to their employment. Teammates are responsible for making this report regardless of the relationship between the aggressor and the individual to whom the threat or threatening behavior was directed.

Counseling for employees is available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for both the victim and any other teammates affected by a violent or traumatic incident in the workplace.

Directive

City teammates are prohibited from using violence, displays of anger or threats of violence against any person in the workplace. Any teammate accused of engaging in such conduct may be investigated. If it is determined the accused engaged in such conduct, they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees may also be held accountable under local, state, and/or federal law.

In some cases, employees may be immediately removed from City property and facilities to protect the safety of others and pending investigation of the incident.

The City also prohibits retaliation against any staff member who, in good faith, reports a violation of this policy. Every effort will be made to protect the safety and anonymity of anyone who comes forward with concerns about a threat or act of violence.

In an effort to provide a safe workplace, individuals applying for any type of a restraining order or order for protection must provide their supervisor and the Director of Human Resources with a copy of the petition used to seek the order, and a copy of any temporary and permanent protective restraining order which is subsequently granted.

Revised and approved by the City Administrator:



Steve Rymer

12/16/2020

Date