

Section 5: A Healthy Workplace

Policy #5: Violence in the Workplace

Effective Date: July 1, 2011

I. Purpose

The Town of Mooresville is committed to maintaining a safe, healthful, and efficient working environment where employees, customers, and Town assets are free from the threat of violence regardless of source or type.

II. Scope

This policy shall apply to all persons holding a paid position as an employee of the Town, except the Town Manager, Town Attorney, a member of any appointed or volunteer board or committee, or any others that may be hired or appointed by the Town Board. For this purpose, and subject to the exceptions set out herein, Town employees shall be defined as those employees in departments and offices for which the Town Board serves as the final budget authority.

III. Background

None

IV. Definitions

Threats or acts of violence – Includes conduct against persons or property that is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating so as to alter the employment conditions at the Town of Mooresville, or to create a hostile, abusive or intimidating environment for any employee, contractor, citizen or customer.

V. Legislation

G.S. 23 – 95

G.S. 14-277.3A

VI. Policy

It is the policy of the Town of Mooresville to have zero tolerance for workplace violence.

VII. Provisions

A. Prohibited Conduct

The Town of Mooresville does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities. This following list of behaviors, while not inclusive, provides examples of conduct that is prohibited.

- i. Causing physical injury to another person
- ii. Making threatening remarks
- iii. Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress
- iv. Intentionally damaging Town property or property of another person
- v. Possession of an unauthorized weapon or other dangerous device while on Town property or while on Town business
- vi. Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence

B. Reporting Procedures

Any potentially dangerous situations must be reported immediately to a supervisor, the Risk Manager or the Human Resources Director. Reports can be made anonymously and all reported incidents will be investigated. Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. All parties involved in a situation will be counseled and the results of investigations will be discussed with them. The Town will actively intervene at any indication of a possibly hostile or violent situation.

C. Risk Reduction Measures

- i. Hiring: The Human Resource Department takes reasonable measures to conduct background investigations to review candidate's backgrounds and reduce the risk of hiring individuals with a history of violent behavior.
- ii. Safety: The Town conducts annual inspections of the premises to evaluate and determine any vulnerabilities to workplace violence or hazards. Any necessary corrective action will be taken to reduce all risks.
- iii. Individual Situations: While we do not expect employees to be skilled at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform their supervisor, the Risk Manager or the Human Resources Director if any employee exhibits behavior which could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace
 - b. Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger
 - c. Making threatening remarks
 - d. Sudden or significant deterioration of performance
 - e. Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior

- iv. Employees at Risk: The Human Resources Department will identify and maintain a list of employees who have been determined to be at risk for becoming victims of violence because of the nature of their job or because they are subject to harassment, violence, or threats from a non-employee. Human Resources and Risk Management in conjunction with the Police Department will design a plan with at-risk employees to prepare for any possible emergency situations.

D. Dangerous/Emergency Situations

Employees who confront or encounter an armed or dangerous person should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual. Employees should remain calm, make constant eye contact and talk to the individual. If a supervisor can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given. Otherwise, cooperate and follow the instructions given.

E. Enforcement

Threats, threatening conduct, or any other acts of aggression or violence in the workplace will not be tolerated. Any employee determined to have committed such acts will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Non-employees engaged in violent acts on the employer's premises will be reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted.

F. Retaliation

Episodes of workplace violence can only be eliminated if employees are willing and able to report threats, violent acts and other unsafe conditions. To encourage employees to come forward without fear of retaliation, the Town of Mooresville will promptly investigate all complaints of retaliation and impose appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

VIII. Authorization

Approved by:

Erskine Smith
Town Manager

July 1, 2011
Date