

**VILLAGE OF WILLISTON PARK  
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE  
POLICY & PROCEDURES**

2012

The Village of Williston Park has a long-standing commitment to promoting a safe and secure work environment that promotes the achievement of its mission of serving the public. All employees of the Village of Williston Park are expected to maintain a working environment free from violence, threats of harassment, violence, intimidation or coercion. While these behaviors are not prevalent at the Village, no organization is immune.

The purpose of this policy is to address the issue of potential workplace violence in our Village, and to help prevent workplace violence from occurring to the fullest extent possible and set forth procedures to be followed when such violence has occurred.

## **Policy**

The Village of Williston Park prohibits workplace violence. Violence, threats of violence, intimidation, harassment, coercion, or other threatening behavior towards people or property will not be tolerated. Complaints involving workplace violence will not be ignored and will be given the serious attention they deserve. Individuals who violate this policy may be removed from Village property and are subject to disciplinary and/or personnel action up to and including termination, consistent with Village policies, rules and collective bargaining agreements, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution. Complaints of sexual harassment are covered under the Village of Williston Park Policy against Sexual Harassment.

The Village of Williston Park, at the request of an employee, or at its own discretion, may prohibit members of the public, including family members, from seeing an employee on Village property unless necessary to transact Village-related business. This policy particularly applies in cases where the employee suspects that an act of violence will result from an encounter with said individual(s).

## **Scope**

All employees, members of the public, vendors, contractors, consultants, and others who do business with the Village of Williston Park, whether at a Village facility or off-site location where Village business is conducted, are covered by this policy. This policy also applies to other persons not affiliated with the Village, such as former employees, and visitors. When employees have complaints about other employees, they should contact their supervisor immediately.

## **Definitions**

Workplace violence is any behavior that is violent, threatens violence, coerces, harasses or intimidates others, interferes with an individual's legal rights of movement or expression, or disrupts the workplace, the work environment, or the Village's ability to provide services to the public.

Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to: Disruptive behavior intended to disturb, interfere with or prevent normal work activities (such as yelling, using profanity, verbally abusing others, or waving arms and fists).

Intentional physical contact for the purpose of causing harm, (such as slapping, stabbing, punching, striking, shoving, or other physical attack).

Menacing or threatening behavior (such as throwing objects, pounding on a desk or door, damaging property, stalking, or otherwise acting aggressively; or making oral or written statements specifically intended to frighten, coerce, or threaten) where a reasonable person would interrupt such behavior as constituting evidence of intent to cause harm to individuals or property.

Possessing firearms, imitation firearms, knives or other dangerous weapons, instruments or materials. No one within the Village of Williston Park shall have in their possession a firearm or other dangerous weapon, instrument or material that can be used to inflict bodily harm on an individual or damage to Village property without specific written authorization from the Mayor regardless of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or weapon. (Excluding Peace Officer/Police Officer Status)

## **Reporting of Incidents**

### **General Reporting Responsibilities:**

Incidents of workplace violence, threats of workplace violence, or observations of workplace violence are not to be ignored by any employee of the Village of Williston Park. Workplace violence should promptly be reported to the appropriate Administrator (see below). Additionally, employees are encouraged to report behavior that they reasonably believe poses a potential for workplace violence as defined above. It is important that all employees of the Village take this responsibility seriously to effectively maintain a safe working and learning environment.

### **Imminent or Actual Violence:**

Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent danger or actual violence involving weapons or personal injury should call their supervisor immediately, or call 911.

### **Acts of Violence Not Involving Weapons or Injuries to Persons:**

Any person who is the subject of a suspected violation of this policy involving violence without weapons or personal injury, or is a witness to such suspected violation, should report the incident to his or her supervisor, or in lieu thereof, to their respective law enforcement agency. The law enforcement agency will work with the Village on an appropriate response.

### **Commission of a Crime:**

All individuals who believe a crime has been committed against them have the right, and are encouraged, to report the incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

**False Reports:**

Employees of the Village of Williston Park who make false and malicious complaints of workplace violence, as opposed to complaints which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, will be subject to disciplinary action and/or referral to civil authorities as appropriate.

**Incident Reports:**

The Village of Williston Park will report incidents of workplace violence consistent with the Village's Policies for Incident Reporting.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Mayor**

The Mayor shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. The responsibility includes dissemination of this policy to all Village employees, ensuring appropriate investigation and follow-up of all alleged incidents of workplace violence, and ensuring that all administrators, and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities under this policy through internal communications and training.

### **Safety Coordinator**

The Safety Coordinator is responsible for responding to, intervening, and documenting all incidents of violence in the workplace. The Safety Coordinator will maintain an internal tracking system of all threats and incidents of violence.

The Safety Coordinator is responsible for assisting the Law Enforcement Agency and supervisors in responding to workplace violence; facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence; notifying the Law Enforcement Agency of workplace violence incidents reported to that office; and consulting with, as necessary, counseling services to secure professional intervention.

The Safety Coordinator is responsible for providing new employees with a copy of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedures and insuring that employees receive appropriate training. The Safety Coordinator will also be responsible for annually disseminating this policy to all employees.

### **Supervisor/Department Head**

Each, Department Head or other person with supervisory responsibility (hereinafter "supervisor") is responsible within his/her area of jurisdiction for the implementation of this policy. Supervisors must report to the Safety Coordinator any complaint of workplace violence made to him/her and any other incidents of workplace violence of which he/she becomes aware or reasonably believes to exist. Supervisors are expected to inform their immediate supervisor promptly about any complaints, acts, or threats of violence even if the situation has been addressed and resolved. After having reported such complaint or incident to the Safety Coordinator and immediate supervisor, the supervisor should keep it confidential and not disclose it further, except as necessary during the investigation process and/or subsequent proceedings.

Supervisors are required to contact the Law Enforcement Agency immediately in the event of imminent or actual violence involving weapons or potential physical injuries.

## **Employees**

Employees must report workplace violence, as defined above, to their supervisor. Recurring or persistent workplace violence that an employee reasonably believes is not being addressed satisfactorily, or violence that is, or has been, engaged in by the employee's supervisor should be brought to the attention of the immediate Supervisor.

Employees who have obtained Orders of Protection are expected to notify their supervisors and the Safety Coordinator/ Law Enforcement Agency of any orders that list Village locations as protected areas.

Victims of domestic violence who believe the violence may extend into the workplace, or employees who believe that domestic or other personal matters may result in their being subject to violence extending into the workplace, are encouraged to notify their supervisor, or the Safety Coordinator/ Law Enforcement Agency. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Upon hiring, and annually thereafter, employees will receive copies of this policy. Additionally, the policy will be posted in the Village Hall and be placed on the Village's website, as appropriate.

## **Education**

Supervisors are responsible for the dissemination and enforcement of this policy as described herein, as well as for providing opportunities for training in the prevention and awareness of workplace violence. Additionally, annual training will be provided.

## **Confidentiality**

The Village of Williston Park shall maintain the confidentiality of investigations of workplace violence to the extent possible. The Village of Williston Park will act on the basis of anonymous complaints where it has a reasonable basis to believe that there has been a violation of this policy and that the safety and well being of employees of the Village would be served by such action.

## Retaliation

Retaliation against anyone acting in good faith who has made a complaint of workplace violence, who has reported witnessing workplace violence, or who has been involved in reporting, investigating, or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this policy. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Approved by:  on 8/6/2012