

PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE
#355

1.0 POLICY. Davis County prohibits workplace violence, or the threat of violence, by any of its employees, customers, the general public, and anyone else who conducts business with the County. It is the intent of Davis County to provide a workplace which is free from intimidation, threats, or violent acts.

2.0 DEFINITION. Workplace violence includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse, harassment, threats, physical attack, or property damage. A threat is the expression of an intent to cause physical or mental harm regardless of whether the person communicating the threat has the present ability to carry out the threat and regardless of whether the threat is contingent, conditional, or future. Any statement or act deemed offensive enough to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment may be interpreted as a threat. Physical attack is unwanted or hostile physical contact with another person such as hitting, fighting, pushing, shoving, or throwing objects. Property damage is any damage to property owned by the County or an individual.

3.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES. Employees are expected to assist the general public and fellow employees in a courteous manner. The following guidelines are suggested actions to follow to reduce the potential for workplace violence:

A. If a person becomes angry, the employee should courteously attempt to calm the person down by explaining that they would like to help them resolve their concerns and that if they each can communicate calmly this is likely to happen. If that does not work, the employee should get their supervisor involved or call for assistance from another employee.

B. If a person is threatening bodily harm, the employee should attempt to leave the scene, if it can be done safely. The employee should notify another employee or supervisor if possible. If the supervisor is unaware of the situation, the employee should notify the supervisor as soon as it can be done safely. Every employee is authorized and encouraged to call 911 when necessary. Employees should inform the dispatcher who they are, where they are, and what is happening. The dispatcher will provide further instructions.

4.0 VIOLATION OF POLICY. It is a violation of this policy and the Employee Code of Conduct to engage in any act of workplace violence. In accordance with County policies regarding conduct and discipline, any employee who has been determined to be in violation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and, depending upon the violent act, may be subject to criminal sanctions.

5.0 EMPLOYEE OBLIGATIONS. Act in accordance with 3.0 General Guidelines. Report all threats or acts of physical violence which they know. If injury occurs, Workers'

Compensation and Risk Management forms must be completed by the Administrative Officer.

5.1 Any employee who acts in good faith by reporting actual or implied violent behavior will not be subjected to retaliation. Employees having knowledge of a violent or potentially violent incident and failing to report it may face disciplinary action. Employees may, at their choice, make a report of workplace violence to any of the following:

- Any supervisor in the employee's chain of command,
- The Office of Personnel Management,
- Any County Commissioner, or
- The County Attorney's Office.

5.2 Anyone receiving a report of workplace violence shall immediately inform the Personnel Director.

6.0 REVIEW TEAM. As necessitated by the seriousness of the incident, the Personnel Director may assemble a Threat Management Review Team consisting of representatives from the County Attorney's Office, Personnel Office, Sheriff's Office, employee assistance program, local law enforcement agency, and others as deemed necessary. In the event of a specific violent threat or violent incident, the Review Team may take action that includes, but is not limited to the following:

- A. Evaluating potential for further violence
- B. Assessing an employee's fitness for duty (through mental health professionals)
- C. Selecting intervention techniques
- D. Establishing a plan for the protection of coworkers and other potential targets
- E. Coordinating with affected parties such as victims, families, employees, media, or law enforcement personnel
- F. Referring victims to appropriate assistance and community service programs
- G. Assuring that counseling is available to traumatized individuals

7.0. SECURITY AUDIT. On an annual basis or whenever the physical layout of the work space is significantly altered, the Administrative Officer should examine the escape routes of the work area and communicate any changes to all department employees. On an as needed basis, the Administrative Officer may request a security audit from the Sheriff to determine whether any or additional security measures might be necessary and effective. All employees should openly communicate with each other to be aware of any unusual activity that may identify the potential for or actual occurrence of a violent incident. Administrative Officers are encouraged to solicit employee input regarding workplace security. Suggestions for improved security may also be channeled through the Office of Personnel Management.

8.0 EMPLOYEE TRAINING. As a condition of employment, employees must complete the County's Workplace Violence Prevention Training Course within six (6) months of their hire/appointment date. Failure to attend required training may result in disciplinary action which could include termination of employment.

8.1 The Administrative Officer or designee, will orient all new employees to department procedures regarding reporting incidents of violence, what to do if the employee is threatened or if an incident of violence actually takes place, and dealing with the after effects of an act of violence.

9.0 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP). If an employee becomes the victim of an incident of workplace violence, the employee is encouraged to seek assistance from the EAP. When determined by an investigation that an employee committed a violent act, they may be referred to the EAP by the Administrative Officer. In these cases, failure by the employee to keep any appointments with the EAP may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment.