

TOWN OF CAZENOVIA
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY
(Adopted 2/13/2012, Last Revised 8/10/2020)

STATEMENT

The Town of Cazenovia is committed to the safety and security of its employees. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to Town employees and to members of the general public who interact with them.

Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment, including, but not limited to,

- an attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee;
- any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm;
- intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without his or her consent that entails some injury; or
- stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

All reports of acts of violence against any Town officer or employee during the performance of any work-related duty will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including involving law enforcement authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other, as well members of the general public with whom they interact, following all policies, procedures and practices, and are responsible for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of New York State Labor Law §27-b and highlights some of the elements of the Town's Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The process involved in complying with this law includes a workplace evaluation that is designed to identify the risks of workplace violence to which Town employees could be exposed. Authorized Employee Representative(s) will, at a minimum, be involved in:

- evaluating the physical environment;
- developing the Workplace Violence Prevention Program; and
- reviewing workplace violence incident reports at least annually to identify trends in the types of incidents reported, if any, and reviewing the effectiveness of the mitigating actions taken.

All employees will participate in the Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program. The goal of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of all people in the workplace. All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to immediately upon notification. All personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, members of the public, visitors, vendors, contractors and others who do business with the Town.

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 Town'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 (*e.g.*, yelling, using profanity, verbally abusing others, or waving arms and fists).
- Intentional physical contact for the purpose of causing harm (*e.g.*, slapping, stabbing, punching, striking, shoving or other physical attack).
- Menacing or threatening behavior (*e.g.*, 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 could interpret such behavior as constituting evidence of intent to cause harm to individuals or property.
- No unauthorized person may possess in any building owned by the Town a firearm, imitation firearm, knives or other dangerous weapon, instruments or materials that can be used to inflict bodily harm on an individual or damage to Town property.

Workplace violence can take many forms, including violence by co-workers, strangers, customers and those resulting from a personal relationship.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Town has **ZERO** tolerance on any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees.

- If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call "911" and your supervisor.
- Report any threatening or potentially dangerous situations or actions to your Department Head, the Town Supervisor or the Town Clerk immediately.
- 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.
- The Town may actively intervene at indications of a potential hostile or violent situation.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- If you work after dark, try to be with a co-worker as you walk to your vehicle.
- Be attentive to types of potentially dangerous situations or behavior, including:
 - Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace
 - Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility or anger
 - Making threatening remarks
 - Sudden or significant deterioration of performance

-Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior

- The Town will conduct periodic inspections of the premises to evaluate and determine any vulnerability to workplace violence or hazards. Necessary corrective action will be taken to mitigate risk.
- Visitors or customers who are unknown to employees may be required to show identification. Employees should feel free to ask to see ID if they do not know the person.

AREAS OF RISK

- All Parking Lots
- All Town Parks
- Supervisor's Office
- Town Clerk's Office and Counter Area
- Tax Collection
- Town Assessor
- Codes Department
- Community Center
- Transfer Station
- Highway Department

INSPECTIONS

Desks, telephones, Town-owned vehicles, machinery and computers are the property of the Town. The Town reserves the right to enter or inspect your work area including but not limited to desks and computer hard drives without notice.

REPORTING VIOLENCE

It is everyone's business to prevent violence in the workplace. You can help by reporting what you see that could indicate that you or a co-worker is in trouble. You are in a position to know what is happening with those you work with and as a result, we rely on your involvement.

You are strongly encouraged to report any incident that may involve a violation of any of the Town's policies that are designed to provide a comfortable workplace environment. All reports will be investigated. Reports should be made to your Department Head, the Town Supervisor, a member of the Town Board or the Town Clerk.

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION AND TRAINING

Training of affected employees will be performed upon initial assignment and annually thereafter. Retraining is required any time there is a significant change to the program, a risk factor, or work control. Training topics will include the following:

- Requirements of the New York State Workplace Violence Prevention Law
- Details of the risk factors identified in the risk assessment and our organization's procedures for conducting the risk assessment
- How employees can protect themselves, summon assistance, report threats and incidents and how to suggest improvements to the program
- Description and review of our written Workplace Violence Prevention Program
- How to obtain a copy of the Workplace Violence Prevention Plan and where it is kept

- How to obtain post-incident crisis counseling
- Training on dealing with potentially violent clients, citizens and co-workers

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The record keeping requirements outlined in 12 NYCRR Part 801, Recording and Reporting Public Employees' Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, must be used to document recordable injuries sustained during workplace violence incidents.

In addition to Part 801, all incidents will be investigated and documented to insure that all threats and workplace violence incidents are reported to management. These reports will provide written notification when a violence incident occurs so that management can develop an appropriate response. The Incident Report will also create a historical record that be used in the risk assessment and program evaluations.

PROGRAM REVIEW

This program will be reviewed periodically or after any serious incident. The review will focus on incident trends, addressing root cause, and the effectiveness of the control measures in place or the need to make changes. The review will also assess whether the reporting and record keeping systems have been effective in collecting all relevant information.