



CITY OF PETALUMA
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY
Revised September 2023

Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

Policy:

The City of Petaluma (the "City") is concerned about the well-being and personal safety of its employees and anyone doing business or receiving services from the City, and for that reason has adopted this no-tolerance workplace violence policy on its premises and in relation to its services.

Purpose:

The **City of Petaluma (City)** is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace and will not tolerate acts or threats of violence through any means, including but not limited to: verbal, physical, and/or electronic communications (email, social media, Zoom, MS Teams, etc.). The workplace includes any location where **City** business is conducted, including virtual settings such as virtual meetings, chats, and emails, as well as physical locations, such as vehicles and parking lots, including other locations where City employees are required to perform work, such as inspection sites. Any violation of this policy may lead to criminal prosecution, and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Cal/OSHA General Industry Safety Orders require that all employers identify, assess, and develop loss prevention and control measures that are responsive to recognized workplace hazards. This Workplace Violence Prevention Plan ("Plan" or "WVPP") describes the resources and processes available to report and address disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior in the workplace. All reports of incidents will be addressed by the City in a timely and reasonable manner.

Scope:

This policy applies to all elected or appointed officials, employees, volunteers, contractors, and interns involved in City of Petaluma-related operations and services, as well as those receiving services and attending City-sponsored events. This policy is not intended to address issues arising between law enforcement officers and members of the public when the officer is acting in the course and scope of their duties. If any conditions covered in an employee Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are different than the policy explained here, the MOU stipulations prevail.

Definitions:

"Workplace violence" is defined as any conduct that causes an individual to reasonably fear for their personal safety or the safety of their co-workers, community members, family, friends, and/or property. The term shall not include lawful acts or self-defense or defense of others. Specific examples of workplace violence include,

but are not limited to, the following:

1. Threats or acts of physical harm directed toward an individual or their family, friends, associates, or property;
2. The destruction of, or threat of destruction of **City** property or another person's property;
3. Fighting, challenging another person to fight, or participating in dangerous or threatening horseplay;
4. Striking, punching, slapping, or assaulting another person;
5. Grabbing, pinching, or touching another person in an unwanted way whether sexually or otherwise;
6. Harassing or threatening communications, including, but not limited to, mail, e-mail, telephone calls, faxes, gestures, drawings, writings or verbal remarks;
7. Conducting surveillance of a person or persons (except where conducted as part of an authorized police operation);
8. Stalking;
9. Throwing objects such as a stapler, book, cell phone, etc.
10. Bullying and intimidation; and
11. Any other act or threat of violence, whether made indirectly or directly, including, but not limited to words, gestures, correspondence, symbols or physical acts which threaten the safety or physical security of City Councilmembers, committee members, employees or contractors, or which may inhibit employees from conducting business or providing services in a safe and physically secure environment. This includes, but is not limited to threats on City premises, at City functions or any other location where violence or threats of violence may have an adverse impact on the City's ability to do business or provide services.

Weapons Ban:

Possessing weapons of any type, whether licensed or not, and particularly firearms, are prohibited on City property and premises at all times and while conducting business on behalf of the City as an employee, contractor or volunteer. This includes both open or concealed weapons, and weapons for which an employee has a permit. City property includes parking lots, unless otherwise provided by applicable law.

“Weapon” is defined as a firearm, chemical agent, club or baton, knife, or any other device, tool, or implement that can cause bodily harm if used as a weapon or displayed in such a manner to cause harm or threaten a person with harm.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE WEAPONS BAN:

1. Safety equipment issued or used by public safety personnel pursuant to Petaluma Police Department and/or Petaluma Fire Department policy in the course and scope of their work.
2. Tools of the trade (hammers, screwdrivers, folding and fixed blade tactical/utility/work knives, axes, etc.) and any kitchen related tools used by City employees for food preparation and dining are not considered weapons for purposes of this plan.

Procedures for Incidents at Public Meetings:

The safety of staff attending public meetings (i.e., Council Meetings, Commissions, Committees, Boards, Special Meetings, and Community Engagement Events) at City buildings is of paramount importance to the City. The City understands that often times staff is required to attend these meetings in their roles to present or be available for questions. In the event of a disruption, such as a protest, riot, or civil unrest, staff and public officials should immediately notify the Police and/or Fire Department and evacuate to their respective offices, workstations, or other areas where the public is not allowed without permission unless unsafe to do so. Staff should wait for an all clear from public safety officials before returning to the meeting or, at the direction of public safety officials, leaving the premises due to ongoing safety concerns. For Council meetings, Staff and Council members may watch the meeting online to ensure it is safe to return for the item in which they are speaking.

Procedures for Reporting Incidents:

A public safety emergency call (9-1-1) should be first considered by the reporting individual (e.g., witness, victim, or department representative) in order to prevent an imminent threat from being carried out or a violent act from occurring, or in response to an actual assault. Nothing in this plan is intended to prevent quick action to stop or reduce the risk of harm to anyone, including requesting immediate assistance from law enforcement or emergency response resources.

- A. Disruptive behavior that is not an emergency or of an urgent nature should be reported by the employee to their supervisor, or their manager or department head if the immediate supervisor is not available, who may then use any of the following resources listed in this policy to help resolve the issue. See Attachment A, Workplace Violence Threat of Violence Reporting Form.
- B. If an employee believes that a threat or act of violence has been made against that employee or others, the employee shall report the details immediately to his or her supervisor or site manager.
- C. All reported incidents of violence and threats of violence will be taken seriously and investigated by the City. Involved employees will be informed of the results of the investigation and any corrective actions to be taken. If results or corrective actions are deemed non-disclosable, involved employees will be notified as such.
 1. Retaliation against anyone who in good faith reports a violation of this plan will not be tolerated and may subject the individual engaging in the retaliation to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
 2. The City shall make reasonable efforts to protect the identity of individuals reporting disruptive behavior to the extent permitted or required by law.
- D. A supervisor, manager or department head shall report incidents to the HR Director or designee and coordinate appropriate action to investigate and stop reported disruptive behavior in the workplace if a violation has occurred and will determine what preventive or corrective action is appropriate.

Procedures for Post-Incident Responses:

- A. Excluding professional medical and police activities that have been rendered or initiated, the City should make available individual trauma counseling through its employee assistance program (EAP) to any

employees who seek assistance.

- B. The HR Director or designee, Department Head, manager, or supervisor should notify the reporting party that the case was investigated, and that the City is taking or has taken appropriate measures to address the matter.
- C. When necessary, employees engaging in disruptive behavior that is not protected by law may be subject to discipline in accordance with the applicable laws, personnel policy or collective bargaining agreement procedures, up to and including termination.
- D. When necessary, members of the public engaging in disruptive behavior may be restricted or excluded from City properties and activities in accordance with applicable policies, laws and regulations. Should that occur, information about individuals restricted from City properties will be shared with other departments at that site (or Citywide) for future knowledge and situational awareness.

Employee Training:

- A. Training content should include risks of violence that employers can reasonably anticipate. Content material should include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. An explanation of this plan, reference to the departmental Workplace Violence Prevention Plan and how the employee can participate in the review and revision of the departmental WVPP.
 - 2. How to recognize the potential for violence, characteristics of aggressive or violent customers, factors contributing to the escalation of violence and the assault cycle.
 - 3. When and how to seek assistance to prevent or respond to violence, including general and personal safety measures to avoid physical harm.
 - 4. Instruction on the use of verbal de-escalation tactics.
 - 5. Advise of availability of emotional trauma support (e.g., EAP) to help cope with incidents of violence or disruptive behavior.

Additional training when significant physical changes occur in the environment that may create new safety hazards. Training will be provided in compliance with CalOSHA requirements.

Employees With “Restraining” Orders Against a Perpetrator:

Employees who obtain a restraining order against a perpetrator and are protected by an existing court order while at the worksite, must as soon as practicable notify the HR Director or designee of any of the following:

- A. A copy of the court order.
- B. Violations or attempted violations of the order.
- C. Changes to the order.
- D. Order that has been lifted.

Policy Violations:

Employees are prohibited from participating in or promoting acts of intimidation, violence, threats, coercion, assault and/or abusive behavior toward any person while in the course of **City** employment, or while holding themselves out as a representative of the City (including off-duty time while the employee is wearing a City uniform or any clothing with the City logo on it). The **City** has zero tolerance for any conduct that references workplace violence, even if it was intended to be harmless, humorous, a prank, blowing off steam, or venting. The **HR Director or designee** will see that reported violations of this policy are investigated as necessary.

Each **Department Head** has authority to enforce this policy by:

1. Training supervisors and subordinates about their responsibilities under this policy – training will normally occur within six (6) months of hire and every two (2) years thereafter;
2. Assuring that reports of workplace violence are accurately and timely documented and addressed;
3. Notifying the HR Director or designee and/or law enforcement authorities of any incidents;
4. Making all reasonable efforts to maintain a safe workplace; and
5. Maintaining records and follow up actions as to reports of workplace violence.

Recordkeeping:

- A. Records of workplace violence incidents, logs, and investigations shall be maintained for a minimum of five (5) years by Risk Management. Records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation and correction shall be created and maintained in accordance with Section 3203(b)(1).
- B. Training records shall be created and maintained for a minimum of three (3) years.

Policy Updates:

Employees and authorized employee representatives should notify the Human Resources department if they have any requested edits to this policy. Additionally, they can provide any assistance in identifying, evaluating, and correcting workplace violence hazards; designing and implementing training; and reporting and investigating workplace violence incidents.

Contacts:

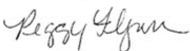
Emergency Dispatch: 911

Police Non-Emergency response: 707-778-4373 or ext. 373

Employee Assistance Program: 800-344-4222 or employees.concernhealth.com

Approved:

DocuSigned by:



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Peggy Flynn, City Manager

9/13/2023

Date

Attachment A – Confidential Workplace Violence Threat Reporting Form

Date/Time of Occurrence:		Exact Location of Occurrence:	
Victim Information:		Perpetrator Information:	
Name:	Gender:	Name:	Gender:
Department:		Employee: Yes or No	
Work Address:		Department (if applicable):	
Work Telephone:		Work Address (if applicable):	
Reporting Party's (RP) Name – (if not victim):		RP Work Telephone:	
Witness Names and contact info (if not employed by the City):			
Description of the incident (weapons, alcohol/drugs, etc.) (Please attach additional pages, if needed.)			
Police Report Completed:		Type of Incident:	
If yes: Yes No		<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Violence	
Agency: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Threat of Violence	
Report No. (if known):		<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
Supervisor's Name (print):		Telephone:	
Supervisor's Signature:		Date:	

Attachment B – Policy Acknowledgement

The City of Petaluma (City) has provided you with a copy and explanation of Administrative Policy, “Workplace Violence Prevention Plan”.

By signing this form, you acknowledge receipt of the policy. The City requires all employees to read the Administrative Policy and to abide by the terms of the Administrative Policy at all times.

Name

Signature

Date