

# **CITY OF CHICAGO VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY**

## **Statement of Policy**

- A. The City of Chicago is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for the benefit of its employees and the general public. Employees have the right to work in an environment free of violence. The City of Chicago is also committed to preventing violence against persons receiving City services and participating in City programs.
- B. This Policy is intended to provide guidelines for preventing, reporting and investigating incidents of violence in the workplace, as well as formulating appropriate remedial action. It is not intended to substitute for or discourage reporting of incidents of workplace violence to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Nothing in this Policy is intended to nor shall be construed to create any private cause of action against the City of Chicago or any of its employees, nor shall it be construed to create any contractual or other rights or expectations. However, nothing herein is intended to affect any existing civil or other remedy which may be available to any person arising out of an incident of violence in the workplace.
- C. Allegations of violence committed by or against sworn police officers and security personnel in the course of their official duties are not covered by this Policy and should be referred to the department head, the Office of Professional Standards, the Office of the Inspector General and law enforcement authorities, as may be appropriate. However, this Policy covers such employees insofar as violence may result from interaction with co-workers.

## **II. Definition of Violence**

Violence, as the term is used in this Policy, includes written or verbal communications, whether direct or indirect, which are of a threatening, intimidating or coercive nature; the use or threat of physical force, including fighting or horseplay; stalking; vandalism or destruction of property; and the use or possession of any weapon and/or ammunition, unless the specific weapon and/or ammunition is authorized by the City for a particular work assignment.

## **III. Duties of City Personnel**

- A. Each department head shall designate a departmental Violence in the Workplace Liaison to work cooperatively with the Violence in the Workplace Coordinator.
- B. Violence in the Workplace Liaisons shall be responsible for the implementation of this Policy in their respective departments; receipt of and reporting all incidents of violence and orders of protection in their department to the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator; investigation of reports of violence in their department and recommendations for appropriate remedial action in coordination with the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator.
- C. All managers and supervisors shall be responsible for implementing and maintaining safe workplace practices, including this Policy, and for communicating this Policy to subordinates.

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- D. All employees, including managers and supervisors, shall be responsible for reporting incidents of violence in the workplace or any potentially dangerous situation to their supervisors, the departmental Violence in the Workplace Liaison and, where appropriate, to law enforcement authorities.
- E. All employees, including managers and supervisors, shall notify their supervisors and the departmental Violence in the Workplace Liaison when an order of protection has been obtained naming City premises, and are encouraged, but not required, to make such notification when an order of protection is obtained which does not name City premises.
- F. The City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator shall be responsible for oversight of the City's implementation of this Policy; development of a City of Chicago Violence in the Workplace Procedural Manual, which will include, but will not be limited to, incident assessment and investigation procedures; investigation of incidents of violence; recommendations to department heads of appropriate remedial action; and recommendations to the Commissioner of Personnel concerning prevention of violence in the workplace.
- G. All employees, including managers and supervisors, shall cooperate with the departmental Violence in the Workplace Liaisons and the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator in the course of an investigation under this Policy.
- H. Employees may report any incidents of violence and potentially dangerous situations or make suggestions directly to the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator, but are not required to do so if they have notified their supervisor or departmental Violence in the Workplace Liaison.

## **IV. Investigations**

- A. Employees and other witnesses may be questioned concerning incidents of workplace violence.
- B. Where appropriate, the Office of the Inspector General should be asked to participate in the investigation process.
- C. Law enforcement authorities should be contacted by the Violence in the Workplace Coordinator whenever a possible violation of criminal law is discovered during an investigation.
- D. A written investigation report, with recommendation for remedial and/or disciplinary action, shall be made to the appropriate department head by the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator. The department head shall report any action taken as a result of the report to the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator.

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## **V. Employee Assistance**

- A. Employees, including managers and supervisors, shall assist persons injured as a result of workplace violence, including summoning EMS personnel, staying with the injured person(s) until EMS personnel arrive and assisting City officials in reaching the emergency contact(s) of any injured person(s).
- B. Employees who suffer post-incident distress as a result of an incident of workplace violence shall be referred to the appropriate City of Chicago Employee Assistance Program for evaluation and referral.

## **VI. Confidentiality and Protection from Retaliation**

- A. Consistent with the necessity of prevention and investigation of violence in the workplace, personal information obtained in the course of an investigation under this Policy shall be considered confidential and not subject to public disclosure except as may be necessary as part of the disciplinary process or as otherwise provided by law.
- B. Retaliation against a person for having made a good faith complaint or report of violence in the workplace, or participating in or aiding in an investigation of violence in the workplace under this Policy, is prohibited. Any person who believes that he or she has been subject to such retaliation should bring it to the attention of the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator.

## **VII. Training**

Training for Violence in the Workplace Liaisons, managers and supervisors shall be conducted by the Department of Personnel under the direction of the City's Violence in the Workplace Coordinator concerning this Policy and the Procedural Manual. Liaisons, managers and supervisors will be responsible for communicating this Policy and the Procedural Manual to subordinates.