



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs...Personal Service
www.cochise.az.gov

Policy Title: Workplace Violence Prevention

Policy Number: 2225

Effective: February 1, 2017

Supersedes:

Last Reviewed/Updated:

Scope/Coverage: All persons having contact with individuals conducting County business and/or on County property, whether or not the person is currently on duty.

Policy Contact: Director of Human Resources

Statement of Policy: Cochise County, hereafter referred to as “County,” is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees, users of County facilities, and the public. Violence, threats of violence, threatening conduct, or acts of aggression or violence by or against County employees (to include acts perpetrated by the public) will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes any threat of violence, regardless of the individual’s actual intent to commit harm.

Any person engaged in violent acts or threats, whether on County property or through telephone calls, emails or any other means of communication, shall be reported to the proper authorities. Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination under Cochise County Merit Rule 7.

Criteria: County personnel have an affirmative duty to report threatened or actual workplace violence incidents.

Retaliating because someone reported a violation of this Policy is strictly prohibited. The County will investigate and resolve reports of retaliation in the same manner as reports of violence or threatened violence.

To the extent feasible, information provided in the complaint and investigation process will be kept confidential. However, the County may disclose information if deemed reasonably necessary to investigate and take appropriate corrective action and/or if required by law.

“Violence” – is an act or behavior that: a. Is a physical or verbal act, known, designed, intended or meant to frighten, intimidate or cause actual harm to another person or to oneself; b. A reasonable person would perceive as menacing or obsessively directed or intensely focused on a person and which could result in harm to such persons or property; c. Is a communicated physical or verbal threat to harm or endanger the safety and security of another person or oneself; or d. Involves destroying property, throwing objects or carrying/displaying firearms or other weapons in a manner reasonably perceived as threatening. Exception: The display of firearms falls outside this definition where authorized by law or



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs...Personal Service
www.cochise.az.gov

regulation and in the case of law enforcement officers, judicial officers, and others required to handle/possess firearms and other weapons as part of their job duties.

“Workplace Violence” – is a behavior that causes fear, injury, suffering or discomfort to others on County property or while engaged in the scope of County work. Workplace violence includes physical and mental injury, physical and sexual assault, stalking or intimidation, and physical or verbal harassment.

Response Procedures: Immediate Threat or Violence

Employee:

- Quickly assess the situation and risk. Evacuate or hide as needed to protect yourself.
- If possible, notify the supervisor, co-workers and visitors of the need to evacuate or hide.
- Call 9-1-1 from a safe location.
- Follow instructions from Law Enforcement.
- As soon as possible, document the incident on the Workplace Violence Report form and provide that form to your supervisor.

Supervisor:

- Assist in evacuation of the immediate work area, if you can do so safely.
- Ensure that 9-1-1 has been called and follow instructions from Law Enforcement.
- As soon as is practicable, report the incident to Human Resources at (520) 432-9700.
- Ensure that all staff and visitors are accounted for after the threat is resolved.

Response Procedures: Non-Emergency Threat

Employee:

- Notify the supervisor.
- Follow supervisor directions regarding further actions.
- Document the incident on the Workplace Violence Report form.

Supervisor:

- Direct the actions of employees and visitors.
- Report the incident to Human Resources at (520) 432-9700.
- Report the incident to Law Enforcement as indicated by Human Resources.



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs...Personal Service
www.cochise.az.gov

Reporting Procedures

Any employee who becomes aware of any threats or acts of violence, sabotage, intimidation, harassment, or stalking on County premises, or in conjunction with employment or business situations must immediately report the issue to their supervisor, their Appointing Authority or the Human Resources Director.

Appointing Authorities will ensure that the Human Resources Director is notified of the reported incident and the Human Resources Director will advise County Administration. If the alleged violator is the employee's supervisor or Appointing Authority, the employee must notify another Appointing Authority or Human Resources directly. Failure to report and respond appropriately to threats or acts of violence creates an unacceptable risk to the Cochise County community and may also result in discipline.

Law Enforcement will be notified of every reported workplace violence incident, whether through a 91-1 call or directly to the applicable law enforcement agency.

Investigation

Human Resources will coordinate a thorough and impartial investigation of reports of workplace violence or the threat of violence by a County employee. The investigator shall gather relevant facts and may schedule interviews with employees, managers or witnesses who may have relevant information.

During the investigation process and/or following a review of the allegations made by the reporting employee and any witness(s), the accused employee will have an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

Once the investigation is complete, Human Resources will issue a final decision on whether there was a policy violation and will notify both parties (the reporting person and the accused person) as well as the manager of the department(s) of the outcome of the investigation. Included in the report will be any identified and recommended measures to minimize or eliminate similar and/or future threats or violence.

Mandatory Cooperation

All County personnel are directed to cooperate with any County investigation, whether informal or formal, and to treat information obtained in the course of a County investigation as confidential. Any County employee who fails to cooperate and/or attempts to undermine and/or discourage participation in an investigation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. To ensure a proper investigation, the Human Resources Director shall have access to all relevant and necessary information.



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs...Personal Service
www.cochise.az.gov

Corrective Action

If a violation of this policy has occurred, the involved Appointing Authority, in consultation with the Human Resources Director, will determine and implement prompt and appropriate action, which may include disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Court Orders

An employee who has obtained a Restraining Order, a domestic relations Restraining Order, a no trespass order, or an injunction against harassment involving any public or private person shall immediately notify their supervisor thereof and shall provide their direct supervisor or Appointing Authority with a copy of the court order. Department management shall advise Human Resources of the order(s).

When appropriate and approved by the County Administrator, the County may obtain a Workplace Injunction Against Harassment against any person who disrupts the workplace through harassment, intimidation, or violence against the County, its employees, and/or representatives.