

**TOWN OF WHITE CREEK
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN WILSON SPRAGUE (MOH) BUILDING
28 MOUNTAIN VIEW DRIVE
CAMBRIDGE, NEW YORK 12816**

April 5, 2024

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

1. Findings and Purpose.
 - a. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard for workers; during the last decade, homicide was the third leading cause of death of all workers and the leading cause of occupational death for women workers.
 - b. Example of high-risk workplaces include health-care settings, social services, working alone or in small numbers, service workers, public transportation drivers and many other types of public employment.
 - c. New York State requires certain public employers, including the Town of White Creek, to perform a workplace evaluation of each worksite. The evaluation is intended to identify factors which may place the workforce at risk of occupational assaults or homicides. This information will be reviewed initially and annually thereafter. In addition, the Town adopts the written Workplace Violence Prevention Program contained herein.
 - d. This is a PREVENTION program. In the event of an incident warranting law enforcement intervention, law enforcement investigation takes priority.
2. Workplace Violence Defined.
 - a. Workplace violence is physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting.
 - b. It is categorized as:
 - i. Nonspecific threats of violence by an employee.
 - ii. Specific threats of violence by an employee.
 - iii. Threats of violence directed against an employee by a non-employee.
 - iv. Violent confrontation by a spouse or significant other with an employee over a personal/domestic dispute.
 - v. Threats or threatening conduct by disgruntled or ex-employees.
 - vi. Violent altercations between two employees or employee and supervisor.
 - vii. Multiple assaults by an intruder.
3. Ways to prevent workplace violence.

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There is no single prescription for reducing violence in the workplace. Each organization is unique and operates in a different social and economic environment. In evaluating workplace safety issues, the Town has considered the organization's culture, history, size, industry and workforce, and the Town adopts the following principles.

- a. Harmonious work environment. Creating a culture of mutual respect can help reduce harassment and hostility in the workplace. In such a culture, employers strive to communicate openly, give employees adequate control in their work and provide them with support and recognition. Conflict and stress are lower when employees feel empowered to work independently and are motivated to work cooperatively.
 - b. Effective policies to protect employees from harassment. The Town strives to build a culture free of harassment and discrimination, and has a system in place to address infractions. The Town policy clearly denounces harassment and states unequivocally that it will not be tolerated.
 - c. Procedures for handling grievances. The Town provides grievance procedures for reporting complaints of unfair treatment, discrimination or harassment. Any such procedures will be followed, and employees should feel confident that concerns will be addressed promptly and confidentially. Complaints should be provided in writing to the Town Clerk and/or the Town Supervisor.
 - d. Security programs that protect employees. Employers have a variety of methods for ensuring workers' safety. The Town annually evaluates its security programs to determine if they are meeting employer and employee needs. The Town seeks to make employees aware of existing security policies and procedures.
 - e. Supervisory personnel to recognize signs of a troubled employee. One way to reduce the potential for workplace violence is to intervene before an incident reaches a flash point. Supervisory personnel should recognize signs and symptoms of a potentially violent employee. Also, supervisory personnel should be sensitive to signs of possible abuse among employees, such as frequent absences or depression.
 - f. Crisis plan. The Town has developed a crisis plan for dealing with violent incidents. Incidents are to be reported to the Town Clerk and/or the Town Supervisor, in writing. If it is not feasible to do so in case of an emergency, a report is to be made to 911.
4. Identifying risk factors.
- a. Any preventive measure must be based on a thorough understanding of risk factors associated with the various types of workplace violence. And, even though our understanding of the factors which lead to workplace violence is not perfect, sufficient information is available which, if utilized effectively, can reduce the risk of workplace violence. However, strong management commitment, and the day-to-day involvement of department heads, supervisors, and employees, is required to reduce the risk of workplace violence.

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- b. If a Town facility is known to be a risk for workplace violence, the Town will address workplace security hazards.
5. Injury and illness prevention program: The Town of White Creek safety program addresses the hazards known to be associated with the three major types of workplace violence. Type I workplace violence involves a violent act by an assailant with no legitimate relationship to the workplace who enters the workplace to commit a robbery or other criminal act. Type II involves a violent act by a recipient of a service provided by the Town, such as a resident or customer. Type III involves a violent act by a current/former employee, department head or supervisory personnel, or other person who has some employment-related involvement with the Town, such as an employee's spouse or lover, an employee's relative or friend, or another person who has a dispute with a Town employee.
 6. Responsibility for administration: The program administrator for workplace security is the Town Supervisor, who has the authority and responsibility for implementing the provisions of this program for the Town. All department heads and supervisors are responsible for implementing and maintaining this program in their respective work areas and for answering employee questions about the program.
 7. Communication of policy; enforcement; employee responsibilities.
 - a. The Town Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all safety and health policies and procedures involving workplace violence are clearly communicated and understood by all employees. Department heads and supervisor personnel are expected to enforce the rules fairly and uniformly.
 - b. All employees are responsible for using safe work practices, for following all directives, policies and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.
 - c. Pursuant to the Town policy, all Town employees, including supervisors and managers, are to comply with work practices that are designed to make the workplace more secure and are not to engage in verbal threats or physical actions which create a security hazard for others in the workplace, including:
 - i. Informing employees, supervisors and department heads of the provisions of this program for workplace security.
 - ii. Evaluating the performance of all employees in complying with the Town's security measures.
 - iii. Recognizing employees who perform work practices which promote security in the workplace.
 - iv. Providing training and/or counseling to employees whose performance in complying with work practices designed to ensure workplace security is deficient.
 - v. Disciplining workers for failure to comply with workplace security practices. The following practices ensure employee compliance with workplace security directives, policies and procedures.
 - d. Communication: The Town recognizes that to maintain a safe, healthy and secure workplace there must be open, two-way communication between all employees, including supervisors and

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department heads, on all workplace safety, health and security issues. The Town has a communication system designed to encourage a continuous flow of safety, health and security information between management and our employees without fear of reprisal and in a form that is readily understandable.

8. Policy Statement.

- a. The safety and security of Town employees is important. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on Town property will not be tolerated.
- b. Any person who makes threats, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts on Town property will be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and shall remain off Town premises pending the outcome of an investigation. The Town's response to incidents of violence may include suspension and/or termination of any business relationship, reassignment of job duties, suspension or termination of employment, and criminal prosecution of those involved.
- c. All Town personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below of any threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received. Personnel should also report behavior they regard as threatening or violent if that behavior is job-related or might be carried out on a company-controlled site.
- d. An employee who applies for or obtains a protective or restraining order that lists company locations as protected areas must provide the Town Clerk a copy of the petition and declarations used to seek the order and a copy of any temporary or permanent protective or restraining order that was granted. The Town has confidentiality procedures that recognize and respect the privacy of the reporting employee(s).

9. Contacts.

- a. Designated contact person: Town Supervisor at (518) 677-8545
- b. Alternate contact person: Town Clerk at (518) 677-8545
- c. In case of emergency, contact law enforcement by calling 911.