

Chapter 17 –Workplace Violence Zero Tolerance/ Violence Prevention Policy

The Agency affirms its policy that its employees should work in an environment free from physical and verbal attacks, threats and menacing/harassing behaviors. A physical or verbal attack, the threat of violence, and even the fear of violence can put the safety, productivity and health of our employees at risk. The Agency works to provide a safe workplace for employees and for visitors to the Agency. Each employee, and everyone with whom we come into contact in our work, deserves to be treated with courtesy and respect. Therefore:

- The carrying or possession of firearms, explosives, or other dangerous weapons that can cause harm, by Agency employees while acting in the course and scope of employment is prohibited. This includes Agency work performed at any site on behalf of the Agency, driving or riding as a passenger on Agency business in a State-owned, personally-owned, or rented vehicle, and/or attending training or conferences on behalf of the Agency.
- Employees violating this policy will be subject to severe penalties, up to and including, removal from the worksite, termination of employment and other appropriate actions.
- The Agency will respond promptly, positively and assertively to deal with threats or acts of violence. This response will include timely involvement of law enforcement agencies, when appropriate.
- Incidents of work-related threats or acts of violence will be treated seriously by the Agency. Reports of such acts will be promptly investigated, and management will take action, as necessary, to appropriately address each incident.
- The Agency will support criminal prosecution of those who threaten or commit violence against its employees, or against visitors to its work environment.
- The Agency will not execute a professional technical service contract with a vendor or with an individual who does not agree to abide by this policy while performing work under contract.
- Contractor violations may be grounds for suspension or termination of the contract.

Although the Agency recognizes that general harassment and sexual harassment are violence-related problems, policies for both issues are covered in more depth under separate cover.

17.01 Employee Offsite Safety

You may request to conduct certain off-site work assignments with another employee for safety reasons and when in travel status you have the right to refuse to enter a location, or to leave any situation in which you feel your safety is at risk. Take your cell phone with you when traveling at night or into isolated or dangerous areas.

17.02 Dealing with Threats and Actual Incidents of Violence

1. If you perceive an immediate threat of physical violence, or if a physical act of violence is occurring, contact the police by dialing 9-911.
2. If you experience or witness such acts, conduct, behavior or communications immediately contact your supervisor or Human Resources.
3. Any supervisor or manager who receives a complaint of violence, threats, harassment, property destruction, or who has reason to suspect that these acts or behaviors are occurring must notify Human Resources.
4. Human Resources will investigate these matters and the Agency will respond appropriately and notify the complainant of the action taken.
5. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken in instances of violation of this policy.
6. If you have information about violence, threats, harassment or property destruction, notify your manager or Human Resources.
7. No retaliation will occur to any individual reporting situations of violence, threats, harassment or property damage.