

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

SUMMARY

It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to ensure that all employees are able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of violence and threats of violence. This policy includes an absolute prohibition against employees carrying firearms or personal weapons onto any County property, except as may be specifically authorized by law.

Workplace violence or occupational violent crime (OVC) is defined as violent and/or threatening behavior in the workplace. Threatening behavior includes any behavior that could be interpreted by a reasonable person as an intent to cause physical harm to another individual. Threatening behavior may, or may not, include the actual act of physical force, with or without a weapon, toward another individual. Threatening behavior may be verbal or nonverbal.

Employees, who have knowledge of violent acts or threats of violence in the workplace, must report through the appropriate chain of command and have the right to have those complaints investigated. Employees, who engage in violent or threatening acts against other employees or the public, shall be subject to appropriate sanctions, depending upon the circumstances, up to and including termination of employment, as well as possible criminal charges.

PROCEDURE

The guidelines below apply to all County employees and are intended to aid managers in dealing with violent or potentially violent situations at work.

Any employee observing violent or threatening behavior is expected to first secure his/her own safety, then:

1. Emergency Situations

- a. Call 911 and report as many details as possible so that the appropriate emergency response units can be dispatched. The employee should be prepared to provide a description of the violent or threatening individual(s) and the exact location of the incident. It is difficult to give specific instructions for each situation. We do not wish to endanger any employee, therefore, employees should not be encouraged to do anything that jeopardizes their safety.
- b. Contact his/her supervisor. If the supervisor is the threatening individual, the employee should notify someone else in the departmental chain of command.

2. Non-Emergency Situations

Who you contact and when will depend on the seriousness of the situation. It is in everyone's best interest to make a good faith effort to defuse violent or potentially violent situations as quickly as possible to prevent their escalation and threat to others. The general steps you should follow are:

- a. Encourage and assist employees to resolve their differences by non-violent means;
- b. If the situation escalates, contact his/her supervisor. If the supervisor is the threatening individual, the employee should notify someone else in the departmental chain of command.

Resources for Advice and Assistance

After the initial incident has been responded to, the supervisor/manager may need advice and assistance from other County entities. These may include:

- a. Human Resources Department
Employee Assistance Program, Employee Support Services Unit
Labor Management and Compensation Section
Office of Safety
Security Management
- b. Human Rights and Fair Employment Practices
- c. Emergency Assistance (if appropriate)

CONTACT(S):

Department/Division

Human Resources Department/Employee Assistance Program

REFERENCE DOCUMENT(S):

Administrative Order 7-36