

**Gloucester County
Administrative Policy**
Gloucester, Virginia

Section: 400

Supersedes: N/A

Title: Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

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Effective Date: January 1, 2011

Authorized By: County Administrator

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

400.1 Introduction

Gloucester County is committed to employee safety and health. Any form of violence in the workplace will not be tolerated as stated in Gloucester County's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 13-9.1. Every effort will be made to prevent violent incidents from occurring by implementing a Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP) as described in this Administrative Policy.

Employee participation is encouraged to evaluate and implement this program. Prompt and accurate reporting of all violent incidents is required whether or not physical injury has occurred.

The WVPP Plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

400.2 Enabling Board Action

The Board of Supervisors approved on June 6, 2006, the "Workplace Violence Prevention Policy" addition to the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.

400.3 Responsibility and Accountability

The County Administrator serves as the WVPP Administrator and has the authority and responsibility for implementing the provisions of this program for Gloucester County. All managers, supervisors and employees are responsible for implementing and maintaining the WVPP in their work areas. Further, management is responsible for ensuring that all safety and health policies and procedures involving workplace security are clearly communicated and understood by all employees. The rules will be enforced fairly and uniformly.

In addition, the Safety Team, with assistance from the Sheriff's Department, will assess the vulnerability to workplace violence and reach agreement on preventive actions to be taken. This group will be responsible for administering employee training programs in violence prevention and plans for responding to acts of violence. The Safety Team will also audit the overall WVPP.

All employees are responsible and will be held accountable for using safe work practices, for following all directives, policies and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment. Employees are to report any concerns or incidents regarding workplace violence to their immediate supervisor. If this is not possible, the employee should contact the Human Resources Department for assistance.

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400.4 Compliance

Managers, supervisors, and employees will comply with work practices that are designed to make the workplace more secure, and will not engage in threats or physical actions which create a security hazard for others in the workplace. Managers and supervisors will:

- Inform employees, supervisors, and managers about the WVPP.
- Evaluate the performance of all employees in complying with Gloucester County's workplace security measures.
- Provide training and/or counseling to employees who need to improve work practices designed to ensure workplace security.
- Discipline employees for failure to comply with workplace security practices.
- Follow established workplace security directives, policies and procedures.

Managers and supervisors will maintain an open, two-way communication system on all workplace safety, health, and security issues. Gloucester County has a communication system designed to encourage a continuous flow of safety, health, and security information between management and employees without fear of reprisal and in a form that is readily understandable. The communication system consists of the following items:

- New employee orientation on Gloucester County workplace security policies, procedures and work practices.
- Periodic review of WVPP with all personnel.
- Training programs designed to address specific aspects of workplace security unique to Gloucester County.
- Scheduled safety meetings as needed with all personnel that include workplace security discussions.
- A system to ensure that all employees, including managers and supervisors, understand the workplace security policies.
- Posted or distributed workplace security information.
- A system for employees to inform management about workplace security hazards or threats of violence.
- Procedures for protecting employees who report threats from retaliation by the person making the threats.

400.5 Training and Instruction

All employees, including managers and supervisors, shall have training and instruction on general and job-specific workplace security practices. Training and instruction shall be provided as follows:

- When the WVPP is first established and periodically thereafter.
- To all new employees and to other employees for whom training has not previously been provided.
- To all employees, supervisors, and managers given new job assignments for which specific workplace security training for the job assignment has not previously been provided.

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- To all personnel whenever the employer is made aware of new or previously unrecognized security hazards.

A. General Training

General workplace violence and security training and instruction includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Explanation of the WVPP including measures for reporting any violent acts or threats of violence.
- Recognition of workplace security hazards including the risk factors or warning signs associated with the different types of violence.
- Measures to prevent workplace violence, including procedures for reporting workplace security hazards or threats to managers and supervisors.
- Ways to defuse hostile or threatening situations.
- Measures to summon others for assistance.
- Cash management policies.
- Employee routes of escape.
- Notification of law enforcement authorities when a criminal act may have occurred and when a threat is perceived or made.
- Emergency medical care provided in the event of any violent act upon an employee.
- Post event trauma counseling for those employees desiring such assistance.

B. Specific Instructions

In addition, we provide specific instructions to all employees regarding workplace security hazards unique to their job assignment, to the extent that such information was not already covered in other training.

The following items are to be covered in training and instruction of managers, supervisors and employees:

- Crime awareness.
- Threat assessment.
- De-esclation techniques.
- Location and operation of alarm systems, panic buttons, and other protective devices.
- Communication procedures.
- "People skills" with the respect to handling performance reviews and disciplinary actions.
- Proper work practices for specific workplace activities, occupations or assignments, such as retail sales, law enforcement, case worker, etc.
- Self-protection.
- Dealing with angry, hostile or threatening individuals.
- Using the "buddy" system or other assistance from co-employees.

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- Awareness of indicators that lead to violent acts by service recipients.
- Review of anti-violence policy and procedures.
- Managing with respect and consideration for employee well being.
- Pre-employment screening practices.
- Role-playing a violent incident.

400.6 Incident Investigation

A Threat Assessment Team will be utilized to investigate incidents and/or potential incidents of workplace violence or threats and physical injury. The team shall consist of a representative from the Middle Peninsula Counseling Center and the following members of the Safety Team:

- Chairperson
- Human Resources representative
- Buildings and Grounds representative
- Sheriff's Department representative
- School System representative
- Additional people may be appointed to the team as necessary

400.7 Distribution of Workplace Violence Prevention Policy to County Employees; Employee Acknowledgement

A copy of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy shall be distributed to every County employee in conjunction with general training as outlined herein. The employee shall acknowledge review and understanding of the Policy by signing and dating the Employee Acknowledgement form in the presence of a witness who shall also sign and date the Acknowledgement. Executed Employee Acknowledgement forms are returned to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

400.8 Availability of Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

A copy of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy shall be available for review in the Human Resources Department during normal business hours. A copy shall also be posted on the County's Intranet website.