

## **SECTION 11: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

### **11.1 Prevention Policy.**

Harper County is dedicated to providing safe, dependable working conditions and services to its citizens and employees. In order to achieve this goal, it is the County policy to provide a work place free from violence and violent acts. Consistent with this policy, the County has a "Zero Tolerance" policy for working place violence. Acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment and/or coercion between employees in the workplace or job-related contacts with citizens or persons outside the County organization will not be tolerated.

### **11.2 Definition.**

- a. **Workplace Violence:** Includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, threats, physical attack, or property damage.
- b. **Threat:** The expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm.
- c. **Physical Attack:** The unwanted or hostile physical contact such as but not limited to, hitting, fighting, pushing, shoving, or throwing objects.
- d. **Intimidation:** Includes, but is not limited to, stalking or engaging in actions intended to frighten, coerce, or induce duress.
- e. **Property Damage:** The intentional damage to property which includes property owned by the County, employees, visitors, or vendors.
- f. **Zero Tolerance:** Violations will not be tolerated and will result in severe disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **11.3 Policy Parameters.**

Any threats or acts of violence:

- Occurring on County property during normal business hours and involving County employees.
- Occurring on County property during normal work *hours* and involving employees, vendors, visitors, or contractual employees.
- Occurring away from County property during normal work hours involving employment.

### **11.4 Prohibited Behavior.**

The following is a list of some behavior that is prohibited. It is not an all-inclusive list.

- Hitting or shoving an individual.
- Threatening to harm an individual, their family friends, associates or property.
- Intentional destruction or threat of destruction of property owned, operated, or controlled by the county.
- Making harassing or threatening telephone calls, letters, or other forms of written or

electronic communications.

- Intimidating or attempting to coerce an employee to do wrongful acts that would affect the business interest of the County.
- Harassing surveillance (stalking), which is the intentional and malicious following of another person, and may include making a credible threat with the intent to place the other person reasonable fear for their safety.
- Making a suggestion or otherwise implying intent to injure persons or damage property without regard to the location where such suggestions occur.
- Unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of firearms, weapons, or any other dangerous devices on County property.

### **11.5 Disciplinary Action Against Employees.**

Employees violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of their employment. Additionally, criminal charges may be filed.

### **11.6 Actions Against Persons Not subject to County Policy.**

Persons committing any threat or acts of violence, who are not County employees, will be handled through the criminal justice system in accordance with K.S.A. 21-3419 and/or K.S.A. 21-3419a.

### **11.7 Employee Obligation.**

- Each employee of the County and every person on County property is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of violence of which they are aware. Where the reporting party is not a County employee, the report should be to local law enforcement.
- Where the reporting party is an employee, the report should be made to that party's Supervisor, or to local law enforcement. In all cases, the report should be made as soon as possible.
- Employees who act in good faith by reporting real or implied violent behavior or violations of this policy will not be retaliated against or subjected to harassment.
- All employees are encouraged to be alert to the possibility of violence.
- Any report will be handled in a confidential manner, with information released only on a need to know basis, or as required by local law.

### **11.8 Weapons.**

Employees of Harper County may possess a firearm if:

1. They are required to carry a firearm or other weapon in the course of their work duties for Harper County, or

2. They are licensed under State law to carry a concealed firearm and the employee adheres to license requirements and posted building prohibitions. Employees who wish to carry a firearm for personal protection must have the concealed carry permit as required by Law. Any concealed carry license-holder who intends to carry a firearm while engaged in county employment shall provide a copy of their concealed carry license to Human Resources prior to doing so.

Employees are prohibited from possessing a firearm in any County vehicle or equipment with the exception of Law Enforcement personnel required to carry a weapon in their work duties for Harper County.

Employees are prohibited from storing a personal firearm in any County facility, equipment or vehicle and prohibited from possessing a firearm in any personal vehicle when it is used for County business.

With regard to using a firearm, authorized Law Enforcement personnel are the only individuals authorized to use deadly force while acting for and on behalf of Harper County. Under no circumstances will any other employee use deadly force as a function of their job with the County. If an employee who is not an authorized Law Enforcement Officer uses deadly force, he/she will not have the immunities or be entitled to the same indemnity afforded Law Enforcement Officers.

Horseplay, intimidation, threatening actions or violence of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.