

## **SECTION IV – SAFETY POLICIES (CONT):**

### **VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY - NSC- 1012-08**

#### **PURPOSE:**

The Town of Newton maintains a zero tolerance standard of violence in the workplace. The purpose of this policy is to provide Newton employees and elected officials guidance that will maintain an environment at and within Town property and Town events that is free of violence and the threat of violence.

#### **POLICY:**

Violent behavior of any kind or threats of violence, either implied or direct, are prohibited at Town of Newton properties and sponsored events. Such conduct by a Newton employee or elected official will not be tolerated. An employee who exhibits violent behavior may be subject to criminal prosecution and shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal.

Violent threats or actions by a non-employee or member of the public may result in criminal prosecution or an administrative review / hearing with the Board of Selectmen. The Town of Newton will investigate all complaints filed and will also investigate any possible violation of this policy of which we are made aware. Retaliation against a person who makes a complaint regarding violent behavior or threats of violence made to him/her is also prohibited.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Workplace Violence:** Behavior in which an employee, former employee or visitor to a workplace inflicts or threatens to inflict damage to property, serious harm, injury or death to others at the workplace.

**Threat:** The implication or expression of intent to inflict physical harm or actions that a reasonable person would interpret as a threat to physical safety or property.

**Intimidation:** Making others afraid or fearful through threatening behavior.

**Zero-tolerance:** A standard that establishes that any behavior, implied or actual, that violates the policy will not be tolerated.

#### **PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR:**

Violence in the workplace may include, but is not limited to the following list of prohibited behaviors directed at or by a co-worker, supervisor or member of the public:

1. Direct threats or physical intimidation
2. Implications or suggestions of violence
3. Stalking
4. Assault of any form
5. Physical restraint, confinement

## **VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY - NSC- 1012-08 (Cont.)**

### **PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR (Cont.):**

7. Dangerous or threatening horseplay
8. Loud, disruptive or angry behavior or language that is clearly not part of the typical work environment
9. Blatant or intentional disregard for the safety or well-being of others
10. Commission of a violent felony or misdemeanor on Town property
11. Any other act that a reasonable person would perceive as constituting a threat of violence

### **REPORTING ACTS OR THREATS OF VIOLENCE:**

An employee who:

1. Is the victim of violence, or
2. Believes they have been threatened with violence, or
3. Witnesses an act or threat of violence towards anyone else shall take the following steps:
  - If an emergency exists and the situation is one of immediate danger, the employee shall contact the local police officials by dialing 9-1-1, and may take whatever emergency steps are available and appropriate to protect himself/herself from immediate harm, such as leaving the area
  - If the situation is not one of immediate danger, the employee shall report the incident to the appropriate supervisor or manager as soon as possible and complete the Town Workplace Violence Incident Report Form

An employee who is not:

1. In immediate danger but would like to speak with a Legal Representative or a Counselor may:
  - Contact: Life Resources – Member Assistance Program at 800-759-8122.  
(They are available 24 hours per day / 7 days per week. All calls are confidential)

This Employee Assistance Program (E.A.P.) includes,

- Consultation
- Information & Referrals and Supportive Counseling
- Substance Abuse Professional Evaluations
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- Work/Life Educational Handouts
- Maintain confidentiality of all E.A.P. records

They also provide a resource for possible resolution of these problems, without supervisors becoming directly involved in an employee's personal affairs.

### **INCIDENT INVESTIGATION:**

Acts of violence or threats will be investigated immediately in order to protect employees from danger, unnecessary anxiety concerning their welfare, and the loss of productivity. The town employee's Department Head will cause to be initiated an investigation into potential violation of work rules/policies. Simultaneously, the Department Head will refer the matter to local police for their review of potential violation of civil and/or criminal law.



## **VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY - NSC- 1012-08 (Cont.)**

Procedures for investigating incidents of workplace violence include:

- Visiting the scene of an incident as soon as possible
- Interviewing injured and threatened employees and witnesses
- Examining the workplace for security risk factors associated with the incident, including any reports of inappropriate behavior by the perpetrator
- Determining the cause of the incident
- Taking mitigating action to prevent the incident from recurring. – Recording the findings and mitigating actions taken

In appropriate circumstances, the Town will inform the reporting individual of the results of the investigation. To the extent possible, the Town will maintain the confidentiality of the reporting employee and the investigation but may need to disclose results in appropriate circumstances; for example, in order to protect individual safety. The Town of Newton will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who reports workplace violence.

### **TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION:**

The Town of Newton shall be responsible for ensuring that all employees, including managers, supervisors etc., are provided training and instruction on general workplace security practices. Department Heads shall be responsible for ensuring that all employees, including managers and supervisors, are provided training and instructions on job specific workplace security practices.

Training and instruction shall be provided as follows:

- To all current employees when the policy is first implemented
- To all newly hired employees, supervisors and department heads, or employees given new job assignments for which specific workplace security training for that job assignment has not previously been provided
- To affected employees whenever the Town is made aware of a new or previously unrecognized hazard

Workplace security training and instruction includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Preventive measures to reduce the threat of workplace violence, including procedures for reporting workplace security hazards
- Methods to diffuse hostile or threatening situations
- Explanation of this Workplace Violence Prevention Policy