

Village of Elnora Policy:

Violence/Harassment Policy

POLICY NUMBER: 15-10

POLICY PURPOSE: The Village of Elnora is committed to the provision of a healthy, safe work environment. The purpose of this guideline is to outline the Municipality's commitment to providing a violence-free environment.

DEFINITIONS:

Workplace Violence includes behaviors such as physical assault or aggression, unsolicited and unwelcome conduct, comment, gesture or contact which causes offense or humiliation, and physical harm to any individual which creates fear or mistrust, or which compromises and devalues the individual.

Workplace Harassment means engaging in a course of vexations comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

POLICY:

General

The Village does not tolerate, ignore or condone any workplace harassment or violence. All reported threats or incidents will be investigated promptly, with appropriate action taken. The Village will take every reasonable precaution to protect employees from domestic violence where the supervisor or council has been made aware that an employee is at risk of physical harm in the workplace.

Workplace violence, or the threat of workplace violence, undermines an employee's ability to work effectively. In the Municipal Sector, it is recognized that the potential for staff to encounter violence in their workplace is high, especially in jobs involving the following:

- Dealing with the public
- Working with unstable or volatile people
- Working Alone
- Transporting people and goods
- Handling cash
- Securing/protecting valuables
- Transporting people

Responsibility

It is the primary responsibility of management, particularly immediate supervisors, to prevent, investigate and resolve complaints of harassment. The complainants are responsible to make their disapproval and/or unease known to the offender immediately and to report the incident to their supervisors. Should the supervisor be the offender, complainants are responsible to contact the next highest level according to the organizational chart.

Initial Complaint and Counseling

Complaints shall be conscientiously investigated and will be processed in a confidential manner. The name of the complainant and the circumstances related to the complaints will not be disclosed and confidentiality will be preserved as much as possible.

Upon a decision to make a formal written complaint, the principles of natural justice require that absolute confidentiality cannot be maintained as witnesses may be involved. The alleged harasser will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations made against him or her.

Employees who make legitimate complaints concerning harassment against themselves by others will not be adversely treated as a result of their complaint. In fact, they will assist the municipality in providing a healthy working environment.

Because a charge of harassment is a very serious matter for everyone involved, employees must not make frivolous or malicious charges against others.

Procedure

Recognizing Behaviors of Concern as Warning Signs of a Potentially Violent Situation:

- Fidgety/anxious
- Raised voice
- Minimal eye contact
- Foul language
- Heavy rate of breathing
- Clenched jaw

The staff member should notify the offender — only if it is safe to do so — that the behaviour is considered an affront and will not be tolerated. The harassment complaint is not dependent upon speaking to the alleged harasser. Keep a written record of dates, times, places, nature of behaviour, and witnesses (if any);

If at any time staff become uncomfortable dealing with a person exhibiting any of these behaviors of concern, they should contact their Supervisor immediately for assistance, or provide the person contact information for their Supervisor (i.e. business card) so that they can deal with them directly.

Reporting Incidents of Violence – Emergencies

(Immediate danger; weapons; physical injury or the threat of physical injury)

If a situation is escalating or an employee feels there is a potential for violence, and attempts to de-escalate the situation are ineffective – GET HELP. The worker, or a staff member in the immediate area should notify Police (9-1-1) or immediate Supervisor in all emergency situations. If the person exhibiting violent behavior will not leave, employees that feel they have been violated should vacate the premises while waiting for help to arrive.

Reporting Incidents of Violence -Non-Emergencies

(Harassment or verbal threats that may in the future lead to activities that may result in an emergency)

- Employees are encouraged to report threatening statements or behavior that

causes a worker to believe that there is a threat of workplace violence to their Supervisor immediately

- All incidents must be reported to supervisor and tracked as an incident by filling out a Village Incident Report form noting 'violence' as the Incident Type, along with all other pertinent information, and given the same consideration as any incident.
- Incidents involving Harassment must be reported to the supervisor and tracked as an incident by filling out a Village Incident Report form noting 'harassment' as the Incident Type, along with all other pertinent information, and given the same consideration as any incident.
- All matters relating to workplace violence and harassment shall be dealt with sensitive, fair, and impartial manner. Privacy and confidentiality considerations shall be applied at all times when dealing with such issues.

Investigating Incidents of Violence/Harassment

All incidents involving physical violence and harassment in the workplace shall be investigated in the following manner:

- Conduct separate interviews with the complainant, the respondent (where possible), the Supervisor and any individuals who may be able to provide relevant information;
- Document the interview, and have the notes from each discussion read and signed by the interviewee to confirm accuracy;
- Prepare a written report summarizing the investigation findings so that appropriate corrective measures can be taken to facilitate the worker returning to a safe work environment.
- The perpetrator will be subject to a range of corrective action up to and including termination or expulsion if it is an employee from Municipal programs.

This Policy was adopted by Village Council on _____.

Mayor

Administrator

SCHEDULE "A"

VIOLENCE COMPLAINT FORM

Witness Statement

Complaint # _____

Note: Please include only the facts and details that you have actually witnessed. It is important that you state a SPECIFIC time and date. e. g. Sept 1, 20__ at 1:15 pm.

Complainant: Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Age _____

Offence: Date of Offence _____

Time of Offence _____ o'clock am/pm

Location of Offence _____

Name of offender _____

Address (if known) _____

Location of Occurrence: _____

Details of Occurrence: