

Prevention of Workplace Violence

Kitsap County recognizes that a workplace safe from the fear of violence is fundamental to the health and well being of both employees and the public alike, Kitsap County is committed to protecting the safety of its employees and will not tolerate acts or threats of violence which involve or affect its officers or employees. Kitsap County recognizes that acts of workplace violence are serious safety concerns and desires to adopt a policy that prohibits acts by its officers or employees which may threaten or harm other officers or employees or members of the public. Kitsap County prohibits workplace violence and prohibits the possession of any weapons by officers, employees and volunteers, while conducting county business, while on the job, and while on any County worksite.

Section 1. Definitions. As used herein, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

1.1 “Dangerous Knife” means switch blade, swords, bayonet, dagger, bolo knife, or any other edged or pointed, cutting or stabbing device with a blade in excess of three inches in length.

1.2 “Firearms” are weapons capable of discharging a projectile by means of compressed air or chemical combustion.

1.3 “Threatening behavior,” is a person directly or indirectly communicating to another (e.g., using words, conduct, writing or stalking) with the intent to do or cause harm.

1.4 “Weapon” means, but it is not limited to, firearms, brass knuckles, electronic stunning devices, bows, cross-bows, arrows, sling shot, dangerous knives and any martial arts device capable of being used to inflict bodily injury.

1.5 “Workplace Violence” is any verbal assault, threatening behavior, or use of, or attempt or offer to use, force upon or toward the person of another occurring in or arising from the worksite.

1.6 “Worksite” is: (1) The building or work area constituting the principal place where work is performed or assigned, including common areas (such as reception area or halls) and private or personal work areas (such as offices or group work stations); (2) Any remote areas where the employee is engaged in official business, including field locations; (3) Vehicles, either county-owned or privately-owned, when used while conducting county business.

Section 2. Workplace violence by any county officer, employee, or volunteer is prohibited.

Section 3. The possession or use of any firearm or weapon by a county officer, employee, or volunteer, while conducting county business, while on the job, and while on the worksite, is prohibited. Possession of a valid concealed weapons permit is not an exception under this policy.

Section 4. An act of workplace violence or the possession or use of any firearm or weapon by a county officer or employee may result in disciplinary action including possible discharge.

Section 5. Exceptions:

5.1 Sheriff’s Officers, Sheriff’s Reserve Officers when on duty, Corrections Officers, Prosecutor’s Investigators, the Security Coordinator, or Courthouse Security Staff, who are authorized to carry firearms in the performance of their duties, are not governed by this policy while in the good faith performance of their official duties.

5.2 The use of force necessarily used by a public officer in the performance of a legal duty, or a person assisting the officer and acting under the officer's direction, is not governed by this policy if the use of such force was made while in the good faith performance of official duties.

5.3 The use of force in defense of oneself or others as prescribed by chapter 9A.16 RCW is not governed by this policy.

5.4 Appropriate tools, equipment, devices and knives issued or approved by elected officials or department directors for their employees to be used in the course of employment are not considered dangerous weapons for purpose of this policy.

5.5 Employees who carry mace or pepper spray for their personal protection may carry these devices on to county property. Except as authorized by an elected official or department director, when on county property, these devices shall be concealed from sight and stored in a secure compartment, e.g., desk, cabinet.

Section 6. Responsibilities:

County of Kitsap:

- 6.1** Provide opportunities for training and education about violence and about reducing the risk of violence.
- 6.2** Take appropriate administrative, legal and/or disciplinary actions to respond to acts of violence and threats.
- 6.3** Maintain confidentiality of complaints and concerns to the extent allowed by law.
- 6.4** Adhere to all pertinent state rules and federal regulations regarding workplace violence.
- 6.5** County will not discriminate or retaliate against employees who file workplace violence complaints.
- 6.6** Address and investigate employee personal safety concerns and recommend appropriate action as necessary.

Employee Responsibilities:

- 6.7** If fear of violence is imminent, employee should immediately retreat then contact 911.
- 6.8** If the threat of physical violence does not appear imminent, employee shall still retreat and then request intervention from a supervisor or other available management staff.
- 6.9** Employees who are concerned about their personal safety while conducting county business shall report such concerns to their elected officials or department director.

- 6.10** Employees involved in a situation where they fear physical retaliation may take place or where someone has made verbal threats of physical violence should immediately notify their elected official or department director.