

**Missouri Department of
Natural Resources
Administrative Policies and Procedures**

Chapter 3 Work Environment

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

Effective date

Revised

Number: 3.08

March 17, 2003

September 1, 2017

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR) is committed to providing a workplace that is safe and secure. If workplace security is compromised, the Department may take action as provided by law and policy. The Department will not tolerate threats of or actual violence associated with the workplace.

REFERENCES

Related MoDNR policies

- Conduct and Ethics 1.01
- Affirmative Action and Employee Relations 1.02
- Discipline 1.08
- Alternative Dispute Resolution Procedures 1.02-02
- Employee Assistance Program 1.02-08
- Critical Incident Stress Management 1.10
- Internet Acceptable Use 2.03

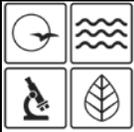
DEFINITIONS

Administrative Leave: Time off from work either with or without pay, at the discretion of the appointing authority due to extraordinary reasons and in the best interest of the state, which are sufficient in the opinion of the appointing authority to warrant such time off.

Appointing Authority: A person with the authority to approve hiring staff and to approve or deny other personnel-related transactions. In the Department the appointing authority to direct personnel action is the Human Resources (HR) Program Director.

Firearm: Any weapon that is designed or adapted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.

Threat Assessment Team: The Department’s Threat Assessment Team consists of the HR Program Director or designee, a member of the General Counsel’s Office, appropriate divisional/facility safety staff and appropriate members of management. Mental Health providers and Law Enforcement personnel may provide advice and assistance as needed. The Threat Assessment Team is a structured group process used to evaluate the risk posed by an individual, typically as a response to an actual or perceived threat or concerning an individual’s behavior.



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Threat of Violence: A threat of harm that generally involves a perception of injury, physical or mental damage, an act or instance of injury, or a material and detrimental loss to a person.

Violence: The exercise or an instance of physical force, usually effecting or intended to effect injuries, destruction, etc. For the purpose of this policy, this includes, but is not limited to, physically harming another, shoving, pushing, harassing, intimidating, coercing, brandishing weapons, and threatening or talking of engaging in such activities.

Weapon: An instrument for attack or defense.

Workplace: Any Department-leased, owned or operated facilities and vehicles or equipment used by Department employees or other places employees are located in the conduct of official business.

Workplace Safety Plan: A comprehensive plan to identify and diffuse situations before they develop, and a prepared method for responding to a crisis. This includes assessing risk and taking preventative measures, training and instructing staff, reporting incidents, keeping records, and evaluating progress.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

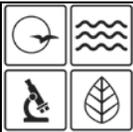
All individuals, including but not limited to employees, vendors and members of the public are to be treated with respect, concern, and courtesy at all times. Conduct that threatens or results in violence, intimidates, coerces or is otherwise harassing will not be tolerated. Department resources may not be used to threaten, intimidate, or coerce another within or outside of the workplace.

Prompt action will be taken to address any employee determined to be responsible for conduct that is threatening, intimidating, or harassing to others. Such action may include discipline, up to and including dismissal from employment.

Prevention

In order to prevent workplace safety concerns, all employees are responsible for the following:

- Their own behavior, by interacting responsibly and professionally with each individual they come into contact with through the performance of their duties;
- Being familiar with Department policies;



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- Promptly reporting actual and/or potential conduct that may be in violation of this policy;
- Cooperating fully in workplace and/or criminal investigations;
- Being familiar with the services provided by the Strive Employee Life and Family (SELF) Program (Formerly the Employee Assistance Program – EAP).

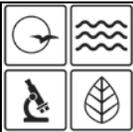
Although not a requirement, employees who have a protective order/ex parte in place against another individual are encouraged to report such situations to appropriate management and/or to the HR Program.

Managers and supervisors are additionally responsible for:

- Promoting sincere, open and timely communication with staff;
- Treating all staff in a consistent and respectful manner;
- Regularly ensuring that staff are aware of this policy and any changes/updates;
- Taking all reported or witnessed violations of this policy seriously and acting promptly;
- Informing their chain of command and HR Program of reports or witnessed violations immediately;
- Being aware of situations that have the potential to deteriorate into a workplace violence incident;
- Encouraging employees who show signs of stress, evidence of possible domestic violence, etc. to utilize the SELF Program;
- Assuring that staff members have time and opportunity to attend training on this policy, as well as training in areas that could reduce the likelihood of a violation of this policy, and to engage in conflict resolution events;
- Taking steps to ensure early intervention. Early intervention is crucial in diffusing a potentially serious situation and it sets the tone for how the matter will be resolved.

The HR Program is responsible for:

- Offering training to staff regarding this policy, as well as training on skills to assist with interpersonal interactions;
- Assisting management in defusing potential violent situations;
- Providing advice and technical assistance to management in determining the appropriate administrative action for the specific situation;
- Providing advice and counsel regarding personnel laws and regulations;
- Providing advice and support regarding physical security matters;
- Activating the Threat Assessment Team as needed;



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- Assisting with or conducting investigations into allegations of threats or incidents of violence;
- Coordinating assistance from functional area experts;
- Acting as liaison with law enforcement as needed;
- Taking disciplinary action as appropriate.

Reporting a workplace security concern

An employee should report all threats of violence or actual violence, suspicious behavior or activities, or crimes in progress or committed, immediately or as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor, any other member of management, the HR Program, or local law enforcement. HR should be notified as soon as possible if the initial notification was to any other entity other than the HR Program. The information provided should be as specific and detailed as possible.

To maintain workplace safety and the integrity of any investigation, the Department may place employees who are alleged to be in violation of this policy on administrative leave, either with or without pay, pending investigation. Other appropriate action will be taken to remove the risk to workplace security, as applicable.

Upon notification to the appropriate authority, prompt action will be taken to assure the investigation of all reports of threats, incidents of actual violence, and suspicious behavior or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as possible.

Weapons/Firearms

Pursuant to Chapter 571, RSMo, employees may have a firearm in a personal vehicle on the state’s property, provided that the vehicle is locked and the firearm is not visible. Unless required by an employee’s official job duties, Department staff may not carry or possess a firearm in or at their workplace, including state-owned vehicles.

An exception to the above can be made for authorized state parks staff to dispatch an injured or nuisance animal at state parks or state historic sites.

Physical violence in the workplace

Physical violence in the workplace will not be tolerated.

The Department encourages employees to attempt to peacefully settle any disputes or differences directly with the individual with whom they are having the dispute/difference. If the issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the employees should seek the assistance

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of their supervisors, the HR Program Director, or the Employee Relations Officer before the situation escalates.

All Employees should trust their own judgment and take appropriate action when they feel a person or a situation is dangerous. Recognizing the different levels of violence can also be helpful in determining if a situation could escalate:

Level One (Early Warning Signs)

The person is:

- Intimidating/bullying;
- Discourteous/disrespectful;
- Uncooperative, and/or;
- Verbally abusive.

Level Two (Escalation of the situation)

The person:

- Argues with customers, vendors, coworkers, and/or management;
- Refuses to obey agency policies and procedures;
- Sabotages equipment and steals property for revenge;
- Verbalizes wishes to hurt coworkers and/or management;
- Threatens coworker(s) and/or management, and/or;
- Sees self as victimized by management (me against them).

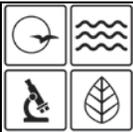
Level Three (Further escalation, usually resulting in an emergency response)

The person displays intense anger resulting in:

- Suicidal threats;
- Physical fights;
- Destruction of property;
- Display of extreme rage, and/or;
- Utilization of weapons to harm others.

No existing policy, practice, or procedure should prohibit decisions designed to prevent a threat from being carried out, a violent act from occurring or a life-threatening situation from developing. Any individual observing a behavior which poses an immediate danger to persons or property is expected to:

- Call 911 and other appropriate emergency contacts for that particular work location, particularly if the situation requires immediate medical and/or law enforcement personnel;



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- Secure their own personal safety;
- Leave the area if their safety is at risk;
- Cooperate with law enforcement personnel when they have responded to the situation, and;
- Remain calm and contact supervisor.

Once law enforcement personnel are on the scene, they will assume control of the situation. Witnesses should be prepared to provide a description of the violent or threatening individual, details of what was observed and the location of the incident. Steps should be taken to document the incident as soon as possible.

Workplace Searches

Work areas and state-issued equipment and technology are the property of the state and may be searched as needed, with or without notice. Employees should not maintain any expectation of privacy with regard to their work areas, or state-issued equipment and technology. This includes lockers, as well as personal property while on state property and/or conducting official state business.

Strive Employee Life and Family (SELF) Program

SELF Program services are available to all Department staff and their household members. Voluntary, individual contacts made by employees to the SELF Program are confidential. The phone number for the SELF Program is 800-808-2261. Staff members who are experiencing personal and/or workplace difficulties are encouraged to contact the SELF Program. See MoDNR Policy 1.02-08 for further information.

Threat Assessment Team

The Department has established a Threat Assessment Team to assess potential threats to the workplace by a Department employee and address any workplace security incidents that occur. This team may be activated by the HR Program Director or their designee on an as needed basis. In addition to following the Conduct and Ethics Policy (1.01), all members of the Threat Assessment Team will sign a statement of confidentiality.

Incident Management

In the event a workplace security incident occurs, the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team may be activated. CISM team members will respond to requests for assistance at the location of the employee(s) who are affected by the incident. See MoDNR Policy 1.10 for further information.