

SECTION 13 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The Town strives to maintain an environment in which all employees feel comfortable and safe in performing their job duties; where customers and employees are treated with respect, courtesy, and dignity; and where prevention and education are key to enabling resolution of conflict and potentially abusive situations.

13.1 POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Town of Blacksburg that any acts of workplace violence by or toward any individuals are prohibited. The Town will educate its employees in recognition and reporting procedures, prevention strategies and emergency actions; investigate acts of violence, and take immediate actions to resolve such issues, including using disciplinary action as a consequence. If violence by a third party is done to a Town employee, the Town will support that employee in pursuing criminal charges, seeking medical attention, etc.

13.2 SOURCES OF VIOLENCE

The Town recognizes that several sources of violence exist and may include current and former Town employees; customers of the Town, and family members of both groups.

13.3 DEFINITIONS

Workplace – Any place a Town employee performs work for the Town is the workplace, including but not limited to buildings, parks, parking lots, and vehicles.

Violence – Action that includes the use of physical force; verbal and physical harassment or intimidation; or abuse of power or authority, where the impact is to control by causing pain, fear, or hurt. It may take the form of hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, or sexual assaults. Examples of verbal abuse include shouting in an angry tone, using abrasive or inappropriate language, threats, or cursing.

13.4 PREVENTION

The Town is committed to the prevention of workplace violence. To that end, training will be available to assist employees and supervisors in recognition of potentially volatile situations, how to resolve conflict, and on hiring procedures to avoid hiring or retaining a potentially dangerous individual; security surveys will be conducted periodically; and avenues for help and treatment will continually be available and encouraged.

13.5 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Departments shall develop specific emergency procedures for responding to incidents of violence. Individuals calling the Police Department should dial 9-911 to access the E-911 system.

Potentially dangerous situations should be reported to a supervisor or Department Head. Any established protocol within departments should be utilized in communicating emergencies.

13.6 DUTY TO INVESTIGATE

Any employee who recognizes a potential threat should report the incident or situation to his/her supervisor immediately. Any reported possibility of violence will be investigated with action taken to resolve or diffuse the situation. Consequences may include disciplinary action or criminal prosecution.