



## PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject:

**PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

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### **PURPOSE**

This policy prohibits workplace violence by and against Pima County employees.

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of Pima County to provide a secure work environment for all employees free from all forms of threats, intimidation and violence.

#### **I. DECLARATION**

Pima County will not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against its employees and will actively intervene at any indication of a violent situation. Specifically, all Pima County employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in any threatening conduct or any other acts of aggression or violence in the workplace. Any employee violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

#### **II. DEFINITIONS**

Workplace violence includes all conduct and circumstances that create a threat to an employee's safe working environment. This conduct may be fatal or non-fatal and includes actual violence or threats of violence. This conduct need not be criminal nor cause physical injury, but involves the threat or use of force. Examples and warning signs include, but are not limited to:

- Assaults, including brandishing a weapon, or any other violent crime defined in the Arizona Revised Statutes
- Verbal threatening behavior, either expressed or implied
- Obscene telephone calls
- Intimidation causing fear or reasonable belief of harm, such as invading personal space, stalking, blocking movement, lunging toward an individual, raising a fist, hurling objects, or other threatening physical moves or motions
- Inappropriate erratic behavior suggesting a potential for violence, such as marked changes in work habits or personality, violence-related humor, outbursts of rage, repeated discussions of violent acts or weaponry, etc.
- Domestic violence that spills into the workplace.

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**III. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Any potentially dangerous situation, where an employee reasonably believes he or she may be a victim of workplace violence or becomes aware of any act that may constitute workplace violence, must immediately be reported to the employee's supervisor who must report it to the Human Resources Department. If the alleged violator is the employee's supervisor, then the employee must call Human Resources directly.

**IV. CONFIDENTIALITY**

To the extent feasible, information provided in the complaint and investigation process at both the informal and formal level will be treated as confidential. However, the County will disclose information if deemed reasonably necessary to investigate and take appropriate corrective action and/or if required by law.

**V. PROCEDURE**

All employees have the responsibility to report acts or threats of violence. Upon notification of an act of violence or threat of an act of violence:

A. The Department shall:

1. Immediately inform Human Resources and if appropriate, inform Security;
2. Call the appropriate law enforcement agency, if it involves criminal conduct such as assault, rape, possession of a weapon, etc. (If in the city, call the Tucson Police Department. If in unincorporated Pima County, call the Sheriff's Department, etc.);
3. Place the employee(s) accused of such action on Administrative Leave With Pay, when appropriate, and pending immediate investigation into the conduct;
4. Document the incident giving as many specific details as known, and describe the demeanor of both the person making the threat or involved in the conduct and the target of the incident; for example, calm, angry, slurred speech, crying, incoherent;
5. For the most serious infractions, contact Finance and Risk Management to determine if a Special Psychological Evaluation is appropriate for the employee who is the subject of the complaint.

B. Human Resources shall:

1. Conduct a thorough and impartial investigation of the reported incident and request the assistance of appropriate law enforcement experts who have investigative knowledge and responsibility in said areas, when appropriate. Apply the "reasonable person" or "reasonable victim" standard to the investigative record;

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2. In the event that a law enforcement agency has been called (pursuant to V.A.2), defer any further action or investigation until law enforcement has closed or concluded its investigation and make recommendations to the County Administrator based on the information received from the law enforcement agency.
- C. The County Administrator shall:
1. Direct Human Resources to conduct an administrative investigation process into reported workplace violence incidents and prepare a report;
  2. Issue a final decision and notify both parties (the individual bringing the complaint and the one accused of the conduct) and the department of the outcome of the investigation.
  3. Direct the department to refer the known perpetrator for coaching (for minor infractions); to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for counseling (for more serious infractions); or to Finance and Risk Management to determine if a special psychological evaluation is required (for the most serious infractions, and if not already done pursuant to section V.A.5, above). If necessary, all employees exhibiting emotional stress from the incident in question should be referred to EAP for group processing.

**VI. MANDATORY COOPERATION**

All employees, supervisors, managers, appointing authorities, or agents of Pima County Government shall cooperate with any investigation process or resolution, whether informal or formal. Any County employee who fails to cooperate and/or attempts to undermine and/or discourage participation in an investigation will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. To enable the County to achieve the goals of this policy, Human Resources shall have access to all relevant and necessary information.

**VII. NON-RETALIATION**

This policy prohibits retaliation against employees who bring allegations of workplace violence or participate in the investigation of allegations. Any employee bringing a complaint under this policy, or assisting in the investigation of such a complaint, will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, nor discharged because of the complaint. Anyone who engages in retaliatory action will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Effective Date: December 14, 1999  
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