

Amityville Public Library

Workplace Violence Policy

Introduction

The Amityville Public Library has a long-standing commitment to promoting a safe and secure work environment that promotes the achievement of its mission of serving the public. All employees of the Amityville Public Library are expected to maintain a working environment free from violence, threats of violence, intimidation or coercion. All employees of the Amityville Public Library should expect to work in an environment free from violence, threats of violence, intimidation or coercion. While these behaviors are not prevalent at the Library, no organization is immune.

The purpose of this policy is to address the issue of potential workplace violence in the Library, help prevent workplace violence from occurring to the fullest extent possible and set forth procedures to be followed when such violence has occurred.

Policy

The Amityville Public Library prohibits workplace violence. Violence, threats of violence, intimidation, harassment, coercion or other threatening behavior towards people or property will not be tolerated. Complaints involving workplace violence will be given the serious attention they deserve. Individuals who violate this policy may be removed from Library property and are subject to disciplinary and/or personnel action up to and including termination, consistent with Library policies, rules and collective bargaining agreements, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution.

The Amityville Public Library, at the request of an employee, or at its own discretion, may prohibit members of the public, including family members, from seeing an employee on Library property to the extent permitted by law. This may be applied in cases where the employee suspects that an act of violence will result from an encounter with said individual(s).

No one in the Amityville Public Library shall have in their possession a firearm or other dangerous weapon, instrument or material that can be used to inflict bodily harm on an individual or damage to Library property without specific written authorization from the Director, or his/her designee, regardless of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or weapon.

Additional Library policies related to workplace violence include the “Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace” and “Maintenance of Public Order” policies.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Amityville Public Library employees, patrons and other members of the public, vendors, contractors, consultants and other who do business in or with the Amityville Public Library, whether in the Library facility or off-site location(s).

Definitions

Workplace violence is any behavior that is violent, threatens violence, coerces, harasses or intimidates others, interferes with an individual's legal rights of movement or expression, or disrupts the workplace, the work environment or the Library's ability to provide services to the public. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to:

1. *Assault* – The intentional use of physical injury, (impairment of physical condition or substantial pain) to another person, with or without a weapon or dangerous instrument.
2. *Criminal Mischief* – Intentional or reckless damaging of the property of another person without permission.
3. *Disorderly Conduct* – Intentionally causing public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm or recklessly creating a risk thereof by fighting (without injury) or in violent or threatening behavior or making unreasonable noise, shouting abuse, misbehaving, disturbing an assembly or meeting or persons or creating hazardous conditions by an act which serves no legitimate purpose.
4. *Harassment* – Intentionally striking shoving or kicking another or subjecting another person to physical contact, or threatening to do the same (without physical injury). ALSO, using abusive or obscene language or following a person in or about a public place, or engaging in a course of conduct which alarms or seriously annoys another person.
5. *Larceny* – Wrongful taking, depriving or withholding property from another (no force involved). Victim may or may not be present.
6. *Menacing* – Intentionally places or attempts to place another person in fear of imminent serious physical injury.
7. *Reckless Endangerment* – Subjecting individuals to danger by recklessly engaging in conduct which creates substantial risk of serious physical injury.
8. *Robbery* – Forceable stealing of another's property by use of threat of immediate physical force. (Victim is present and aware of theft.)
9. *Sex Offense* – Public lewdness, sexual abuse, sodomy, rape.

Reporting of Incidents

Incidents of workplace violence, threats of workplace violence or observations of workplace violence are not to be ignored by any employee of the Amityville Public Library. Workplace violence should be reported promptly to the Director, or in his/her

absence, the librarian in charge or other designee. Additionally, the employees are encouraged to report behavior that they reasonably believe poses a potential for workplace violence as defined above. It is important that all employees of the Library take this responsibility seriously to effectively maintain a safe working environment.

1. *Imminent or Actual Violence* – Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent danger or actual violence involving weapons or personal injury should call the police (911 or 1-631-264-0400) immediately. Notification should be made to the director or his/her designee and other staff members as soon as feasibly possible.
2. *Acts of Violence not Involving Weapons or Injuries to Persons* - Any person who is the subject of a suspected violation of this policy involving violence without weapons or personal injury, or is a witness to such suspected violation, should report the incident to his/her supervisor, or in lieu thereof, to their respective law enforcement agency. The law enforcement agency will work with the Library on an appropriate response.
3. *Commission of a Crime* – All individuals who believe a crime has been committed against them have the right, and are encouraged, to report the incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
4. *False Reports* – Employees of the Amityville Public Library who make false and malicious complaints of workplace violence, as opposed to complaints which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, will be subject to disciplinary action and/or referral to civil authorities as appropriate.
5. *Documentation/Incident Reports* – Reporting an incidence of workplace violence is mandatory, to the greatest extent possible. Verbal notification to the Library Director or designee must be followed by written narrative detailing the incident(s). An initial report is expected within 24 hours of any incident. Documentation will be kept on file for a minimum of 7 years. Past incident reports will be used to evaluate existing security and safety methods and procedures.

Confidentiality

The Amityville Public Library shall maintain the confidentiality of investigations of workplace violence to the extent possible. The Amityville Public Library will act on the basis of anonymous complaints where it has a reasonable basis to believe that there has been a violation of this policy and that the safety and well being of employees of the Library would be served by such action.

Retaliation

Retaliation against anyone acting in good faith who has made a complaint of workplace violence, who has reported witnessing workplace violence or who has been involved in reporting, investigation or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this policy.

Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Education and Information

Each employee will receive a copy of this policy. It is the responsibility of supervisors and/or department head to ensure that all new employees receive a copy of this policy and to train staff in the procedures pertaining to workplace violence.

The Library will schedule training workshops on a periodic basis dealing with various issues. Examples of such workshops include “dealing with difficult people” or “effective communication”. The workshops will be available to all staff.

The Library offers a program of counseling and debriefing through its Employee Assistance Program for staff witnessing or experiencing violent incidents. Membership in the EAP is available free of charge to all library employees, trustees and their immediate and extended family members.

Evaluation

The Library Director with a committee consisting of Trustees, supervisors and/or department heads and/or other staff members will conduct an evaluation of risk factors in the library facility. The committee will also provide recommendations for procedures as they pertain to workplace violence prevention strategies. Some activities of the committee may include:

- Identifying jobs or locations with the greatest risk,
- Conducting a physical workplace security survey,
- Noting high risk factors,
- Evaluating the effectiveness of existing security measures,
- Setting up and/or conducting staff training for emergency procedures,
- Annually reviewing the history of past incidents to identify patterns or trends.

Annual Review

Both the policy and the evaluation will be reviewed annually.

Adopted September 20, 2007; amended 11/3/16

Appendix I

Prevention Strategies and Procedures

(Preliminary)

While workplace violence can occur in any workplace setting, typical examples of employment situations that may pose higher risks include (risk factors):

- Duties that involve the exchange of money,
- Working alone or in small numbers (staffing level),
- Working late at night or during early morning hours,
- Contact with the public,
- Uncontrolled access to the workplace.

Methods for prevention and control could include:

- Making high risk areas more visible,
- Decrease cash on hand,
- Train employees on conflict resolution,
- Limiting access points for entry to building including locking delivery doors,
- Establishing rules for workers leaving the facility,
- Providing security guard,
- Staff and volunteers wearing identification badges.