

**VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY FOR
EXECUTIVE BRANCH EMPLOYEES**

NOTIFICATION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

All executive branch employees (herein “employees”) are required to read this revised Violence-Free Workplace Policy, and will be expected to sign an Acknowledgement indicating the Policy was read and fully understood by the employee. Section IV of this Policy was updated on January 1, 2022, reflecting changes in Reporting and Investigation Procedures. No other changes were made with this update.

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The State of Iowa is committed to providing a work environment free from threats, intimidation, harassment, and acts of violence against the public, vendors, clients, customers, and employees. The State of Iowa further establishes, as its vision, all of its officials and employees will treat each other and those they serve with courtesy, dignity, and respect.

Accordingly, the State of Iowa is committed to:

- Preventing violence in the work environment,
- Providing resources and complaint resolution procedures for employees who experience or encounter violence in the work environment, and
- Maintaining a respectful work environment which promotes positive conflict resolution.

II. PROHIBITIONS

- A. Employees are prohibited from the possession, sale, transfer, or use of any dangerous weapon while engaged in state business.

This prohibition shall not apply to peace officers and other state employees who have been issued professional weapons permits by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety for use by these employees when acting under the authority of their agency. Further, this policy is not intended to restrict employees who live in state owned housing from the legal possession of weapons in their homes, if allowed by the appointing authority. This policy is not intended to restrict state employees from engaging in legal hunting and recreational activities on state owned property during off-duty hours.

- B. Employees are prohibited from engaging in harassment of the public, vendors, clients, customers, and employees in accordance with the State of Iowa’s Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Anti-Discrimination Policy.
- C. Employees are prohibited from engaging in violence towards the public, vendors, clients, customers, and employees. Violence is defined as the actual or threatened use of physical force, actions, or verbal or written statements which either results in or is likely to result in physical or mental pain or injury to another person, group of persons, or damage to

property. Violence may be a single occurrence or it may be a pattern of behavior which intimidates, degrades, or offends another person or a group of persons.

III. AFFIRMATIVE DUTIES

- A. An employee who is the victim of workplace violence shall report the incident immediately in accordance with the procedures established by this policy.
- B. An employee witnessing workplace violence or the potential for such violence directed at another person or property of the state, shall report such incidents in accordance with the procedures established by this policy.
- C. When applicable, state officials and employees shall cooperate fully with all appropriate individuals in the investigation and prosecution of criminal acts, this policy, and the pursuit of any civil remedies in order to create and maintain a violence-free workplace.

IV. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to workplace violence, who witnesses workplace violence, or who believes there is the potential for workplace violence to occur in violation of this Policy shall immediately report the matter to his or her direct supervisor, the next higher supervisor, their agency director or other designated agency personnel. Alternatively, any complaint, including those regarding senior agency officials and directors, may be submitted directly to the Iowa Department of Administrative Services-Employee Relations team.

A complaint will be investigated however it is conveyed, however, to facilitate the investigation of workplace violence complaints, employees are encouraged to fill out the employee complaint form found at the following link: https://das.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/hr/documents/MS_manual/M-0318_Complaint_form_fillable.pdf

Every complaint made pursuant to this policy shall be promptly investigated to the extent necessary to determine whether a violation of this policy occurred and whether remedial measures are necessary. All executive branch employees must cooperate fully with any investigation. Failure to cooperate with an investigation may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Agencies who receive a complaint that creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the ability of the agency to conduct an unbiased investigation of the complaint shall contact the Iowa Department of Administrative Services-Human Resources Enterprise for assistance in completing the investigation.

Complaints and records relating to complaints are confidential and not subject to disclosure under Iowa's open records laws.

In the event of a situation requiring intervention by law enforcement personnel, the appropriate law enforcement agency should be contacted immediately.

V. REMEDIES FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Corrective action will be taken to remedy violations of this policy when warranted, up to and including the discharge of parties whose conduct violates this policy.

Any manager or supervisor who fails to properly act upon employee complaints or on personal knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Issued August 1, 1996 – Revised November 17, 2014; July 1, 2017, January 1, 2022.