



TOWN OF FREETOWN  
3 NORTH MAIN STREET  
ASSONET, MA 02702

## **TOWN OF FREETOWN WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a Town standard that will encourage and foster a work environment that is characterized by respect and healthy conflict resolution; to reduce the potential for violence in and around the workplace; to mitigate the negative consequences for employees who experience or encounter violence in their work lives; and to ensure that appropriate resources are available to employees who may be victims of workplace violence or who may be perpetrators of workplace violence.

### **II. POLICY**

It is the policy of Freetown to promote a safe environment for its employees. The Town is committed to working with its employees to maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior.

Violence, threats, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior in the workplace will not be tolerated. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. Such behavior can include not only acts of physical violence, but also oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm.

Freetown is committed to providing a safe environment for working and conducting business, in so far as is reasonably possible given available resources. The Town will not tolerate acts of violence committed by or against Town employees or members of the public on Town property, or during the performance of Town business, regardless of location.

Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from the premises and may be subject to criminal prosecution. Employees may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **III. REPORTING**

The Town needs the cooperation of all employees to implement this policy effectively and to maintain a safe working environment. Employees should not ignore violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior. Employees who observe or experience such behavior by anyone on Town property should report the incident immediately to a supervisor or department head, whether or not the alleged offender is a Town employee. Supervisors and

department heads who receive such reports should contact the Town Administrator immediately for response. Threats or assaults that are of an emergency nature and require immediate attention should first be reported to the Police Department via 911.

#### **IV. DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE**

For the purposes of this policy, the word violence shall mean an act or behavior that:

- is physically injurious or abusive;
- a reasonable person would perceive as obsessively directed (e.g. an intensely focused grudge, grievance or romantic interest in another person) and reasonably likely to result in harm or threats of harm to persons or property;
- consists of a communicated or reasonably perceived threat to harm another individual or in any other way endanger the safety of the individual;
- is a behavior or action that a reasonable person would perceive as menacing;
- involves carrying or displaying weapons, destroying property, or throwing objects in a manner reasonably perceived to be threatening; or
- consists of a communicated or reasonably perceived threat to destroy property.

#### **V. WEAPONS**

Possession or use by employees of firearms or other items which may be considered dangerous and/or are designed to cause death or serious bodily injury are prohibited on Town property, in Town vehicles, or in any personal vehicle which is used for Town business, or during business hours, except for those employees who are engaged in official military or law enforcement activities. Possession or use of a firearm in such circumstances is prohibited whether or not the employee is licensed to carry a firearm, or has a Firearm Identification Card (FID). Use of other objects by employees, such as, but not limited to, pocketknives, razors, hammers, etc., in a dangerous or potentially dangerous manner is also prohibited

#### **VI. VIOLATION OF POLICY**

Violent actions on Town property or facilities, or while on Town business, will not be tolerated or ignored. Any unlawful violent or non-violent actions committed by employees or members of the public on Town property, or while using Town facilities, will be subject to prosecution, as appropriate. The Town intends to use all reasonable legal, managerial, administrative, and disciplinary procedures to secure the workplace from violence and to reasonably protect employees and members of the public.

#### **VII. ENFORCEMENT OF POLICY**

Department heads and supervisors are responsible for receiving reports of incidents of workplace violence, assessing situations, making judgments as to appropriate responses, responding to reports of workplace violence and initiating the investigation process. Department heads shall submit all reports to the Town Administrator.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on March 10, 2023.

FRETOWN BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Trevor R. Matthews, Chairman



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Jared C. Zager



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Carlos A. Lopes

