

## **West Sand Lake Fire District #1 Workplace Violence Policy & Guidelines**

The West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 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 and visitors of the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 are expected to maintain a working environment free from violence, threats of harassment, intimidation or coercion. While these behaviors are not prevalent at the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1, no organization is immune.

### **POLICY**

The West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 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 not be ignored and will be given the serious attention they deserve. Individuals who violate this policy may be removed from the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 property and are subject to disciplinary and/or personnel action up to and including termination, consistent with the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 policies, rules, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution.

Complaints of sexual harassment are covered under the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1's Policy against Sexual Harassment.

The West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1, at the request of an employee(s) or at its own discretion, may prohibit members of the

public, including family members, from seeing an employee on West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 property unless necessary to transact West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 related business. This policy particularly applies in cases where the employee suspects that an act of violence will result from an encounter with said individual(s).

## **SCOPE**

All employees, members of the public, vendors, contractors, consultants, and others who do business with the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 or any of its affiliates, whether in a West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 facility or off-site location where West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 or affiliates business is conducted, are covered by this policy. This policy also applies to other persons not affiliated with West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 or organizations there in, such as former employees, and visitors. When employees have complaints about other employees, they should contact their Chief Officer, President or any member of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. Organization henceforth in this document refers to all organizations as permitted by law under the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1.
2. 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 organization's ability to provide services to the public. It also involves the abuse or intentional non-authorized destruction of property.

Workplace violence does not include the use of reasonable force in the defense of oneself or others.

3. Disruptive behavior intended to disturb, interfere with or prevent normal work activities (such as but not limited to yelling, using profanity, verbally abusing others, or waving arms and fists).
4. Intentional physical contact for the purpose of causing harm (such as but not limited to slapping, stabbing, punching, striking, shoving, or other physical attack).
5. Menacing or threatening behavior (such as but not limited to throwing objects, pounding on a desk or door, damaging property, stalking, or otherwise acting aggressively, or making oral or written statements specifically intended to frighten, coerce, or threaten) where a reasonable person would interrupt such behavior as constituting evidence of intent to cause harm to individuals or property.
6. Possessing firearms, imitation firearms, knives or other dangerous weapons, instruments or materials regardless of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or weapon. No one within the organization, shall have in their possession a firearm or other dangerous weapon, instrument or material that can be used with the intent to inflict bodily harm on an individual or damage to the organizations property.
7. Hazing is an abusive, often humiliating form of initiation into or affiliation with a group, including any willful action taken

or situation created which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of another. Any willful act by any person alone or acting with others in striking, beating, bruising, or maiming; or seriously suggesting, threatening, or attempting to strike, beat, bruise, or maim, or to do or seriously suggest, threaten, or attempt to do physical violence to another made for the purpose of committing any of the acts.

## **REPORTING OF INCIDENTS**

### **1. General Reporting Responsibilities:**

Incidents of workplace violence, threats of workplace violence, or observations of workplace violence will not be ignored by any employee of the organization. Workplace violence should promptly be reported to the appropriate organization official. Additionally, 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 organization take this responsibility seriously to effectively maintain a safe working and learning environment.

### **2. Imminent or Actual Violence:**

Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent danger of actual violence involving weapons or personal injury should call 911 and then notify their supervisor immediately.

### **3. Acts of Violence Not Involving Weapons or Injuries to Persons:**

Any person who is subject of a suspected violation of the policy involving violence without weapons or person injury, or is a witness to such suspected violation, should report the incident to his or her immediate supervisor, or in lieu thereof, to the (authority having jurisdiction)

#### **4. 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.

#### **5. False Reports:**

Employees of the organization 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 deemed appropriate by Civil Service Law.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The organization shall maintain the confidentiality of investigations of workplace violence to the extent possible. The organization will act on the basis of anonymous complaints where it has a reasonable basis to believe that there has been a violation of the policy and that the safety and well being of employees of the organization 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, investigating, 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.

**Adopt by the West Sand Lake Fire District No. 1 on March 21, 2011.**

**Reviewed: January 23, 2012**