

It is the policy of Okanogan County to provide a safe and peaceful workplace all employees and to minimize the risk of personal injury to employees at work and damage to county property.

Okanogan County does not expect each employee to become an expert in psychology or to physically subdue a threatening or violent individual. The county discourages employees from engaging in a physical confrontation with a potentially violent individual. The county expects that employees shall exercise reasonable judgment in identifying potentially dangerous situations and recognize that before actual physical acts of violence occur, behaviors are often exhibited where:

- A. Co-workers display overt resentment, anger, and hostility;
- B. Co-workers display signs of extreme stress;
- C. Co-workers make ominous threats;
- D. Co-workers' performance deteriorates suddenly and or significantly;
- E. Co-workers display irresponsible, irrational, or inappropriate behavior; and
- F. Co-workers have access to weapons, know how to use them, discuss them in the workplace, and/or brandish weapons in the workplace.

Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee shall not be tolerated. For purposes of this policy, threat includes any verbal or physical harassment, attempts to intimidate or instill fear in others, menacing gestures, flashing of concealed weapons, stalking, or other hostile or destructive behaviors. Any employee determined to have committed such acts shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Non-employees engaged in violent acts on the employer's premises shall be reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted.

All potentially dangerous situations, including threats, shall be reported to the supervisor or designee. Reports of threats may be made anonymously and all incidents shall be investigated and appropriate action shall be taken depending on the circumstances. Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality shall be handled appropriately and information shall be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. Written reports of investigations shall be made and retained by the department head.

Employees who confront or encounter an armed or dangerous person should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual. Employees should remain calm, make constant eye contact and talk to the individual. If a supervisor can be safely notified of the need for assistance without

endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given. Otherwise, cooperate and follow the instructions given. The county's first objective is to maintain the safety of all its employees to the extent feasible. The county therefore, should not engage in any conduct that would serve to escalate a hostile or threatening situation. (Res. 77-99 § 6.9, 1999).