

POLICY**ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

Ridgewater College will foster an environment where employees, students and visitors are at zero risk of involvement in workplace violence. This will be accomplished by encouraging mutual respect among all individuals, establishing open and honest communication, inviting all employees to provide input, and enforcing zero tolerance for any type of violent behavior. Please see the Ridgewater College "Possession or Carry of Firearms Policy" for restrictions regarding possession or carry of firearms applicable to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, in accordance with the Minnesota Citizens' Personal Protection Act of 2003, Minnesota Statutes Section 624.714 (Possession or Carry of Firearms), and other applicable law.

History:

03.15.04 Adopted

03.13.08 Revised

PROCEDURES**ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

Ridgewater College has adopted a Zero Tolerance for Violence in the Workplace Policy in accordance with Minnesota Statute (MS 1.50) Freedom from Violence Act, which states “The State of Minnesota hereby adopts a policy of zero tolerance of violence. It is stated policy that every person in the state has a right to live free from violence.” Ridgewater College will provide an educational and employment environment that is free from threats or acts of violence, whether perceived or real. Employees, students and visitors of Ridgewater College will be treated with respect and dignity.

Definition of Violence: *“Violence” means the abusive or unjust exercise of power, intimidation, harassment and/or the threatened or actual use of force which results in or has a high likelihood of causing hurt, fear, injury, suffering or death. Workplace violence generally falls into three categories:*

1. *A violent act or threat (perceived or real) by a current or former employee, supervisor of manager, or someone who has some involvement with a current or former employee, such as an employee’s spouse, significant other, relative or another person who has a dispute with an employee.*
2. *A violent act or threat (perceived or real) by a student or a member of the public visiting the college.*
3. *A violent act by someone totally unrelated to the work environment.*

Ridgewater College will foster an environment where employees, students and visitors are at low risk of involvement in workplace violence. This will be accomplished by encouraging mutual respect among all individuals, establishing open and honest communication, inviting all employees to provide input, and enforcing zero tolerance for any type of violent behavior. Specifically, Ridgewater College will:

- Provide information and training for employees and information to students that will foster a workplace environment that is safe, respectful, pro-active and responsive to threat or acts of violence.
- Deal promptly with threats or acts of violence.
- Take strong disciplinary action against employees and students of Ridgewater College who are involved in the commission of work-related threats or acts of violence. (Disciplinary action includes any measure up to and including discharge from employment or expulsion from enrollment.)
- Support criminal prosecution of those who threaten or commit work-related violence against its employees, students or visitors. Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 15, 86, this policy does not create any civil liability on the part of the State of Minnesota.
- Enforce the college policy of restricting possession or carry of firearms applicable to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, in accordance with the Minnesota Citizens’ Personal Protection Act of 2003, Minnesota Statutes section 624.714, and other applicable law. (See Ridgewater College’s “Possession or Carry of Firearms Policy.”)

PROCEDURES**ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE, continued**

Ridgewater College is committed to ensuring the workplace provides for safety and reasonable protection from workplace violence. The following actions and activities will support violence prevention goals and policies:

1. Employees will be provided information and training that fosters a workplace environment and climate that is devoid of violence.
2. Employees will be expected to lead by example in promoting positive behavior.
3. Supervisors will be empowered to take immediate action to resolve or stabilize violent situations in the workplace and to protect people from harm.
4. Supervisors will ensure appropriate incident response reports are completed immediately when a threat or violent incident occurs.
5. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Services will serve as a referral source and will respond as needed to any incident report.
6. Standards of conduct will be clear, communicated and consistently enforced.
7. Discipline for unacceptable behavior will be used fairly, consistently and appropriately.
8. Ridgewater College will not tolerate rude, offensive, insulting, derogatory, hateful, threatening or violent language or behavior among its employees, students or visitors. Examples of such language or behavior include but are not limited to, name calling, heated arguments, obscene language or gestures, intimidation, harassment, stalking, negative racial or sexual comments, etc.
9. Employees will be encouraged to make use of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)—an assessment, short-term counseling and referral agency.

History:

03.15.04 Adopted

03.13.08 Revised