Workplace Violence

Purpose: It is the policy of Normandale Community College and the responsibility of all its employees to attempt to maintain a workplace free from threats and acts of violence for employees, students, and visitors of the college.

The college will work to maintain a safe workplace for all employees, students, customers, and visitors. Each individual with whom we come into contact in our work will be treated with dignity and respect. This will be accomplished by encouraging mutual respect among all individuals, establishing open and honest communication, and enforcing “zero tolerance” for any type of violent behavior. Through information and training, the college will work to foster a work environment and culture that is absent of violence for its employees, students, and customers.

The college will attempt to reduce the negative consequences of violence for those employees or students who are victims of violence.

Part 1: Minnesota Statutes

This college policy is established in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 15.86 and MnSCU policy 1.B.1.15.86 Chapter 452; (SF #1985) - (April 10, 1992) (Zero Tolerance of Workplace Violence); MS 609.66(Dangerous Weapons) Governor’s Directive; January 1, 1993. Requires each state agency to create and implement a Workplace Violence Policy and Plan.

Compliance responsibility delegated to the Department of Employee Relations in 1995.

Related policies and procedures are Normandale Community College Emergency procedures, and collective bargaining agreements and personnel plans that govern employees of the college.

The language of Minnesota Statute 15.86 defines violence as follows:

“Violence is 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, suffering or death.”

Part 2: Workplace Violence

Workplace violence generally falls into three categories:

Subpart A: A violent act or threat (perceived or real) by a current or former employee, supervisor or 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 had a dispute with an
Subpart B: A violent act or threat (perceived or real) by a student or someone else visiting the campus.

Subpart C: A violent act by someone totally unrelated to the work environment. The purpose of the visit is to commit a criminal act, such as robbery or bombing.


Acts of work related violence are unacceptable. Such acts will be investigated and, where substantiated, may be cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal of employees or students. The college will support criminal prosecution of those who threaten or commit work-related violence against its employees, students, guests and contractors.

This policy applies to threats made or violent acts occurring on Normandale Community College property and at Normandale Community College sponsored events.

Subpart A: Violations of this policy are subject to timely involvement of law enforcement agencies when appropriate. Other consequences for violating this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Employees** found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, any one of all of the following: oral and written reprimand, suspension, termination, and referral for prosecution.
- **Students** found to have violated this policy will be subject to discipline according to the Student Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to, any one of the following: warning, confiscation, suspension, expulsion, and referral for prosecution.
- **Visitors**. The College will respond promptly, including referral to law enforcement, if warranted, to any violence of visitors.

Subpart B: Any individual who believes s/he has been, or may be, a target of violence, as defined above should contact either Public Safety (358-8280) or local law enforcement (911).

Subpart C: Any individual, acting in good faith, who reports threats of real or implied violent behavior, will not be subject to retaliation or harassment. Retaliation or harassment will not be tolerated and perpetrators of such actions may be subject to discipline. An individual report of violence which is found to be false and not reported in good faith will be subject to college disciplinary action or prosecution.

Part 4: Possession/Threat/Use of a Deadly Weapon
Possession, use or threat of use of a deadly weapon (see also Part 6) is not permitted at work or in any college building, unless such weapon is a necessary and approved requirement of the person's position. The following exceptions apply:

Subpart A: Legal rifles, pistols, shotguns and knives with blades in excess of three inches (3\"), may be stored in a secured area under the supervision of the Office of Safety & Security.

Subpart B: Equipment, including but not limited to foils, epees, sabers, machetes, martial arts weapons, and unsharpened practice swords may be possessed on campus while participating in clubs of classes recognized by the college. When not being used at a club or class activity, the equipment must be kept in the classroom or club storage area or the advisor's office.

Subpart C: Knives and blades exceeding three inches may be possessed on campus when required to perform course work. When not being used in class, the knives must be kept in a locked storage area.

Subpart D: Employees and organizations contracting with the college and required to use knives with blades greater than three inches to perform their job duties may do so. Those knives must be kept in a limited access area when not in use.

Subpart E: Firearms used for theatrical purposes must be disabled and stored with the faculty advisor/director when not being used in practice or during a production.

Subpart F: Swords, daggers and other knifelike theatrical props may be used for theatrical presentations. Any props with cutting surfaces must have all those surfaces dulled and be stored with the faculty advisor/director when not being used in practice or during a production.

Subpart G: On the infrequent occasions where a presentation or display involves dangerous weapons, as defined in Appendix A, the prior approval of the Director of Public Safety must be obtained.

Part 5: Multiple Method Implementation

It is the responsibility of the College to implement this policy using multiple methods.

Subpart A: **Creating a Violence-Free Environment**
All employees are expected to promote positive behavior, and to lead by example, by treating employees, students, and visitors will the respect and dignity each person deserves. Emphasis will be placed on creating an environment where there is no violence of threat of violence on campus.

Administrators and supervisors are empowered to take immediate action to resolve or stabilize violent situations in the workplace, and to protect people from harm. They will ensure that, when a threat is
made or violent incident occurs, an appropriate response is immediately taken. Administrators and supervisors will also ensure that appropriate disciplinary responses to internal workplace violence and aggression are made. They will carry out these responsibilities with the assistance of the College’s Department of Public Safety, Office of Human Resources and, as appropriate, other state and local government agents.

Subpart B: Training and Information

- **Employees.** All employees will be provided a copy of this policy through the employee portal and new employee orientation. Employee training will be provided to assist further implementation of this policy.
- **Students.** All students will be provided with a copy of this policy through the Student Handbook, Student Bulletin, and New Student Orientation programs.
- **Visitors.** A copy of this policy will be posted on the Normandale website.

Subpart C: Counseling and Assistance

The College will encourage the use of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by employees deemed at risk for violent behavior or who seek assistance in handling stressful work relationships or personal relationships that may become violent; however, the college recognizes that the decision to use the services must be a voluntary one.

Employees may also choose to seek assistance from private health services to deal with pressures, stress, emotional problems, or other personal issues which could, if ignored lead to threats or acts of violence. Informational brochures, website links and other media will be used to make all employees familiar with the services offered by EAP, and the college will provide information on how to take advantage of those services. When necessary information will also be provided about options for the resolution of personal and work-related problems which may have a potential for escalating to a violent incident. Employees will be encouraged to utilize all available resources.

Part 6: Immediate Notification

When they became aware of actions which violate this policy, all employees have the responsibility to immediately notify at least one of the following: their supervisor, the Chief Human Resources Officer, the Director of Public Safety, the Vice President of Finance and Operations, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or the Vice President of Student Affairs.

All employees will have responsibility for ensuring a safe workplace. Administrators and supervisors will continue to have primary responsibility for monitoring and resolving employee conflicts or disputes, and for taking appropriate corrective action when potentially violent situations develop.
Office of Human Resources

The Vice President of Finance and Operations will assume responsibility for coordinating the college response to reports of workplace related threats and acts of violence and serve as the college contact person with law enforcement authorities. The Chief Human Resources Officer will work with administrators and supervisors to take appropriate disciplinary action against employees who violate the policy. The Vice President of Student Affairs will assume responsibility for handling student discipline with may result from violation of this policy by students.

Part 7: Copies of the Policy

Copies of this policy will be distributed to all current employees, will be posted on the employee portal, and will be posted for the information of customers/students and visitors. Administrators and supervisors will be responsible for informing employees of this policy, and for enforcing compliance. This policy will be provided to all new employees and it will be referenced in the student handbook.

Appendix A: Dangerous Weapons

For the purpose of this policy, the following items are considered to be dangerous weapons:

- Any weapon which, per applicable law, is illegal to possess
- Any firearms, loaded or unloaded, assembled or disassembled, including pellet, "BB," and stun guns (electronic incapacitation devices)
- Replicate firearms, as defined in Minnesota Statute 609.713
- Knives (and other similar instruments) with a blade length of more than three inches, other than those present in the workplace for the specific purpose of food preparation and service
- Any “switchblade” knife
- “Brass knuckles”, “metal knuckles”, and similar weapons
- Bows, cross-bows and arrows
- Explosives and explosive devices, including fireworks and incendiary devices
- “Throwing stars”, “numchucks”, clubs, saps, and any other item commonly used as, or primarily intended for use as, a weapon
- Any other object not listed above that has been modified to serve as, or has been employed as a dangerous weapon.