ESCC POLICY
Preventing Violence in the Workplace

Effective Date: June 15, 2012
Responsible Office: Human Resources (V.P. Finance & Administration)

I. PURPOSE

To establish Eastern Shore Community College’s policy regarding response and repercussions for acts of violence or threats of violence in the campus community. Issuance serves to notify employees of the policy.

II. AUTHORITY

The President has given the Vice-President of Finance & Administration and the Human Resources Officer the responsibility and authority to establish and enforce the college’s Preventing Violence in the Workplace Policy.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all employees of the college.

IV. DEFINITION

Workplace Violence is any act of violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening behavior that occurs in the workplace. Workplace Violence incidents may involve actions directed at an employee by a co-worker, actions directed towards an employee by a third party (i.e. family member, friend, contractor, etc.), or actions directed at a third party (e.g. student, family member, friend, contractor, etc.) by an employee while engaged in performing work responsibilities.

A. Physical Violence includes, but is not limited to:
   - Any act that injures a person physically
   - Other physical actions such as hitting, pushing, spitting and kicking

B. Threatening behavior includes, but is not limited to:
   - Verbal threats of violence towards persons or property
   - Visual threats, including threatening or intimidating writings, e-mail, posters, cartoons, publications, drawings, or gestures

C. Other prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:
   - engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to self or another person
   - engaging in behavior that would subject a reasonable person to, and does subject another individual to, extreme emotional distress.

V. POLICY

A. ESCC has a standard ZERO TOLERANCE policy for all acts or threats of violence against its employees, or by its employees, while they are engaged in performing work responsibilities.
B. ESCC will not tolerate behavior by any employee, contractor, former employee, customer or any other person, which poses a threat to the safety and security of any employee while engaged in performing work responsibilities for the college.

C. Any threat or act of violence will be taken seriously, addressed immediately, and dealt with appropriately, which may include disciplinary action, termination of employment, arrest, and prosecution.

D. Unauthorized possession or use of firearms is prohibited. Using other materials or items as dangerous weapons is also prohibited. An item is used as a dangerous weapon when it is used with the intent to cause harm, threaten, or intimidate.

E. To the extent allowed by law, ESCC prohibits carrying weapons on campus property.

F. In accordance with Section 3.14.6.1 of the VCCS Policy Manual - Violence Prevention Committees and Threat Assessment Teams

Violence Prevention Committee

1. ESCC has established a committee with responsibility for education and violence prevention on campus. The membership includes representatives from the following areas: student affairs, human resources, law enforcement, a mental health professional or counseling services representative, and others who have knowledge, professional expertise, or responsibilities that could assist the committee with completing its work. However, in all cases the membership of the committee complies with the requirements of Virginia Code § 23-9.2:10. The members shall consult VCCS legal counsel when necessary, through established protocols.

2. The ESCC Violence Prevention Committee publishes a clear statement of its mission and membership, as well as the committee's leadership role in the area of violence prevention.

3. The ESCC Violence Prevention Committee publishes periodic guidance to faculty, staff and students regarding the following:

   a. how to recognize and report aberrant or potentially harmful behavior that may represent a threat to the community;
   b. policies and procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat;
   c. appropriate means of intervention with such individuals;
   d. college/system action to resolve potential threats; and
   e. to whom on the college’s threat assessment team, or through what method, potentially threatening behavior should be reported.
Threat Assessment Team

4. ESCC has also established a Threat Assessment Team to be approved by the State Board for Community Colleges. The threat assessment team shall implement threat assessment, intervention, and action policies. The membership includes representatives from the following areas: student affairs, human resources, law enforcement, and a mental health representative. The threat assessment team must always include a mental health professional, but may supplement its membership with others as necessary to assist it with fulfilling its purpose. However, in all cases the membership of the teams must comply with the requirements of Virginia Code § 23-9.2:10. The committee should consult VCCS legal counsel when necessary, through established protocols.

5. As permitted in VCCS Policy, the ESCC violence prevention committee also serves as the ESCC threat assessment team. ESCC reserves the right to establish two separate committees if and when the need arises.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Reporting Incidents of Workplace Violence or Threats of Violence

1. Employee Responsibilities
   a. Any employee who becomes aware of an act or threat of violence in the workplace, shall immediately report it to his/her supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable, or is the alleged perpetrator, the incident shall be reported to the next level of supervision or Human Resources. If the act represents an immediate threat of harm to any individual, it must be reported immediately to the college security officer and law enforcement authorities. In the event of an emergency, dial 911.

2. Management Responsibilities
   a. Any manager/supervisor/faculty who becomes aware of an act or threat of violence, must immediately report it to their manager/supervisor and Human Resources. If the act represents an immediate threat of harm to any individual or themselves, it must be reported immediately to the college security officer and law enforcement authorities. In the event of an Emergency dial 911. The campus community will be notified of incidents in a timely manner.

B. Investigation

1. Employee Responsibilities
   a. All employees shall cooperate with any investigation of workplace violence. Employees will be asked to provide statements regarding an incident of workplace violence which they witnessed. Information reported to the TAT is confidential unless the TAT recommends the matter be handled through a disciplinary process, at which time identities most likely would need to be revealed.
2. Management Responsibilities
   a. Investigation of reported incidents of workplace violence shall be conducted initially by the college Security Officer and or the Administrator in Charge (AIC). The investigation shall be conducted on an immediate, priority basis, following emergency medical care if needed, and in a manner consistent with the concepts of confidentiality, impartiality, and due process. Known or suspected physical evidence should not be touched without law enforcement guidance whenever possible.

   b. As part of the investigation, the Administrator in Charge (AIC) and or the college Security Officer will obtain statements from the individuals involved in the incident and any witnesses.

   c. Manager/Supervisor shall take immediate and appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with DHRM’s Standards of Conduct Policy 1.60, DHRM’s Workplace Violence Policy 1.80, and this policy. The manager/supervisor should consult with Human Resources prior to issuing any formal disciplinary action.

   C. ESCC prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee making a report under this policy.

   D. All reported incidents and related investigations must be documented by the appropriate manager/supervisor/AIC/Security Officer and maintained on file in Security Office records.

VII. SANCTIONS
Sanctions will be commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense. ESCC is committed to ensuring the safety of all employees, students and visitors to the campus community. Any violation under this workplace violence policy is an extremely serious offense and may result in termination, even upon the first offense.

VIII. INTERPRETATION
The authority to interpret this policy rests with the President, and is generally delegated to the Vice-President of Finance & Administration and/or the Human Resources Officer.

Approved:

Linda Thomas-Glover, President

5/31/2012

Date