Policy Prohibiting Firearms and Dangerous Weapons in the Workplace
Department of Employee Relations
November 10, 2011
Revised February 27, 2012

Policy Statement

The City of Milwaukee has a zero tolerance policy for firearms and dangerous weapons in the workplace. Accordingly, the City of Milwaukee prohibits employees from carrying or possessing a firearm or dangerous weapon while acting in the course and scope of their employment for and on behalf of the City of Milwaukee. This policy applies to all general city employees, including students, volunteers, staffing agency workers or contractors working in the course and scope of their employment with the City of Milwaukee.

Definitions

Employee - Employee includes any person, excluding law enforcement personnel, who performs services for the City of Milwaukee, either compensated or uncompensated.

Firearm or dangerous weapon – for purposes of this policy a firearm or dangerous weapon includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) A firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged including but not limited to handguns, pistols, revolvers, shotguns, rifles, and bb guns;
(2) A gun that can discharge a shot or a projectile by means of an explosive or gas, or compressed air;
(3) A device designed to be used as a weapon, from which can be expelled a projectile by the force of any explosion or force of combustion;
(4) Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
(5) Any destructive device;
(6) Any device designed as a weapon and capable of producing great bodily harm, including but not limited to, stun guns, stun batons;
(7) An electric weapon such as a taser gun;
(8) Any combustible or flammable liquid, or other substance, device, or instrumentality that, in a manner it is used or intended to be used, is calculated or likely to produce death or great bodily harm, or any fire that is used to produce death or great bodily harm; and,
(9) Any knife *that is carried with intention or calculation to produce death or great bodily harm. Switchblades are specifically prohibited. (A Leatherman or other small pocket knife is permissible, as long as the blade is 3 inches or less in length. Knives intended to be used as eating utensils, and stored or maintained in office kitchens or lunchrooms do not represent a violation of this policy.)*

Prohibitions

Regardless of whether a city employee possesses a concealed weapons license or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, all employees are prohibited from possessing, transferring, carrying, selling and storing firearms or dangerous weapons while working on city property or while acting within the coursescope of their employment when not on City of Milwaukee property. This prohibition applies anywhere City business is conducted as summarized below:

- working on property owned, leased or controlled by the City;
- performing work for the City at any location including private residences and commercial establishments and other customer or client locations;
- driving or riding as a passenger in a city vehicle;
- attending trade shows, conferences, or training on behalf of the City;
- attending City of Milwaukee directed or sponsored activities or events (intended for city employees only and not the general public) independent of venue;
- rRiding any type of mass transit while on City business;
- wWorking off-site on behalf of the City (excluding the employee's residence);
- performing emergency or on-call work for the City after normal business hours and on weekends;
- aAttending training or conferences on behalf of the City.

City employees may possess, carry and store a firearm or dangerous weapon in their own motor vehicles if they have obtained the appropriate license as required by applicable state and federal laws. Employees who use a personal vehicle in the course and scope of their employment are required to keep the permitted firearm or dangerous weapon stored out of sight and in a secure location.

Violation of this Policy is considered a serious offense that endangers the safety of employees and others. Therefore, this any offense may result in severe disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment. When appropriate a referral to law enforcement may be made which may result in criminal charges.

Safety First

In applying this policy, no employee shall take any action that will risk his or her own safety or the safety of other individuals. No attempt should ever be made by an employee to restrain or forcibly evict an armed person from City premises. Employees in facilities without a designated Police or security force may inform individuals carrying weapons of the law and ask for their compliance. This should be done in an informative, calm and non-confrontational manner. An individual's continued non-compliance after being properly informed of the law should result in notification to the Police Department. Employees in facilities with a designated Police or security force should make all attempts to defer intervention in concealed or open carry situations to those groups by contacting designated security personnel via established reporting mechanisms.

An employee who feels an immediate risk to his or her own safety or the safety or security of others, should avoid any interaction with the individual. Steps should be taken to secure their area and immediately contact the Police Department by calling 9-911 and their assigned building security (where applicable).

Report of Violations

Employee Violations
Employees are required to report violations of this Policy without regard to the relationship between the individual who initiates the prohibited behavior and the individual reporting it.

An employee who believes that another employee may be in violation of this policy should report the alleged violation to the employee's manager or supervisor, the department head, or the appropriate departmental Human Resources representative.

The City will promptly investigate allegations of violations of this policy. Supervisors and managers are responsible for establishing and modifying procedures as necessary to carry out and comply with this Policy in accordance with applicable laws and City ordinances. Departments are responsible for implementing protocols for handling a prohibited weapon upon discovery.

The City reserves the right to authorize searches for prohibited weapons on its property when a violation is reported or when probable cause or reasonable suspicion is presentconsistent with law. Employees should be aware that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to weapons in the workplace. The City's right to conduct searches includes, but is not limited to, such areas and items as lockers, desks, workstations, purses, briefcases, bags, and toolboxes, and lunch bags. Searches of the employee's work area and belongings, as described above, *may* be conducted by the employee's supervisor and another member of management. Searches of all types, including surrounding City property, personal property and the employee may be conducted by law enforcement in accordance with lawshould reasonable suspicion be present. Any weapon found in violation of this Policy may be confiscated. Refusal to permit a search may result in discipline up to an including discharge.

Visitor Violations
Visitors to posted no-carry City facilities are not allowed to carry a weapon on the premises. If a visitor does bring a weapon into a City facility a determination will need to be made as to the level of risk the visitor carries.

Any visitor carrying a weapon into a posted no-carry City facility is creating an elevated risk to security and safety that warrants a response leading to compliance with the law. If the visitor poses an immediate risk to security or safety the Police Department should be notified immediately by calling 9-911. The visitor should be considered an immediate risk to safety and security if he/she is acting in an aggressive, belligerent, confrontational, suspicious or in an otherwise questionable manner while carrying a weapon.

Anti-Retaliation Provision

No employee or City official may retaliate against an employee who has reported a possible violation of this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with the Policy Prohibiting Firearms and Dangerous Weapons in the Workplace. Whenever there is a question as to whether an instrument, article or substance is considered a weapon in violation of this policy, it is the employee's responsibility to seek clarification. Employees seeking clarification should direct their questions to their Department Head or the City's Security Operations Manager at 286-2145 prior to bringing the item(s) to City work sites and events, as well as City-owned or leased facilities or vehicles.

City departments shall ensure that employees complete a statement acknowledging receipt and understanding of this policy.

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