

NAVSUBSCOLINST 5354.5
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12 Nov 1999

NAVSUBSCOL INSTRUCTION 5354.5

Subj: THREATS AND VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Encl: (1) NAVSUBSCOL Policy Statement on Violence and Threats
of Violence in the Workplace

1. Purpose. To set forth this command's policies and procedures for dealing with individual violence or threats of violence in the workplace. This does not include crisis situations arising from a natural disaster or mass destruction, which are covered by other directives.

2. Coverage. This instruction applies to all employees of NAVSUBSCOL, including its Field Offices, and in any workspace occupied by NAVSUBSCOL employees.

3. Information. Violence and threats of violence in the American workplace have increased at an unprecedented rate over the past decade. While such incidents may occur more frequently in some work settings than in others, researchers report that no workplace is immune. Accordingly, the following policies and procedures are established to respond to acts of violence or threats of violence at NAVSUBSCOL and its Field Offices.

4. Preventive Measures. Management can avoid some potentially violent incidents in the workplace by strict adherence to policies already set in place. These policies include:

a. Security Procedures. The Department of Defense identification badge of a civilian employee who terminates employment, either voluntarily or involuntarily, will be retrieved by the first line supervisor or other appropriate official. It is also NAVSUBSCOL policy that windshield vehicle decals issued as a result of civilian employment shall be removed upon termination of employment. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that these actions are accomplished before the close of the employee's last workday.

b. Identification of potentially violent employees. Supervisors must remain alert to noticeable changes in employees' behavior, work habits, attitude, health, etc. that may be indicative of increased stress and/or deteriorating mental health. Although there is a natural reluctance to discuss issues of personal behavior, such problems should be addressed as soon as they surface.

In almost all documented cases of violence in the workplace, managers and co-workers noticed behavioral changes that indicated a need for professional intervention. Behavioral symptoms which lead to violence at work do not disappear; supervisors who wait for an offending employee to "change" or voluntarily leave the job do so not only at their own risk, but also that of co-workers, customers, and even family members. Where such changes impact performance and/or work relationships, and particularly when behavior has become disruptive, the supervisor should counsel the employee, and offer assistance through an appropriate Civilian Employee Assistance Program (CEAP). Supervisors are encouraged to seek early advice and assistance from their supervisor, Department Heads, or other senior official in the chain of command, to determine the most appropriate approach in such situations.

c. Referral of employees to counseling. Department Heads will ensure that employee assistance program services are available to employees under their cognizance. Supervisors shall ensure that information on CEAP is prominently posted in work spaces and shall inform new employees of the availability of the program. Contact with CEAP counselor is confidential and information concerning contact with a CEAP counselor is not released without the express written permission of the employee.

5. Threats of violence. NAVSUBSCOL has a zero tolerance policy towards threats of violence, intimidation, and harassment in the workplace (enclosure (1)). This includes threats against the safety and well-being of employees, members of their families, customers, suppliers, contractor personnel, and visitors to the command. All threats will be taken seriously including threats occurring in the workplace as well as those resulting from work-related events. In the event of a threat of violence at NAVSUBSCOL, responsibilities are assigned as follows:

NAVSUBSCOLINST 5354.5

a. Victim of threat. An employee who receives a threat against his/her personal safety, or that of his/her family, or hears a threat directed against an individual in NAVSUBSCOL work spaces, shall immediately report the threat to his/her supervisor. The employee shall provide the name, if known, and present location of the individual making the threat, the specific nature of the threat, and the employee's assessment of the alleged threatening person's (perpetrator) ability to carry out the threat. If the immediate supervisor is not available, the employee shall report the incident to the next supervisor in the chain of command who is available.

b. Supervisor. The supervisor shall determine the appropriate response based on his/her assessment of the situation. In making such an assessment, the supervisor shall consider the following factors:

(1) The reaction of the threatened employee, i.e. was the threat taken seriously?

(2) The threatened employee's apprehension of harm, i.e. does the employee believe that the threat may actually be carried out?

(3) The intent of the perpetrator. Was the threat made in a joking, casual manner? Is this the kind of remark typical of the perpetrator's everyday behavior? Is s/he a known "jokester"?

(4) Any conditional nature of the threatening statements: e.g. "Unless you give me the day off, I'm going to hurt you."

(5) The attendant circumstances in which the threat was made, e.g., the time, location, other people around, the history (if any) of the perpetrator, the perpetrator's ability to carry out the threat, a particular situation to which the perpetrator is responding, was there provocation, etc.

(6) If the supervisor determines that a threat of violence has been made, the cognizant Security Department will be notified and assistance requested. The supervisor shall then

direct all threatened persons, including other employees, customers, visitors, etc. away from the site and to a safe area. The supervisor shall report the incident via chain of command as soon as possible.

(7) The supervisor or his/her designee will meet Security Personnel and direct them to the location of the perpetrator. Once Security Department officials are on board, they assume command of the situation and NAVSUBSCOL personnel will follow Security Department directions.

(8) As soon as practicable, the supervisor shall obtain a written statement from the threatened employee(s) and other witnesses detailing the nature of the threat, the name of the perpetrator, and attendant circumstances. The supervisor shall present an oral report to the Commanding Officer/OIC, via the chain of command, as soon as possible.

6. Incidents of violence. An incident of violence occurs when an employee, customer, supplier, contract personnel, or visitor of HRO is assaulted or battered in the workplace, or as a result of work-related events, and there is resultant physical harm. Cases of simple battery, i.e. the offensive touching of one individual by another without physical harm, will be handled using the procedures outlined in paragraph 5. In the event of a violent incident at NAVSUBSCOL, responsibilities are assigned as follows:

a. Victim. An employee who is the subject of workplace related violence shall take only such actions as are necessary to escape to a safe location. Employees are specifically prohibited from responding to violence with violence including attempting to subdue or disarm a perpetrator, or detaining the perpetrator in any way. Once a victim is safe, s/he should call for help or otherwise signal that help is needed. S/he shall notify the supervisor as soon as s/he is able.

b. Other employees. In the event that an act of violence is being perpetrated against any individual in NAVSUBSCOL workspaces, all NAVSUBSCOL employees are responsible for notifying the nearest supervisor of the incident as soon as they become aware of it. If no supervisor is available, the employee

NAVSUBSCOLINST 5354.5

shall call the Security Department and request their immediate assistance. An employee should only render assistance to a victim if assistance can be given without jeopardy to the assisting employee.

c. Supervisor. Upon notice of an incident or workplace violence, the supervisor shall:

(1) immediately request assistance from the cognizant Security Department;

(2) attempt to direct all personnel, including any visitors or bystanders, away from the perpetrator until the Security Department arrives;

(3) meet or arrange for the NAVSUBSCOL employee to meet Security Department officials to identify the perpetrator. Upon arrival, Security Department officials will assume command of the situation and NAVSUBSCOL personnel will follow their direction until the incident is resolved.

A. O. LOTRING

NAVSUBSCOL
POLICY STATEMENT
ON
VIOLENCE AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE
IN THE WORKPLACE

1. Violence and threats of violence are becoming increasingly common in the American workplace. We are fortunate that it has not occurred at NAVSUBSCOL, and there is no reason at this time to believe that it will. Nevertheless, it is both appropriate and timely to issue command policy on violence and threats of violence in the workplace.

2. Policy. All employees have the right to work in an atmosphere free from violence or the threat of violence. Threats cannot and will not be ignored. Violence and threats of violence against employees, members of an employee's family, or other workplace related persons will be taken seriously and will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal.

4. Action. All employees at NAVSUBSCOL are responsible to avoid making threats or engaging in acts of workplace violence. Employees who experience any difficulty coping with either work-related or personal matters are reminded that confidential counseling is available through the Employee Assistance Program. Employees are encouraged to obtain the phone number of the closest program official from their supervisor, or from their official bulletin board.

5. This policy remains in effect until superseded.

A. O. LOTRING
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer

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Encl (1)