
St. Andrews Parish Parks & Playground Commission

Policy Manual

Section: 5 **Topic:** Workplace Violence

Policy Number: 5

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SAPPPC is absolutely committed to ensure the personal, physical, and psychological safety of its staff members. Violence of any sort, by any person, is not allowed on agency property, nor is any sort of intimidation, harassment, threatening or frightening behavior, or other disruptive behavior. There are no exceptions.

Any individual, employed or not employed by SAPPPC, who commits such acts will be immediately removed from the premises and will be subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties, or both.

In keeping with this commitment, possession of weapons inside any SAPPPC facility or on agency grounds is strictly prohibited. Possession of such items may be cause for immediate discharge and banishment from SAPPPC property.

SAPPPC needs the cooperation of its staff members in maintaining a safe work environment. Staff members who witness violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior by any person should report it immediately to the Executive Director, Human Resources Director, a department head, or other director. All department heads and directors are on call at all times; their wireless phone numbers are listed on the agency phone list available at every location. If a staff member is unable to get away to gain access to a phone list, or an incident has progressed to physical violence, he or a co-worker should call 911 and at the first safe opportunity notify a supervisor or director.

Whoever is notified will immediately escalate the report to the Executive Director.

All SAPPPC buildings are secured with alarm systems and window and door locks. Staff members working alone during non-business hours should lock the doors and activate the alarm system in “stay” mode.

SAPPPC property, with the exception of the community parks, is under the jurisdiction of the City of Charleston Police Department. Ponderosa Community Park and Red Top Community Park are under the jurisdiction of the Charleston County Police Department. However, the first responding unit will handle any violent situation, no matter the police department.

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Should any staff member see signs of the possibility of violence or disruptive behavior in another person, he should contact the Executive Director, Human Resources Director, a department head, or other director. All are trained on how to deal with such situations and will keep such reports confidential to the fullest extent practicable. Whoever is notified will immediately escalate the report to the Executive Director, who will do the same. Every report will be taken seriously and steps will immediately be taken to resolve the situation safely and effectively.

Examples of signs of potentially violent behavior may include direct or veiled threats of harm, intimidating or bullying behavior, numerous conflicts with supervisors or other staff members, bringing a weapon to the workplace or making inappropriate references to weapons, statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace violence, statements regarding a personal situation indicating desperation to the point of suicide, or extreme changes in behavior.

SAPPPC routinely takes steps to ensure a safe work environment. All directors, department heads and other directors receive training on how to prevent and handle workplace violence. SAPPPC contracts with an Employee Assistance Program to assist staff members experiencing stress or any other problem. Counselors of the Employee Assistance Program are also available to assist staff in the aftermath of any troubling situation. SAPPPC conducts criminal background checks on prospective employees, contractors, and volunteers, and conducts drug testing of staff members and some potential applicants. Signs are posted in every department and building explaining how to deal with specific threats and situations.