



## Belt Railway Company of Chicago Policies & Procedures

**POLICY No: 5**

**POLICY:** Workplace Violence

**Effective:** July 15, 2006

**Reviewed:** March 31, 2021

**Revised:** April 1, 2021; January 1, 2014; August 1, 2009

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### **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

The safety and security of employees is of vital importance to the BRC. Therefore, the BRC has adopted this Zero Tolerance Policy for workplace violence. Threats or acts of violence, including intimidation, harassment and/or coercion, which involve or affect BRC employees, or which occur on the BRC's premises, will **not** be tolerated.

The prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in the operation of the BRC, including, but not limited to, BRC employees and other personnel, contract and temporary workers, consultants, contractors, customers, vendors, visitors, and anyone else on the BRC's premises. Violations of this policy by an employee will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

This policy also provides procedures for reporting, investigating and resolving any threats or acts of violence on the BRC's premises or otherwise affecting BRC employees.

### **Workplace Violence Defined**

Workplace violence is any conduct which is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating to cause an employee to reasonably fear for his/her personal safety or the safety of his/her family, friends, associates, and/or property such that employment conditions are altered or a hostile, abusive or intimidating work environment is created. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Threats or acts of violence or physical force occurring on the BRC's premises, regardless of the relationship between the BRC and the parties involved in the incident.
- Threats or acts of violence or physical force occurring off the BRC's premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of the BRC.

- Threats or acts of violence or physical force occurring off the BRC's premises involving an employee of the BRC as a victim if the BRC determines that the incident may lead to an incident of violence on the BRC's premises.
- Threats or acts of violence resulting in the conviction of an employee or agent of the BRC, or of an individual performing services for the BRC on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provisions relating to violence or threats of violence which adversely affect the business interests of the BRC.

Specific examples of conduct that may be considered threats or acts of violence under this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any act of physical, verbal or emotional abuse, force, violence or intimidation, including but not limited to hitting, shoving or other such aggressive conduct, directed toward another individual or his/her family, friends, associates or property.
- Any actual or veiled threat of physical, verbal or emotional abuse, force, violence, intimidation, or other aggressive conduct, directed toward another individual or his/her family, friends, associates or property.
- Any pattern of coercive behavior which involves any act or threat of abuse, force, violence, intimidation, or other aggressive conduct.
- Any act of physical, verbal or emotional abuse which one person uses to control or intimidate another or others.
- Harassing or threatening communications (including without limitation phone calls, emails, text messages, etc.).
- Harassing or threatening behavior, including without limitation physical aggression and verbal threats, which causes another person to fear for his/her personal safety or the safety of his/her family, friends, associates and/or property.
- Surveillance.
- Stalking.
- Fighting.
- Possession of, and/or advocating illegal use of, guns, firearms, bombs, or weapons.
- Threats or attempts to commit suicide.
- Intentional destruction or threats of destruction of BRC property.
- Enlisting, coercing or asking others to do any of the above; and/or aiding others in doing any of the above.

## **Weapons Prohibited in Workplace**

The BRC strictly prohibits employees or any person providing services to the BRC, visiting the BRC, or located on the BRC premises from possessing weapons of any kind at the workplace. The workplace includes any property owned or leased by the BRC, or occupied by groups of BRC employees or persons providing services to the BRC. Unless such prohibition is contrary to local law, this specifically includes BRC parking areas and BRC vehicles. Employees are not permitted to transport or store weapons in vehicles owned or leased by the BRC and used by the employee for work purposes, unless the employee is required to transport or store a weapon as part of the employee's duties and s/he has written permission from the BRC's Director Police & Risk Management. This policy prohibits the possession of concealed weapons as well as weapons carried openly while on BRC property, regardless of whether the person has a legal permit to carry a weapon.

The prohibition explicitly includes guns, rifles and firearms of any type, including those for which the holder has a legal permit. Other examples of prohibited weapons include, but are not limited to, knives, ammunition, bombs, bows and arrows, clubs, slingshot, black jack, metal knuckles and similar devices that by their design or intended use are capable of inflicting serious bodily injury or lethal force.

## **Former Employees Require BRC Authorization to Visit**

Due to safety concerns, an employee who is no longer employed by BRC may not enter the workplace or be on BRC premises at any time without BRC approval. Therefore, no employee should hold doors open for former employees, or otherwise admit former employees into the workplace. Further, if a current employee sees a former employee on BRC premises or is contacted by a former employee seeking access to BRC premises, the employee should immediately alert Human Resources or BRC Police.

If an employee who no longer is employed by BRC would like to visit, that person must first contact the Human Resources Department and request written permission to visit. A visit can be scheduled only if advance written permission is obtained. If written permission is granted, the former employee must, upon arrival to the BRC premises on the scheduled date/time, report to the reception area, be greeted by the current employee s/he is visiting, and be escorted at all times while on BRC premises.

## **Searches and Inspections**

An investigation into a report or threat of workplace violence may require, with or without notice, an inspection of an employee's work area and/or personal property located in the workplace, including without limitation a vehicle. As a condition of continued employment, all employees are expected to fully cooperate in any lawful inspection required as a result of a report or threat of workplace violence. Failure to cooperate with the BRC's investigation of a report or threat of workplace violence may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## Complaint Procedure

It is often difficult to determine if someone is truly threatening violence or is “just talking”. Law enforcement officials confirm that, if more employees would have reported behavior by co-workers, former employees or others that seemed threatening, was suspicious or made them feel uncomfortable, many incidents of workplace violence could have been prevented. Therefore, any employee who sees, hears or learns of any conduct or statement that seems threatening or suspicious, any conduct that violates this policy, and/or any weapons on the BRC’s premises must **immediately** report such conduct or statement, either to his/her Supervisor or Manager, to the Human Resources Department, BRC Police and/or to Senior Management. In the event that there is an immediate risk or imminent threat of violence, serious harm or life-threatening conduct, employees should report this **immediately** to BRC Police or dial 911 to contact local police.

Employees experiencing domestic problems or abuse - or who know of co-workers who are experiencing domestic problems or abuse - are strongly encouraged to report these matters as well, so that the BRC can offer assistance, if possible. Similarly, any employee who obtains a restraining or protective order against another person, or who is the subject of a restraining or protective order, must immediately report this to Human Resources.

The BRC will not tolerate any retaliation against anyone who in good faith reports any of the above types of matters or who cooperates in the investigation of such report.

The BRC will immediately investigate any complaints of actual, threatened or suspected violence, and will take appropriate action which may include, depending on the circumstances:

- Removal of the individual from the BRC premises.
- Notification of law enforcement authorities.
- If the threat is posed by a BRC employee, termination, suspension or other disciplinary action, or medical/psychiatric evaluation, as BRC deems appropriate.