

BROOME COUNTY WORKPLACE BULLYING POLICY

Broome County Government does not stand for bullying in the workplace.

Victims of bullying suffer very real and serious harm as a result of these incidents, often showing signs of depression, anxiety, social isolation, nervousness, low self-esteem, declining work performance, hyper-vigilance, nightmares, changed eating and sleeping habits, and fear for their safety.

Broome County Government is committed to ensuring the physical, social and mental wellbeing of all of its employees.

For the purpose of this section, bullying within Broome County Government - shall mean:

Any form of verbal or electronic communication or written correspondence, with the malicious and willful intent to coerce, extort, abuse, torment, threaten, terrify or intimidate a specific other person, that serves no legitimate purpose, and causes such other person to suffer:

- a. Actual and reasonable fear of physical harm to himself or herself;
- b. Actual and reasonable fear of damage to the property of such person; or
- c. A substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical, mental or emotional health.

Correspondence may be directly to or regarding an individual and shall include any form of communication. This policy applies to any form of communication at any time while an individual is employed by Broome County, or while a contractor or person is doing business with Broome County.

If any Broome County Government employee believes that they have been bullied, or has witnessed bullying occur, they should first consult his or her supervisor, notify Broome County Security as warranted, the Personnel Officer, and the County Attorney by completing and submitting a Broome County General Incident Report Form, or another communication with the same information contained within the General Incident Report Form.

If a Broome County contractor, or person doing business with Broome County, believes that they have been bullied, or has witnessed bullying occur by a Broome County employee, they shall notify the Personnel Officer and the County Attorney by completing and submitting a Broome County General Incident Report Form, or another communication with the same information contained within the General Incident Report form.

The Personnel Officer will review the matter in consultation with the County Attorney to ensure that all local, state and federal policies, rules, regulations, and laws are followed accordingly. If the Personnel Officer or County Attorney are the subject(s) of the Complaint, they shall not participate in the investigation of the Complaint. If the Personnel Officer receives a Complaint against the County Executive or the Chair of the Legislature, the Personnel Officer and County Attorney, to ensure a fair investigation, shall retain an independent investigator not affiliated with Broome County government to conduct the investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, a report and recommendations and/or corrective actions shall be prepared and distributed to the complainant, the subject of the complaint, and any other person(s) who the investigator determines should see the report. If a party appeared with outside counsel a copy of the report and recommendation(s) shall also be provided to said outside counsel. Additionally, the Personnel Officer and County Attorney shall file copies of the report(s) and recommendation(s) in their respective files.

If enforcement such as discipline is taken against an employee, said enforcement should be handled by the appropriate department head, in consultation with the Personnel Office and Law Department. If enforcement is against an outside vendor or a vendor's employee, the contracting department, in consultation with the Law Department, shall be responsible for said enforcement.

All complaints and investigations shall otherwise be confidential to the extent possible.

A copy of this policy shall be distributed to every Broome County Government officer and employee by the Personnel Department within 30 days after its initial adoption or when changes to the policy are made. Each Broome County Government officer and employee thereafter shall be furnished a copy by the Personnel Department, before entering upon the duties of his or her office or employment. Contracts with Broome County vendors and persons doing business with the County shall require compliance with this policy. If a vendor or person doing business with the County fails to comply with this policy, they may be declared in breach of their contract.