

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe work environment, free of intimidation and threat of physical harm. This policy prohibits all employees, except law enforcement officers and security personnel, from carrying deadly weapons, including firearms, while acting in the course and scope of City employment.

No person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey or attempt to convey a deadly weapon onto City property except for those persons and circumstances specified in Section C., 2., below. This policy applies to employees, visitors, independent contractors, vendors and any other person on City property, including individuals with valid permits to carry deadly weapons and/or firearms.

B. DEFINITIONS

A "deadly weapon" is defined as any instrument, device or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specially adapted for use as a weapon. Examples of prohibited deadly weapons include, but are not limited to:

"Firearm" means any firearm capable of expelling or propelling one or more projectiles by the action of an explosive or combustible propellant. Firearm includes an unloaded firearm and a firearm that is inoperable but that can readily be rendered operable. Firearm includes, but is not limited to, handguns, pistols, rifles, shotguns, automatic and semi-automatic weapons and zip guns.

"Explosives" meaning any chemical compound, mixture, or device, the primary or common purpose of is to function by explosion. Explosive includes but is not limited to dynamite, black powder, pellet powders, blasting caps, fuse igniters and instantaneous fuses.

"Explosive devices" which are defined as any device designed or specially adapted to cause physical harm to persons or property by means of an explosion, and consisting of any explosive substance or agency and means to detonate it. Explosive devices include bombs, demolition devices, blasting caps or detonators containing an explosive charge and any pressurized vessel that has been knowingly tampered with or arranged so as to explode.

"Incendiary devices" which means any firebomb, and any device designed or specially adapted to cause physical harm to persons or property by means of fire and consisting of any incendiary substance or agency and means to ignite it.

Knives with a blade longer than 3.5".

"Ballistic knife" which means a knife with a detachable blade that is propelled by a spring-operated mechanism or other illegal knives.

"City property" means the vehicles, equipment, machinery, facilities and land owned, leased or under the primary control of the City of Cuyahoga Falls, including all Park and Recreation facilities and areas under construction.

"Visitor" means any person who is on City property, including independent contractors, vendors and visitors, and off-duty employees of the City of Cuyahoga Falls.

C. GENERAL PROVISIONS

No person is permitted to carry or possess a deadly weapon on City property except as provided in this policy.

1. Prohibition

Employees - Employees are prohibited from possessing or carrying a deadly weapon, including but not limited to a firearm, while acting in the course and scope of their employment, either on or off City property, regardless of whether the employee has a permit to carry a deadly weapon, except as otherwise provided in the policy.

Visitors - Visitors, vendors and independent contractors are prohibited from possessing or carrying a deadly weapon while on City property, or engaged in the course of City business or City activities, except as otherwise provided in this policy.

2. Exceptions

Law Enforcement - Law Enforcement officers, as defined in RC 2901.01, acting within the scope of their duties, are exempt from this policy.

Security Officers – City of Cuyahoga Falls security officers and the head of security personnel, who are authorized to carry deadly weapons as a requirement of their duties, and who are acting within the scope of their duties at the time of that possession or control, are exempt from this policy.

Persons exempt pursuant to RC 2923.123

Parking Areas – This policy does not prohibit the lawful possession or carry of a concealed weapon in private vehicles in a City parking area or parking facility, provided the owner has obtained the appropriate permit(s) required under the law and stores the weapon in their own locked vehicle, either in a locked glove compartment (or other locked compartment), in the trunk, or locked inside a gun case.

Other Authorized Uses - Lawful possession or carry related to use at a City shooting range or other law-enforcement programs; Lawful discharge or possession of a deadly weapon for show or memorial purposes where no projectile is discharged; Lawful transport of an unloaded deadly weapon directly between a parking area or parking facility and the location authorized for its use, or transport of an unloaded deadly weapon directly between a parking area or parking facility and a storage facility provided by the City.

Other Authorized Persons - Individuals who have obtained written permission from the Mayor to carry or use deadly weapons or deadly weapons on City property to perform specific tasks for the City are exempt from this policy during the performance of those tasks.

D. DEADLY WEAPONS STORAGE

Deadly weapons are not permitted in any City vehicle. For purposes of this policy, City vehicles include any vehicle owned, leased or otherwise under the control of the City. City vehicles shall not be used to store or carry a deadly weapon, except as authorized for purposes under Section C. 2 above.

Nothing in this policy requires the City to provide storage facilities for employee's deadly weapon.

The City reserves the right to search all people and property in accordance with local, state and federal law.

E. VIOLATIONS BY EMPLOYEES

Violation of this policy by an employee while on duty or in the course of City business is grounds for immediate *removal from City property and termination of employment*. An employee who uses a deadly weapon while on duty or in the course of City business will not be defended or indemnified by the City of Cuyahoga Falls. Furthermore, the City may refer suspected violations to appropriate law enforcement authorities, as permitted by law.

Display of a deadly weapon while on or off duty on City property is considered a threat, and will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. An employee who displays an empty firearm holster while on duty, creates a physically intimidating and hostile work environment and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

F. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY

If the employee believes that another person (visitor, independent contractor, vendor or another employee) is in possession of or carrying a deadly weapon in violation of this policy, the employee must report the suspected act immediately to the City Police Department and then his/her supervisor, unless reporting at that time would subject the employee or others to physical harm. The threat of physical harm may delay, but does not excuse this reporting requirement.

The City will not tolerate retaliation toward or harassment of any employee who, acting in good faith, reports violations of this policy.

Failure to Report - Failure to report knowledge the presence of any deadly weapon on City property in violation of this policy shall subject the employee to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

False Report - If an employee knowingly makes a false report of a suspected violation of this policy, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

G. SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT

Employees should be aware that the enforcement of this policy might deal with confronting individuals carrying potentially loaded deadly weapons. Under no circumstances should an employee take unnecessary risks or compromise his or her safety in order to enforce this policy. The Cuyahoga Falls Police Department should be contacted immediately if there is a possibility of imminent threat to the personal safety of an employee or others.

H. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Employees are responsible for making sure, in advance, that any potentially covered item in their possession is not prohibited by this policy. Questions regarding items covered in this policy should be directed to the City Police Department.

I. LIMITATIONS

In the event any other City policy or procedure is found to be in conflict with this policy, the terms of this policy shall govern. To the extent any federal, state or local law, rule or regulation limits or prohibits the application of any provision of this policy, then to the minimum extent necessary, this policy is deemed to be amended to be in compliance, pursuant to such law, rule or regulation.

CITY OF CUYAHOGA FALLS:



Mayor Don S. Walters