

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

### I. PURPOSE

The County of Cumberland has a zero tolerance for domestic violence. It is County policy to support to the fullest extent possible employees who are victims of domestic violence. All Cumberland County employees including those covered by collective bargaining agreements must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the spirit of this policy. Cumberland County will use early prevention strategies in order to avoid or minimize the occurrence and effects of domestic violence in the workplace. Cumberland County addresses the needs of employees with domestic violence concerns that arise in the workplace whenever possible as part of our contribution to combating domestic violence as a societal issue.

### II. DEFINITION

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior that is used by a person against family or household members to gain power or control over the other party in the relationship. This behavior may include any of the following: physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse and threats, stalking, isolation from friends and family, economic control, and destruction of personal property. Domestic violence occurs between people of all racial, economic, educational, and religious backgrounds. It occurs in heterosexual and same-sex relationships, between married and unmarried partners, between current and former partners, and between other family and household members.

### III. REMEDY/RELIEF FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Cumberland County aims to maintain the well-being of all victims of domestic violence by:

1. Respecting the privacy of victims and preserving confidentiality;
2. Aiding the victim in receiving assistance and supportive services;
3. Helping the employee feel safer by developing workplace safety accommodations to prevent the accused from having access to the victim in the workplace to the extent possible;
4. Facilitating other referrals and securing appropriate local services such as emergency relocation into a shelter setting;
5. Allowing vacation, sick or personal leave to be used for the purposes of victim counseling, obtaining medical treatment, attending legal proceedings or carrying out other necessary activities;
6. Assisting employees to maintain a safe workplace; and
7. Taking into account during performance evaluations the impact of domestic violence on an employee's performance.

### IV. SUPPORT AND REFERRALS

Cumberland County will provide available support and assistance to employees who are victims of domestic violence. This support may include confidential means for coming forward for help, resource and referral information, additional security at the workplace, work schedule adjustments or leave necessary to obtain medical, counseling or legal assistance, and workplace relocation. Other appropriate assistance will be provided based on individual need. In all responses to domestic violence, Cumberland County will, to the fullest extent possible, respect the confidentiality and autonomy of the adult victim.

## V. CONFIDENTIALITY

Cumberland County Government recognizes and respects a victim's need for confidentiality and autonomy. To the extent permitted by law and unless the substance of the disclosure demands otherwise, the Cumberland County Government will maintain the victim's disclosure as confidential. Whenever possible, the employee will be given notice of necessary disclosures. Disclosure may be necessary if, in the opinion of the person to whom the initial disclosure is made, an abuser presents a threat to the safety of any person, the victim has expressed homicidal or suicidal intention, or there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation of children or incapacitated or dependent adults.

## VI. PERPETRATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Cumberland County Government is committed to providing a workplace in which the perpetration of domestic violence is neither tolerated nor excused. Any act of domestic violence, including, but not limited to, physical assault, violation of a protection from abuse order or threat made by an employee while on County premises, during working hours, or at a County-sponsored event, is a serious violation of our policy. This also includes use of workplace phones, faxes, e-mail, County vehicle or other means to commit acts of domestic violence. This policy applies not only to acts against other employees, but to acts against all other persons, including intimate partners. Employees found to have violated this policy will be subject to corrective or disciplinary actions, up to and including discharge.

An employee must immediately disclose to his or her Department Head, any order for protection from abuse or harassment, or any criminal charge or condition of bail or probation applicable to the employee that includes: 1) Conditions prohibiting or limiting contact with other Cumberland County employees; or 2) Conditions that may interfere with the employee's ability to perform job duties. **Note:** Any final protection order entered against an employee required to carry a firearm as a condition of employment is considered to interfere with that employee's ability to perform assigned duties of the position and the existence of the order must be reported immediately. Failure to disclose the above information will result in corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Any employee required a firearm as a condition of employment who is a named defendant in a final or permanent protection order, or who is otherwise prohibited by court order, bail condition, criminal conviction or protection order from carrying a firearm, will be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## VII. RESOURCES

*Employees who wish information or assistance are encouraged to reach out to any contact below:*

Through These Doors, [www.throughthesedoors.org](http://www.throughthesedoors.org), 1-800-537-6066, free, confidential Domestic Violence Resource Center.

Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine, [www.sarsonline.org](http://www.sarsonline.org), 1-800-871-7741, Services for survivors of sexual assault.

Pine Tree Legal Assistance, [www.ptla.org](http://www.ptla.org), 207-774-8211, free civil aid legal services, including help with protection from abuse orders

Maine Behavioral Health, [www.MaineBehavioralHealthcare.org](http://www.MaineBehavioralHealthcare.org), (207) 874-1030

A Different Choice, Certified Batterer Intervention Program (Windham, Portland), (207) 730-3641

Choices- The Men's Group, Certified Batterer Intervention Program (Brunswick), (207) 240-4846