

**Administrative Regulations**  
**City of Iowa City**  
**Title: Employee Response to Firearms in the Workplace**  
**Effective Date: 2/8/22 Page 1 of 2**



I. Purpose

This policy will address how Iowa City employees should respond to individuals carrying firearms onto City property and into workplaces.

II. Policy

The City of Iowa City takes workplace violence seriously. City policy is designed to provide a safe work environment for everyone. Acts or threats of violence will not be tolerated. However, there are situations that may fall short of threatening but nonetheless are concerning to employees and the public. Iowa Code Section 724.28 restricts a city's ability to prohibit firearms in public facilities and buses. Additionally, HF756, which went into effect on July 1, 2021, allows a person to carry a handgun without a permit as long as the individual is not otherwise prohibited by state or federal law from possession of a firearm and abides by all other provisions of the law. Because of these laws, Iowa City cannot require a person who is legally carrying a firearm, who is not otherwise acting in a threatening or hostile manner, to leave City property. If acting in a non-threatening manner, these persons may continue to conduct regular business and attend public meetings. However, it is best to be overly cautious when a firearm is involved. When a city employee observes an individual openly carrying a firearm or observes a concealed weapon that was unintentionally or intentionally exposed on any city property, they should calmly dial 911 to request police officer response to assess the level of threat.

Note that by policy, with the exception of police officers and the Fire Marshal, Iowa City employees are still prohibited from carrying weapons at work.

III. Procedures

There are three scenarios that could occur regarding the public carrying of firearms. Procedures for each are as follows:

- 1) **Carrying a concealed weapon-** in this instance the weapon is not visible and generally no one would know it is occurring. Persons who are not prohibited from legally carrying firearms are generally conscious of the importance of concealment and therefore carry as such.
- 2) **Active shooter-** defined as "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area." These incidents unfold very quickly and employees should immediately dial 911 and rely on their survival skills and training from programs such as ALICE.
- 3) **Open carry of firearms-** While open carry is rare, a person who legally possesses a firearm may legally do so in order to demonstrate their right to carry under the law or to intimidate others. Simply put, a person who legally carries a firearm could walk on a city sidewalk or enter a city building with a handgun holstered on

their hip, or a rifle on a shoulder sling. If this occurs the following procedure will apply.

If, at a public city meeting (e.g., Council, board or commission) or on any city property, a city employee observes an individual openly carrying a firearm or observes a concealed firearm that is inadvertently or advertently exposed, the employee should stay calm and quickly evaluate the situation. In order to make those present feel comfortable and to prevent any chance of escalation the employee is to request that a police officer come to the meeting or workspace as a safety precaution. The best way to achieve that is by dialing 911. The employee should not call the seven-digit administrative phone number. The Johnson County Emergency Communications Center (JECC) 911 dispatcher will ask a series of questions.

- 1) **Expressed threat or hostility**- if the person is irate, upset or acting in a threatening or hostile manner, the employee should communicate that to the JECC dispatcher. Be specific and detailed. A police officer will immediately respond in emergency fashion.
- 2) **No expressed anger, threats or hostility**- It is prudent and recommended to go out of view of the person, dial 911 and tell dispatchers that an individual is carrying a firearm at the meeting, is not upset or threatening, but that the employee needs a police officer to respond and stand-by. The officer will assess the level of threat and continue to monitor the situation as needed or requested.

IV. Responsibility

Department Directors are responsible for reviewing this policy with their employees on an annual basis. The City has offered ALICE and other workplace safety trainings in the past. If desired, supervisors should contact the Police Department to arrange a training session on this or other workplace violence issues. The Police Chief is responsible for police response in accordance with the policy.

V. Regulation Update

The City Manager is responsible for updates to this policy.

Approved



City Manager

2/8/2022

Date