



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

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MAYOR

Disruptive Behavior Guidance

Purpose:

The City has confidence that employees serving the public have the tools and skills to effectively manage and deescalate a variety of interactions. The City developed this guidance to assist employees in handling especially difficult interactions with members of the public and how respond appropriately.

Definition of Disruptive Behavior:

Disruptive behavior is behavior which the City of Somerville regards as speech or action which 1) is insulting, offensive, abusive, and/or threatening and 2) interferes with the administration of City business or interferes with an employee's ability to perform their job safely or with dignity.

Procedure:

Employees, performing their duties in their official capacity, may engage in communications and interactions with members of the public and other non-employees in conducting public business. In doing so, employees need not experience threats, intimidation, demeaning, inappropriate and unprofessional comments (for example, related to an individual's person or character), obscene or indecent language, or other conduct that materially disrupts the administration of city business.

In the event that an employee does face such conduct, depending upon the circumstances, an employee may:

- Inform the individual that the conversation shall be limited to public business relating to the employee's official duties;
- Politely ask the individual to refrain from such action and inform the individual that the conversation will have to end until the individual can interact in a respectful manner;
- Inform the individual that the employee is going to contact a supervisor to speak with the member of the public;
- Politely end the conversation and remove themselves from the interaction by walking away and / or;
- Contact the police department in cases of safety concerns.

Please note that an employee who takes action prompted by this guidance should report the matter to their supervisor as soon as practicable.

Employees should contact the Personnel Department for additional guidance on these types of interactions. The Personnel Department can be reached at (617)625-6600 x3300.