

## **Executive Order 2002-30**

(October 8, 2002)

**WHEREAS**, the State of South Carolina recognizes that workplace violence is a growing problem that must be addressed; and

**WHEREAS**, the State is committed to providing its employees a safe and healthy working environment, reasonably free from intimidation, harassment, threats, or violence; and

**WHEREAS**, domestic violence costs employers at least three to five billion dollars a year nationally in absenteeism, lower productivity, employee turnover, and health and safety costs; and

**WHEREAS**, several leading employers in South Carolina, including Blue Cross/Blue Shield of South Carolina, Verizon Wireless, and BMW, have established workplace policies to help prevent domestic violence and assist victims of abuse.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Statutes of this State, I encourage all state agencies to establish policies to prevent and address workplace domestic violence and to provide information and assistance to their employees who are struggling to overcome the problem of domestic violence.

Furthermore, I hereby order and direct all departments within the executive branch of state government, as set forth in S.C. Code § 1-30-10, to adopt and enforce a "zero tolerance" policy for workplace violence, with the following standards:

- Each agency has a responsibility to provide reasonable protection for their employees and visitors. Management must assess the current level of security and related human resource policy and procedures, including but not limited to, management training, counseling and referral services, leave and benefit policies, and employee education or training programs to create a safe workplace for victims of domestic violence.
- All forms of workplace violence are prohibited, to include but not limited to: use of force in order to harm, threats of intent to inflict injury, harassment, and intentional damage to property owned by the state, employees, visitors or vendors.
- Any employee who feels subjected to or has witnessed violent, threatening or harassing behavior in the workplace must immediately report the incident to their supervisor, manager or human resources office. Any employee who believes that there is a serious threat to their safety or the safety of others that requires immediate attention must notify proper law enforcement authorities and his or her manager or supervisor. Any manager or supervisor receiving such a report shall immediately contact their human resource office to evaluate, investigate and take appropriate action.

- Visitors and employees must be advised that the State will strictly enforce the provisions of §§ 16-23-240 and 16-23-460, which prohibit carrying or displaying firearms or carrying concealed weapons in public buildings and adjacent areas. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these items in the workplace and any such weapon or firearm will be confiscated.

In addition to the above mandates, agencies shall refer to the S.C. Budget & Control Board, Office of Human Resources Model Policy as a guide for further actions or considerations. Each agency must prominently post the policy and all managers and supervisors must clearly communicate this policy to all employees.