

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 40.1-27.3 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by*
 3 *adding in Article 5 of Chapter 3 of Title 40.1 a section numbered 40.1-51.4:6, relating to workplace*
 4 *violence policy required for certain employers; civil penalty.*

5 [H 1919]

6 Approved

7 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**8 **1. That § 40.1-27.3 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is**
 9 **amended by adding in Article 5 of Chapter 3 of Title 40.1 a section numbered 40.1-51.4:6 as follows:**10 **§ 40.1-27.3. Retaliatory action against employee prohibited.**11 A. An employer shall not discharge, discipline, threaten, discriminate against, or penalize an employee, or
 12 take other retaliatory action regarding an employee's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges
 13 of employment, because the employee:14 1. Or a person acting on behalf of the employee in good faith reports a violation of any federal or state law
 15 or regulation to a supervisor or to any governmental body or law-enforcement official;16 2. Is requested by a governmental body or law-enforcement official to participate in an investigation,
 17 hearing, or inquiry;

18 3. Refuses to engage in a criminal act that would subject the employee to criminal liability;

19 4. Refuses an employer's order to perform an action that violates any federal or state law or regulation and
 20 the employee informs the employer that the order is being refused for that reason; ~~or~~21 5. Provides information to or testifies before any governmental body or law-enforcement official
 22 conducting an investigation, hearing, or inquiry into any alleged violation by the employer of federal or state
 23 law or regulation; *or*24 6. *Reports an incident of workplace violence under a policy developed pursuant to § 40.1-51.4:6 or*
 25 *otherwise.*

26 B. This section does not:

27 1. Authorize an employee to make a disclosure of data otherwise protected by law or any legal privilege;

28 2. Permit an employee to make statements or disclosures knowing that they are false or that they are in
 29 reckless disregard of the truth; or30 3. Permit disclosures that would violate federal or state law or diminish or impair the rights of any person
 31 to the continued protection of confidentiality of communications provided by common law.32 C. A person who alleges a violation of this section may bring a civil action in a court of competent
 33 jurisdiction within one year of the employer's prohibited retaliatory action. The court may order as a remedy
 34 to the employee (i) an injunction to restrain continued violation of this section, (ii) the reinstatement of the
 35 employee to the same position held before the retaliatory action or to an equivalent position, and (iii)
 36 compensation for lost wages, benefits, and other remuneration, together with interest thereon, as well as
 37 reasonable attorney fees and costs.38 **§ 40.1-51.4:6. Workplace violence; employer policy required; civil penalty.**39 A. *For the purposes of this section, "workplace violence" means any act of violence or threat of violence,*
 40 *that occurs at an employer's workplace while an employee performs work duties. "Workplace violence"*
 41 *includes intimidation, bullying, verbal abuse and threats, harassment, assault, refusal to obey workplace*
 42 *policies, sabotaging or stealing workplace equipment, sabotaging or stealing from others in the workplace,*
 43 *suicidal threats, physical fights, destruction of property, displays of extreme rage, and the use of weapons to*
 44 *harm others.*45 B. *Each employer of 100 or more employees shall develop, implement, and maintain an effective*
 46 *workplace violence policy that provides a mechanism for employees to report workplace violence and*
 47 *measures to protect employees from workplace violence based on the requirements of this section no later*
 48 *than January 1, 2027.*49 C. *An employer's workplace violence policy shall be tailored and specific to conditions and hazards for*
 50 *the employer's workplace, including job-specific risk factors and risk factors specific to each work area or*
 51 *unit. Such policy shall be suitable for the size, complexity, and type of operations at the employer's workplace*
 52 *and shall remain in effect at all times. Such policy may be developed in consultation with stakeholders or*
 53 *experts who specialize in workplace violence prevention, emergency response, or other related areas of*
 54 *expertise for all relevant aspects of the policy.*55 D. *Each workplace violence policy developed pursuant to this section shall include procedures and*
 56 *methods for (i) identifying the individual or team responsible for implementation of the policy; (ii) reporting*

57 instances, threats, concerns, risks, and hazards of workplace violence to the responsible individual or team;
58 (iii) incident response and post-incident investigation, including procedures for employers to respond to
59 reports of workplace violence; (iv) emergency response, including procedures for threats of incidents
60 involving a firearm or dangerous weapon; (v) communicating with and training employees on workplace
61 violence hazards and threats, work practice controls, the employer's policy, and procedures for confronting,
62 responding to, and reporting workplace violence threats, incidents, and concerns; (vi) assessing risks of
63 workplace violence and hazards to employees exposed to such risks and hazards; and (vii) hazard
64 prevention, engineering controls, or work practice controls to correct hazards in a timely manner.

65 E. An employer to which this section applies shall document all reports of incidents of workplace
66 violence, any incident response or post-incident investigation undertaken following such a report, and any
67 corrective measures taken for each investigation conducted pursuant to the policy required by this section.
68 Such documentation shall include, at a minimum, a description of (i) the violent incident; (ii) the date, time,
69 and location of the incident and the names and job titles of involved employees; (iii) the nature and extent of
70 injuries to covered employees; and (iv) if applicable, how the incident was abated. If an employer learns of a
71 workplace violence incident for which a report has not been submitted, the employer shall document the
72 incident no later than seven days after the employer learns of such incident.

73 Each employer shall maintain the documentation required by this subsection for not less than five years
74 and make such documentation available upon request to (a) its employees, provided that any such
75 documentation omit any element of personal identifying information sufficient to allow identification of any
76 individual alleged to have committed a violent incident or (b) law enforcement.

77 F. An employer shall ensure that its policy for mitigating workplace violence developed pursuant to the
78 requirements of this section is made available at all times to its employees.

79 G. An employer to which this section applies shall provide information regarding its policy for mitigating
80 workplace violence and associated procedures and methods for submitting a report under such policy to each
81 employee upon commencement of employment as part of the employer's onboarding process. This
82 information shall be appropriate in content and vocabulary to the language, educational level, and literacy of
83 the employee.

84 H. An employer that fails to comply with the requirements of this section shall be subject to a civil penalty
85 of not more than \$1,000 per violation. Civil penalties under this subsection shall be assessed by the
86 Department and paid to the Literary Fund, provided that no civil penalty shall be assessed under this
87 subsection prior to July 1, 2027.

88 I. No employer to which this section applies shall discriminate or retaliate against any employee for (i)
89 reporting a workplace violence incident, threat, or concern to, or seeking assistance or intervention with
90 respect to such incident, threat, or concern from, the employer, law enforcement, local emergency services,
91 or a local, state, or federal government agency or (ii) exercising any other rights under this section.

92 J. The provisions of § 40.1-51.4:5 that provide immunity from all civil liability to any employee who
93 truthfully reports threatening conduct at the workplace shall apply to any employee who truthfully reports
94 workplace violence under a policy developed pursuant to this section.

95 K. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or prevent employees from reporting violent
96 incidents to appropriate law enforcement or to limit or diminish any other employee protections in local,
97 state, or federal law.

98 **2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on July 1, 2026.**