

## **Legislative Summary: Ordinance No. 1380-2025**

This ordinance amends Codified Ordinance Section 621.07 to increase the penalty for menacing a healthcare worker to a first-degree misdemeanor that carries up to six months in jail and/or up to a \$1000 fine imposed by the court. If the victim of the offense is a healthcare worker while performing official responsibilities, the convicted offender shall receive a mandatory minimum jail sentence of at least three days. The current penalty for menacing is a fourth-degree misdemeanor that carries up to 30 days in jail and/or up to a \$250 fine.

**Menacing details:** Section 621.07(b), Menacing, states, “No person shall knowingly cause another to believe that the offender will cause physical harm to the person or property of such other person or member of his or her immediate family.” This ordinance adds the following definition of “Healthcare worker” in division (a): “...one who delivers care and/or services to the sick and ailing either directly as health care professionals such as doctors or nurses, or indirectly as aides, helpers, laboratory technicians, or medical waste handlers.”

**Legislative purpose:** The City wants to discourage and strongly penalize increasing workplace violence against healthcare workers. There has been a 7% rise in reported harassment from healthcare workers between 2018 and 2022, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Healthcare workers are five times more likely than any other occupation to experience violence (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). They make up 10% of the workforce, but experience 48% of nonfatal injuries resulting from workplace violence (CDC). The Cleveland Clinic brought this issue to our attention.

**Other laws:** The Ohio General Assembly enacted House Bill Number 452, effective April 9, 2025, to require each hospital system to establish a workplace violence prevention security plan, reporting systems, and training for security personnel. The City of Akron recently passed an ordinance increasing the penalty for menacing a healthcare worker to a first-degree misdemeanor. Many other states have passed laws to address this issue.