

Workplace Violence Prevention Procedure

1.0. Process

Incidents of workplace violence, threats of workplace violence, or observations of workplace violence are not to be ignored by any member of the College community. Workplace violence should promptly be reported to the appropriate college official (see below). Additionally, all members of the College community are encouraged to report behavior they reasonably believe poses a potential for violence in the workplace.

All employees are responsible for using safe work practices, for following all directives, policies and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work and learning environment.

2.0. Reporting Procedures

- 2.1. Any person witnessing imminent danger, or personal injury, or violence involving weapons, or any violent acts should call the University Police at ext 5555 immediately.
- 2.2. Any person who is the subject of a suspected violation of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy involving violence without weapons or personal injury, or is a witness to such suspected violation, should report the incident to his or her supervisor, or to University Police.
- 2.3. Employees are expected to report any threat or act of violence that they have witnessed, received, or have been informed of, to University Police and
 - 2.3.1. if an employee is involved, also notify their supervisor or manager; or
 - 2.3.2. if a student is involved, also notify the VP of Student Affairs (5500) or Dean /VP Academic Affairs (5712), or
 - 2.3.3. if a patient of University Eye Center is involved, contact the Office of Chief of Staff (4030).
- 2.4. Employees who commit a violent act or threaten to commit a violent act are subject to disciplinary action and/or civil prosecution as appropriate.
- 2.5. Any individual who makes a substantial threat, exhibits threatening behavior or engages in violent acts on College property shall be subject to removal from the premises as quickly as safety permits, pending the outcome of an investigation. However, if the individual involved is an employee, any actions or investigations undertaken will be conducted in accordance with established procedure of the employee's bargaining unit.

3.0. Responsibilities:

3.1. Employees

- A. All employees are responsible for helping to maintain a safe work and educational environment and are urged to take reasonable precautions to prevent violence and other unsafe conditions in

the workplace. Employees are encouraged to report indicators of increased risk of violent behavior including but not limited to the following examples:

Indicators¹:

- Direct or veiled threats of harm;
- Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying, or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior;
- Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees;
- Bringing a weapon to the workplace, brandishing a weapon in the workplace, making inappropriate references to guns, or fascination with weapons;
- Statements showing fascination with incidents of workplace violence, statements indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve a problem, or statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace homicides;
- Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide;
- Drug/alcohol abuse; and
- Extreme changes in behavior.

Precautions:

- In response to telephone inquiries, do not release information about coworkers' schedules, home telephone numbers, or other personal information.
 - In the event of suspicious conduct, request the credentials of any stranger who enters your office to do repair or other service work. If necessary, verify their presence with University Police at ext 5566.
 - Never leave money, credit card travel documents or any thing else of value in an unlocked desk or cabinet, or in open view within your office.
 - If something is stolen, report it immediately to University Police.
- B. Employees are expected to notify University Police whenever an order of protection is granted which mentions place of employment, or involves a College employee, or a student attending the University, and provide a copy of the order to the Assistant Chief of Police (Room 3M12a). Appropriate efforts will be made to protect the privacy and sensitivity of the information provided. Employees may also notify the office of Director of Human Resources (Room 933) of the order of protection. Employees should also notify their supervisor.
- C. Victims of domestic violence who believe the violence may extend into the workplace, or employees who believe that domestic or other personal matters may result in their being subject to violence extending into the workplace, are encouraged to notify their supervisor, or the University Police. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.
- D. All employees have an obligation to report any incident of violence and/or inappropriate conduct or behavior to their supervisor or University Police immediately.
- E. Any employee or representative of employees who believes that a serious violation of a workplace violence protection program exists or that an imminent danger exists shall bring such matter to the attention of a supervisor in the form of a written notice (Appendix A- Workplace Harassment Compliant Form). If, following a written notice, the matter has not

been resolved and the employee or representative still believes that a violation of a workplace violence prevention program remains, or that an imminent danger exists, the employee or representative should forward their complaint to the Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action (Room 933).

3.2. Supervisors

- A. Each Dean, Director, Department Chairperson, Clinic Chief and Manager, or other person with supervisory responsibility (hereinafter “supervisor”) is responsible within his/her area of jurisdiction for the implementation of this policy. Supervisors are expected to enforce the rules and regulations fairly and uniformly.
- B. Supervisors are required to contact the University Police immediately in the event of imminent or actual violence involving weapons or potential physical injuries.
- C. Supervisors must report to the University Police any complaint of workplace violence made to him/her and any other incidents of workplace violence of which he/she becomes aware of, or reasonably believes to exist. Supervisors are expected to inform their immediate supervisor promptly about any complaints, acts, or threats of violence even if the situation has been addressed and resolved. After having reported such complaint or incident to the University Police and immediate supervisor, the supervisor should keep it confidential and disclose it only as necessary during the investigation process and/or subsequent proceedings.
- D. Every supervisor is obligated to report any knowledge of employee misconduct or workplace violence incident to the Director of Human Resources immediately. Failure of a supervisor to investigate and initiate appropriate action may result in administrative action including possible discipline.

3.3. University Police

- A. University Police is responsible for:
 - responding to;
 - intervening; and
 - documentingⁱⁱ all incidents of violence in the workplace.
- B. University Police will immediately log all incidents of workplace violence and will notify the respective supervisor of an incident with his/her employee, or notify the appropriate University official of an incident with a student.
- C. University Police will maintain an internal tracking system of all threats and incidents of violence. Annual reports will be submitted to the Campus Health and Safety Advisory Committee detailing the number and description of workplace violence incidents and the disposition of the incidents.
- D. University Police officers will be trained in workplace violence awareness and prevention, non-violent crises intervention, conflict management, and dispute resolution.
- E. When informed, University Police will maintain a record of any Orders of Protection submitted by any member of the College Community. University Police will add the names of persons

that pose a threat to members of the College Community to the UPD's record management system and the Persona Non Grata list (PNG) or the be On the Look Out list (BOLO). University Police will provide escort service to members of the college community within its geographical confines, when sufficient personnel are available. Such services are to be extended at the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee. Only the President, or a designee in his/her absence, can authorize escort service outside of the geographical confines of the College.

- F. University Police will initiate a Timely Warning notice when there is a confirmed incident that poses a threat to the safety of members of the College community or to College property. The notice will be sent through the SUNY Optometry Emergency Alert system, the College website, First Class electronic mail, and posted flyers.

3.4. Office of Human Resources

- A. The Office of Human Resources (HR) is responsible for:
- assisting the Chief of Police and supervisors in responding to workplace violence;
 - facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence;
 - informing employees about established procedures for handling grievances;
 - notifying the University Police of workplace violence incidents reported to HR; and
 - consulting with, as necessary, counseling services and through employee assistance program to secure professional intervention.
- B. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for providing new employees or employees transferring to the College with a copy of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure and insuring that employees receive appropriate training pursuant to NYS Labor Law §27b.
- C. The Office of Human Resources will also be responsible for annually disseminating this policy to all employees, as well as posting the policy throughout the campus and on the College's website, as appropriate. Every employee must sign for receipt of this policy and procedure upon publication or at orientation. Signed receipt will be placed in each employee's personnel file.

3.5. Health and Safety Advisory Committee

- A. **On a need to basis or at a minimum once a year**, members of the committee shall conduct a risk evaluation / physical survey of the college to determine if any existing or potential hazards exist that might place members of the college community at risk for workplace violence or occupational injuries.
- B. On an annual basis the committee, after reviewing the University Police report, will submit a report to the President and recommend policy, training issues, or security procedures that were or should be implemented to maintain a safe working and learning environment.

Applicable Laws

Chapter 82 of the Laws of 2006 – signed June 2006 by the Governor
NYS labor Law Section 27-a & b, NYCRR Part 801

Important/Useful Telephone numbers:

University Police Department	212 938 5566(info), 212 938 5555 (emerg)
Human Resources Department	212 938 5880
Counseling Services/Social Services	212 938 4030
NYS Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	800 822 0244
Department of Labor- Compliance Assistance	212 621 0773
- NYC District Office	212 621 0881
NYS Crime Victims Board	718 923 4325

References:

ⁱ Identified by the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, Profiling and Behavioral Assessment Unit) in *Dealing with Workplace Violence: A Guide for Agency Planners* by the United States Office of Personnel Management, Workforce Relations, February 1998

ⁱⁱ For recordkeeping requirements see NYS Labor Law § 27-a. Safety and health standards for public employees.