

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

Category: Human Resource Management
Responsible Office: Human Resource Management Office

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POLICY SUMMARY

SUNY Buffalo State is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees and will respond promptly to threats, acts of violence and acts of aggression by employees or against employees by coworkers, members of the public or others.

POLICY**Policy Statement**

SUNY Buffalo State is committed to providing for all employees a safe work environment that is free from intimidation, threats and violent acts. The college will respond promptly to threats, acts of violence and acts of aggression by employees or against employees by coworkers, members of the public or others. This document sets forth standards for employee conduct and guidelines for reasonable precautions. The accompanying procedures outline responses to threats or violence should they occur in the workplace.

Prohibited Conduct

- A. SUNY Buffalo State will not tolerate any act or threat of violence made in the workplace, on college property, or while in work status.
- B. No person may engage in violent conduct or make threats of violence, implied or direct, on SUNY Buffalo State property or in connection with college business. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. The use of force with the intent to cause harm, e.g., physical attacks, any unwanted contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, or throwing objects;
 - 2. Behavior that diminishes the dignity of others through sexual, racial, religious or ethnic disparagement or harassment;
 - 3. Acts or threats which are intended to intimidate, harass, threaten, bully, coerce, or cause fear of harm whether directly or indirectly;
 - 4. Acts or threats made directly or indirectly by oral or written words, gestures or symbols that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical or mental harm.
- C. No person, without legal authority, may carry, possess or use any dangerous weapon on SUNY Buffalo State property or in college buildings or facilities. Unauthorized possession or use of firearms, knives (except non-spring pocket knives) or other weapons or explosives is prohibited.

Applicability

This policy applies to all New York State employees.

Responsibility

Employees

- A. All SUNY Buffalo State 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 and report indicators of increased risk of violent behavior including, but not limited to the following examples:

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 the work request with the Campus Services Office.
- Never leave money, credit card travel documents or anything else of value in an unlocked desk or cabinet.
- If something is stolen, report it immediately to the University Police Department.

Indicators:

- 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 or other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide;
 - Drug/alcohol abuse; and
 - Extreme changes in behavior.
- B. Employees are expected to notify the University Police Department whenever a protective restraining order or order of protection is granted which mentions SUNY Buffalo State property, or involves a college employee or a person working at or attending the college, and provide a copy of the order. Appropriate efforts will be made to protect the privacy and sensitivity of the information provided. Employees should also notify their supervisor of such protective restraining orders or orders of protection.
- 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 and the University Police Department. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.
- D. All employees have an obligation to report any incidents of violence and/or inappropriate conduct or behavior to the University Police Department immediately. Following notification to the University

Police Department, employees should inform their supervisor of the incident.

- E. NYS Labor Law §27b mandates that all public employees participate in annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training. Employees must either attend one of the classes (announced in the *Daily Bulletin* on a regular basis) or may fulfill this requirement by completing the web-based workplace violence prevention training which can be accessed through Blackboard 24/7.

Supervisors

- A. Each dean, director, department chairperson, executive officer, administrator, or any other person with supervisory responsibility (hereinafter “supervisor”) is responsible within his/her area of jurisdiction for the implementation of this policy.
- 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 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. Following notification to the University Police, supervisors are obligated to contact the Associate Vice President or Associate Director of Human Resource Management immediately to report incidents involving College employees.
- E. Supervisors must ensure that their employees participate in annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training as mandated by NYS Labor Law §27b. This training may be completed in classes (announced in the *Daily* on a regular basis) or may fulfill this requirement by completing the web-based workplace violence prevention training which can be accessed through Blackboard 24 hours a day, seven days a week (view log on guide).

University Police Department

- A. The University Police Department is responsible for: responding to; intervening in; and documenting all incidents of violence in the workplace.
- B. The University Police Department will immediately log all incidents of workplace violence and will notify the respective supervisor and the Associate Vice President or Associate Director of Human Resource Management of an incident involving an employee, or notify the Associate Vice President and Dean of Students of an incident with a student.
- C. The University Police Department will maintain an internal tracking system of all threats and incidents of violence. Annual reports will be submitted to the President detailing the number and description of workplace violence incidents, the disposition of the incidents, and recommend policy, training issues, or security procedures that were or should be implemented to maintain a safe working and learning

environment.

- 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, the University Police Department will maintain a record of any Orders of Protection and 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 University Police or designee. Only the President or designee can authorize escort service outside of the geographical confines of the college.

Human Resource Management Office

- A. The Human Resource Management Office (HR) is responsible for:
 - Assisting the Chief of University Police and supervisors in responding to workplace violence;
 - Facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence;
 - Notifying the University Police Department of workplace violence incidents reported to HR; and
 - Consulting with, as necessary, counseling services to secure professional intervention;
 - Coordinate mandated Workplace Violence Prevention Training classes and web-based training program.
- B. The Office of Human Resource Management is responsible for providing new employees or employees transferred to the college with a copy of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedures and insuring that employees receive appropriate training pursuant to NYS Labor Law §27b.
- C. The Office of Human Resource Management is 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.

Reporting Procedure

No incidents of workplace violence, threats of workplace violence, or observations of workplace violence are to be ignored by any member of the SUNY Buffalo State community. Workplace violence should be promptly reported to the University Police Department (see below). Additionally, all members of the college community are encouraged to report behavior they reasonably believe poses a potential for workplace violence in order to maintain a safe working and learning environment.

- A. Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent danger or personal injury or violence involving weapons or actual violence should call the University Police Department at extension 6333 immediately.
- B. 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 the University Police Department.

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

- C. Employees are expected to report any threat or act of violence that they have witnessed, received, or have been informed of, to the University Police Department.
- D. Every threat must be reported.
- E. Employees who commit a violent act or threaten to commit a violent act are subject to disciplinary action and/or civil/criminal prosecution as appropriate.
- F. Any individual who makes a substantial threat, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts on SUNY Buffalo State property shall be subject to removal from the premises as quickly as safety permits, pending the outcome of an investigation.

RELATED INFORMATION

Related Links:

[Training online via Blackboard](#)

[SUNY Buffalo State Workplace Violence Prevention Online Training Guide](#)

[SUNY Buffalo State Workshop Registration System \(for in-classroom training\)](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Human Resource Management Office
Cleveland Hall, Room 403
1300 Elmwood Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222

Phone: (716) 878-4822

Fax: (716) 878-3068

Website: <http://hr.buffalostate.edu/>

E-mail: warnesje@buffalostate.edu

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APPROVAL

Approved prior to 2016