

Policy as Approved on September 22, 2011

3.14.6 Workplace Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment Policy Guidelines

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the development of a College/System Office policy for the prevention of workplace and general campus violence. It includes the formation of campus Threat Assessment Teams and the promotion and maintenance of a productive environment for learning and working that is free from threats, intimidation, and violence.

3.14.6.0 **Coverage:** These policy guidelines will apply to all faculty, staff, students, visitors, contractors, and other third parties. Students may be covered under additional provisions of their respective college's Student Handbook.

3.14.6.1 **Policy Components:**

A. **Definitions:**

Workplace: Any location, either permanent or temporary, where an employee performs any work-related duty. This includes, but is not limited to, the buildings and the surrounding perimeters, including the parking lots, field locations, alternate work locations (other than an individual's home when telecommuting), and travel to and from work assignments.

Workplace Violence: Any physical assault or threatening behavior occurring in the workplace by employees, students, or third parties. It includes, but is not limited to, beating, stabbing, suicide, shooting, rape, attempted suicide, psychological trauma such as threats, obscene phone calls, intentionally damaging property, an intimidating presence which makes a reasonable person apprehensive of imminent harm, and harassment of any nature such as stalking, shouting so as to cause a disruption, swearing or committing injurious acts motivated by, or related to, domestic violence or sexual harassment.

Third Parties: Individuals who are not state employees, such as relatives, acquaintances, strangers, contractors, or visitors.

B. The colleges/system office prohibits threats and acts of violence on college property, within college/system office facilities, at any college/system office-sponsored event; while engaged in college/system office business, educational, or athletic activities; and while traveling in state vehicles. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to:

- injuring another person physically;

- engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to self or another person;
- engaging in behavior that would subject a reasonable person to, and does subject another individual to, extreme emotional distress;
- possessing, brandishing, or using a weapon while on state premises by students, except where possession is a result of participation in an organized and scheduled instructional exercise for a course, or where the student is a law enforcement professional;
- possessing, brandishing, or using a firearm, weapon, or other device by faculty or staff that is not required by the individual's position while on college/system office property or engaged in college/system office business; or in violation of law or other college/system office policy, except where the employee is a law enforcement professional;
- **Brandishing, using or possessing a weapon without a permit to carry a concealed weapon by third parties while on campus in academic or administrative buildings, or while attending a sporting, entertainment or educational event, when specifically asked by the college to agree not to possess a weapon as a condition of attendance. This provision does not apply to law enforcement personnel.**
- **Brandishing or using a weapon by third parties with a permit to carry a concealed weapon while on campus in academic or administrative buildings, or while attending a sporting, entertainment or educational event, when specifically asked by the college to agree not to possess a weapon as a condition of attendance. This provision does not apply to law enforcement personnel.**
- intentionally damaging property;
- threatening to injure an individual (including oneself) or to damage property;
- committing injurious acts motivated by, or related to, domestic violence or sexual harassment; and
- retaliating against any employee or student who, in good faith, reports a violation of this policy.

C. Consequences of Policy Violations:

1. Employees violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and criminal prosecution using existing policies and procedures including Section 3 of the VCCS Policy Manual or DHRM Policy 1.60, Standards of Conduct. Additionally, employees who are identified as engaging in the use of threatening language or behavior may be required, as a condition of continued employment, to participate in a mental health evaluation as part of a threat assessment

process, and receive approval from the mental health evaluator that they are not a risk to themselves or others.

2. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in their respective college's Student Handbook, and other college policies as appropriate. Additionally, students who are identified as engaging in the use of threatening language or behavior may be required, as a condition of continued enrollment, to participate in a mental health evaluation as part of a threat assessment process, and receive approval from the mental health evaluator that they are not a risk to themselves or others.

3. Visitors and third parties violating this policy will be subject to applicable, state, and federal laws, and associated regulations, and may be barred from the college/System Office at the college's/System Office's discretion for violating this policy.

D. Violence Prevention Committees and Threat Assessment Teams

1. Each college shall establish a committee with responsibility for education and violence prevention on campus. The membership of this body shall include representatives from the following areas: student affairs, human resources, law enforcement, a mental health professional or counseling services representative, and others who have knowledge, professional expertise, or responsibilities that could assist the committee with completing its work. However, in all cases the membership of the committee must comply with the requirements of Virginia Code § 23-9.2:10. The committee should consult VCCS legal counsel when necessary, through established protocols.

2. Each violence prevention committee shall publish for its college community, a clear statement of its mission and membership, as well as the committee's leadership role in the area of violence prevention.

3. Each violence prevention committee shall publish periodic guidance to faculty, staff and students regarding the following:

- a. how to recognize and report aberrant or potentially harmful behavior that may represent a threat to the community;
- b. policies and procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat;
- c. appropriate means of intervention with such individuals;
- d. college/system action to resolve potential threats; and
- e. to whom on the college's threat assessment team, or through what method, potentially threatening behavior should be reported.

4. Each college shall also organize a threat assessment team to be established by the State Board for Community Colleges. Membership of this body shall include representatives from the following areas: student affairs, human resources, law enforcement, and a mental health representative. The violence prevention committee may also be designated the campus threat assessment team if the counseling services representative is also a mental health professional. The threat assessment team may supplement its membership with others as necessary to assist it with fulfilling its purpose. However, in all cases the membership of the team must comply with the requirements of Virginia Code § 23-9.2:10. The threat assessment team shall implement the assessment, intervention, and action policies of the violence prevention committee. The committee should consult VCCS legal counsel when necessary, through established protocols.

E. Procedures for reporting or responding to threats or incidents of workplace violence:

1. Employee and student responsibilities should include:

- Reporting incidents or threats of violence to their immediate supervisor, Human Resource Office, campus police/security, Threat Assessment Team members, or other designated individuals or offices by stated college policy.
- Providing Human Resources and the immediate supervisor, or a college's counseling services office where a student or employee, with a copy of any Protective Orders from a court which lists the College/System Office as protected areas so that appropriate enforcement activities occur.
- No person who, in good faith, reports threatening or otherwise troubling behavior in accordance with this policy will be subject to retaliation.

2. Management Responsibilities include:

- Designate a Workforce Violence Prevention Coordinator.
- Establish a college violence prevention committee and organize a threat assessment team for the State Board's establishment to comply with § 23-9.2:10 of the Code of Virginia. Each college's administration should ensure that its threat assessment team remains able to quickly receive information about, assess, and respond to potential threats that are reported in accordance with its policies, and to determine

corrective actions and prepare necessary reports on given situations. In addition, each college's administration should ensure that its violence prevention committee remains able to publish education and prevention information and recommend ways to, (1) to respond to incidents, (2) investigate all reported incidents of workplace violence, and (3) determine the appropriate response and the actions necessary to address a particular situation.

3. Threat Assessment Team Responsibilities include:

- Establishing or utilizing existing relationships with local and state law-enforcement agencies as well as mental health agencies to ensure compliance with § 23-9.2:10 of the Code of Virginia, and expedite assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may present a threat to campus safety.
- Upon a preliminary determination that an individual poses a threat of violence to self or others, or exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or need for assistance, a threat assessment team may obtain criminal history record information, as provided in Virginia Code §§ [19.2-389](#) and [19.2-389.1](#), and health records, as provided in § [32.1-127.1:03](#).
- No member of a threat assessment team shall redisclose any criminal history record information or health information obtained pursuant to this section or otherwise use any record of an individual beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was made to the threat assessment team. Va. Code § 23-9.2:10(E).

3.14.6.2 Communication and Training

- A. The Workplace Violence Prevention Policy will be posted on the College/System Office website.
- B. Information on the Workforce Violence Prevention Policy, will be included as part of the employee orientation.
- C. Training on recognizing and responding to potentially violent or violent situations in the workplace will be provided to employees periodically by the violence prevention committee.
- D. Information regarding this policy will be included as part of student orientation.